



**Hawaiian
Electric**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hawaiian Electric using drones as a wildfire safety tool *Recent vandalism incident on Maui prompts importance of public awareness*

KAHULUI, Sept. 17, 2024 – Hawaiian Electric is raising awareness about its drone operations after one of its contracted drones was purposely targeted and damaged while midair, downing the tool as it was being used to inspect overhead lines on Maui last week. As part of its ongoing wildfire safety strategy, Hawaiian Electric is using unmanned aircrafts, or drones, for aerial inspections within Maui County, Hawai'i Island and O'ahu to inspect its electrical infrastructure in identified wildfire risk areas.

"While we often do aerial inspections of our electrical infrastructure by helicopter, we have increased the use of drones as part of our ongoing wildfire mitigation efforts to keep our communities safe," said Shayna Decker, Hawaiian Electric's spokesperson. "The drones play a critical role in our inspection process, and the technology enables us to more quickly identify issues to prevent or mitigate wildfires. To deter future vandalism and to maintain safety of the public and our workforce, we please ask for the public's help to say something if they see something suspicious during our inspections."

The company E2 has been contracted by Hawaiian Electric, along with the company's own staff, to conduct inspections with drones and typically will work Mondays through Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Personnel conducting the inspections drive in Hawaiian Electric or ProEnergy company marked vehicles. If on foot, the drone operator will be wearing a Hawaiian Electric or ProEnergy company branded hard hat and vest. All field personnel will carry a Hawaiian Electric contractor or employee identification badge.

The inspections are performed at the poles and power lines and no one will request to enter a home or business. There may be instances where the operator may need to enter private property, like a yard, to access a utility pole. In these instances, the operator will make their presence known before accessing the equipment on private property. Electric service will not be impacted.

For questions about this work, contact Hawaiian Electric at hawaiianelectric.com/customerservice or call the E2 contractor at (559) 515-3840, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Hawai'i standard time.

The Hawaiian Electric Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) program is in full compliance and protection of all Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules and has developed safety, training, operating and privacy procedures to make sure the unmanned aircraft are flown with the highest regard for the safety of the public and crews. Drones performing scheduled flights in support of utility and infrastructure projects are regulated by the FAA. Tampering with or damaging drone equipment or interfering with drone operations could be subject to federal enforcement or citing.

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