



**Hawaiian  
Electric**

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Hawaiian Electric issues statement regarding Maui Fire Department report on August 2023 wildfires**

**HONOLULU, October 2, 2024** – *Hawaiian Electric today issued the following response to reports released by the Maui Fire Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”) detailing the findings of their investigations into the cause and origin of the Aug. 8, 2023 Maui windstorm and wildfires:*

The fires in Lahaina and Upcountry Maui were terrible tragedies for our state. The loss and pain experienced by our families, neighbors, customers and employees will never leave our hearts and we are working with many government, community and business partners to keep our communities safe.

We appreciate the commitment by the Maui Fire Department and ATF to conduct thorough investigations into the events of Aug. 8. We have been committed to transparency and accountability from the start and have said that it was important to understand what caused the fire and its catastrophic impact to ensure that it never happens again. To that end, our company and our employees have cooperated fully with all government investigators, diligently providing requested information while aggressively advancing our own fire safety measures in parallel.

On Aug. 27, 2023, shortly after the fires occurred, we publicly stated that it appeared our equipment sparked a fire on the morning of Aug. 8. The Maui Fire Department and ATF determined that the fire that impacted Lahaina was accidental in nature and largely affirmed the original understanding of the timeline of events as first described by Hawaiian Electric:

- A fire reported at about 6:35 a.m. was caused by Hawaiian Electric equipment that was damaged by high winds.
- The Maui County Fire Department responded to this small fire, reported it was “100% contained,” declared it had been “extinguished,” and then left the scene.
- An afternoon fire began in the same area shortly after their departure and spread to Lahaina.

The report also concluded that the afternoon fire was a reignition of the morning fire.

We deeply regret that our operations contributed to the fire that ignited in the morning. Confronted by an extraordinary weather event and a chaotic situation, our employees brought their best efforts to their jobs, as they do every day.

We have looked closely at our protocols and actions that day and have made many changes in our operations and resilience strategies to ensure we fulfill our commitment to keep the public safe, especially in extreme weather events, which are becoming more frequent and severe.

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Consistent with the previous reports published by the Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI) and the state Attorney General, the reports issued by the Maui Fire Department and the ATF also make clear that the devastation in Lahaina resulted from a combination of many factors and the actions of many parties. We appreciate the work of all parties who are working together to understand what happened and to make our communities safer in a changing environment.

As stated in the Lahaina Fire Phase Two report published on Sept. 13, 2024: “The destruction caused by the August 2023 fires ... resulted from a complex interaction of contributing factors with root causes going back years. It is vital to reiterate, as demonstrated throughout this report, that no single factor, or set of factors, is directly responsible for the tragic outcome.”

Wildfires are a statewide and emerging national problem whose causes are rooted in climate change, history and land management. Reducing the risk will require an all-hands approach. Hawaiian Electric is doing its part by continuing to strengthen the resilience of the electric system. The company has already taken significant steps to reduce the potential for wildfires, even before these reports were released:

- As part of our Wildfire Safety Strategy and broader resilience efforts, Hawaiian Electric is making more than \$110 million in investments in 2024 to strengthen electric infrastructure against extreme weather conditions, implement enhanced vegetation management that falls under the utility’s purview and deploy devices to help prevent wildfires.
- On July 1, 2024, the company launched its Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) program, which may be used as a last line of defense to help prevent utility-related wildfires. In standing up the PSPS program, Hawaiian Electric has seen that coordination with critical service providers and emergency responders and providing advance notice to the public are essential elements to ensure public safety.
- Hawaiian Electric is installing 78 AI-enabled fire detection cameras and 52 weather stations and sharing data and access with fire departments and other agencies.

As a 132-year-old company and family of employees deeply rooted in Hawai‘i, we are committed to being here for Lahaina, Maui and the entire state for the long term. The global settlement agreement in principle we reached in August is an important milestone in our collaborative work to support our state’s recovery.

As we move forward, we will continue to work together to strengthen our state’s infrastructure and identify solutions to keep our communities safe as extreme weather events intensify in Hawai‘i and across the country.

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