



**Hawaiian
Electric**

NEWS RELEASE

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Expanded Hawaiian Electric safety strategy details actions to reduce potential for wildfires

- *3-year plan focuses initial work on high-risk areas*
- *Continues initiatives to strengthen grid, minimize fire hazards*
- *Expands use of weather stations, AI-enabled cameras*

HONOLULU, Jan. 13, 2025 – Hawaiian Electric plans to deploy new technology, fortify infrastructure, minimize fire hazards and expand community partnerships to significantly reduce the risk of a wildfire started by its equipment, actions detailed in a new Wildfire Safety Strategy.

The 3-year safety blueprint is an expansion of a plan first created by Hawaiian Electric in 2019 and updated in 2023 in the months after the August 2023 windstorm and wildfires on Maui. The enhanced plan, which was filed for review by the Public Utilities Commission, underscores the recent emergence of extreme weather events as requiring a coordinated effort by many organizations and supportive public policy to keep communities safe.

“Our 2025-2027 expanded wildfire safety strategy builds upon our past work and that of many others. It is not just a technical roadmap, it is our shared and steadfast commitment to a safer, more resilient Hawai‘i,” said Shelee Kimura, president and CEO of Hawaiian Electric. “We are thankful for the hundreds of stakeholders and partners – local, state and federal agencies, elected officials, landowners, businesses, community organizations, customers, peer utilities, and expert advisors – who have contributed to wildfire prevention efforts, including the work that has resulted in this plan. Through collective action and thoughtful approaches, Hawai‘i can create a fire-safe environment for generations to come.”

The cost of the 2025-2027 plan is estimated at about \$450 million, including \$137 million budgeted for work in 2025. Some of the cost is already funded through existing programs, including a federal grant for grid resilience received in 2024. The company plans to continue refinement of the program and the long-term cost and scope of work are subject to change. Additional federal funding is being pursued.

The 179-page strategy was filed with the PUC on Jan. 10 for its review and acceptance. Many of the initiatives described are already underway, including this work completed in 2024:

- Replaced and upgraded 2,124 wood poles
- Tested 5,805 poles
- Replaced more than 23 miles of older overhead lines with new, more resilient lines
- Installed 3,177 single-phase fault current indicators, which allow crews to more quickly locate disturbances on lines in high-risk areas

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- Installed 3,558 sparkless fuses, which help reduce the risk of ignition
- Changed 213 substation relay settings to shut off power quickly if a disruption is detected
- Installed 53 weather stations in wildfire-prone areas on four islands to provide key information about wind, temperature and humidity to help the company better predict and respond to fire weather conditions. The weather stations, mounted on utility poles, provide meteorological data that will help the company decide whether to activate and deactivate a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)
- Installed 44 artificial intelligence-assisted high definition wildfire detection cameras
- Installed 680 new lightning arrestors

Among the initiatives to be completed in the next three years include:

- **Ongoing grid hardening, asset inspections and vegetation management focused on areas with medium to high risk of ignition.**
 - Deploy covered conductor in the highest risk areas. Covered conductor is heavy-duty insulating material placed on power lines to help prevent bare wires from sparking if they touch another line or fall to the ground
 - An initial undergrounding of about two miles of overhead power lines in critical safety areas in Lahaina with a community working group convened to provide area-specific knowledge and input
 - Replace, upgrade and strengthen poles and equipment
 - Enhance inspections of electrical assets
 - Expand hazard tree removal, create wider rights-of-way for vegetation clearing
- **Installing more weather stations and hazard-detection cameras.**
 - Add more weather stations and install additional standard AI-assisted video camera stations to enable 100% camera viewshed coverage of all high and medium wildfire risk areas
 - Create a wildfire-focused Watch Office that will monitor media reports, internal and external weather products and field reports to provide more situational awareness within Hawaiian Electric
 - Implement an operational wildfire risk model to inform real-time decision-making and refine the company's PSPS program
- **Ongoing engagement with stakeholders and communities.**
 - Continue convening Wildfire Safety Working Group meetings to bring experts together and share best practices
 - Continue partnerships with local organizations to host community events, reach individual residents and share resources

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