



**Hawaiian
Electric**

NEWS RELEASE

Hawaiian Electric warns customers to watch for scams

Thieves tricking some into paying “overdue” bills with prepaid cards

HONOLULU, April 13, 2021 – Using scare tactics and trickery, scammers are pretending to be Hawaiian Electric and threatening to disconnect customers’ electric service unless “overdue” bills are cleared with prepaid debit cards. Don’t be scammed!

In one recent incident, a business paid thousands of dollars to a scammer using MoneyPak cards. On another call, the scammer pretended to be Hawaiian Electric’s president and CEO as he attempted to get a customer to pay. Don’t fall victim to these schemes.

Customers are reminded that the moratorium on disconnections for nonpayment has been extended through May 31, 2021. Calls or other communications threatening immediate disconnection are scams and can be reported to Hawaiian Electric via an [online form](#). (See infographic on next page that outlines legitimate company collections activities.)

While the volume of scam reports has not spiked, Hawaiian Electric wants to raise awareness of recent cases in which customers were tricked into paying large sums of money.

In one call, the scammer advised a customer to purchase MoneyPak cards at a local convenience store. The scammer warned against telling the cashier that the card was being purchased to pay a utility bill, advising the customer to instead to cite “personal reasons.” The scammer wanted to skirt steps in place meant to combat fraud. Clerks are trained to intervene if the customer is purchasing cards to pay a utility bill. As part of the scheme, the scammer warned the customer that he would have to pay a \$50 fee if he told the clerk it would be used to pay a utility bill, much more than the usual \$5.95 fee.

As a reminder, Hawaiian Electric does not accept the following types of payment:

- Cash App
- Bitcoin
- gift cards
- prepaid debit cards

Visit the company [website](#) to check the acceptable forms of payment.

Customers should note that while the moratorium ends May 31, it won’t trigger immediate disconnections. Those customers having difficulty paying their bill are urged to submit a payment arrangement request to ensure uninterrupted service. Go to hawaiianelectric.com/paymentarrangement to submit a request.

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What we **DO**

- ✓ Extend courtesy phone call(s) to customers in arrears
- ✓ Mail payment reminders to households or business
- ✓ Email notifications to urge payment of past due balance
- ✓ Disconnection notices/letters provide:
 - Minimum of five days for customers to make payment
 - Total amount due and past due balance
- ✓ Leave door hanger reminder at customer's business or residence
- ✓ Provide available payment methods at hawaiianelectric.com/paymentoptions



What we **DON'T** do

- ✗ Call and threaten immediate disconnection if payment isn't made
- ✗ Send disconnection notices via text
- ✗ Demand payment information via email
- ✗ Without prior written notice, demand immediate payment and threaten to shut off electricity within the hour
- ✗ Go door-to-door collecting past due balances from customers
- ✗ Demand immediate payment over the phone, via money transfer, prepaid debit cards or by Bitcoin

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