

Green infrastructure fee to appear on Hawaiian Electric bills this month

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Typical Hawaiian Electric Co. customers across the state will begin to see a monthly \$1.29 green infrastructure fee on their bills this month, although the utility noted that a reduction on a surcharge will result in little net change in what customers actually pay.

The Honolulu-based utility, which is also the parent of Maui Electric Co. and Hawaii Electric Light Co., said Tuesday that the fee will help finance the state's \$150 million Green Energy Market Securitization program, which aims to expand the installation of solar energy systems and other clean energy devices for Hawaii customers.

For a typical residential customer using 600 kilowatt-hours a month, there should be a net change of "give or take a few cents," Peter Rosegg, spokesman for HECO, told PBN.

But for heavy users of power, there may be a higher charge, as the lowering of the Public Benefits Fund surcharge will not be equal to the green infrastructure fee, with the difference getting greater as more electricity is used.

For homeowners with solar photovoltaic systems who do not pay the Public Benefits Fund surcharge, they will pay the green surcharge, so for these individuals there will be no offset, Rosegg said.

The new line item, titled "Green Infrastructure Fee," will appear under the listing of "Current Charges: Electric Service" beginning with this month's bill.

As required by law and authorized by the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission, all residential and commercial customers will pay the green fee to help pay for the GEMS program, which will make low-cost loans so green infrastructure improvements are more affordable and accessible for customers who cannot afford upfront costs or cannot qualify for other financing.