



**Hawaiian
Electric**

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hawaiian Electric warns customers to watch for scams *Thieves devise new trick to get potential victims to use prepaid cards*

HONOLULU, April 13, 2020 – 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 a Hawaiian Electric executive as he attempted to get a customer to pay. Don't fall victim to these schemes.

Hawaiian Electric customers across five islands 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 a new trick being used by scammers.

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 cite "personal reasons."

Scammers have figured out that store clerks are now trained to intervene if the customer says they're purchasing cards to pay a utility bill, and employees have helped many potential victims avoid being conned out of their money. So in this most recent case, the scammer warned the customer that a \$50 fee would be charged if he told the clerk it would be used to pay a utility bill.

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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