



The Current Newsletter

December 2023



Mark's Message

Aloha kākou,

This issue of the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) newsletter gives you a preview of some important strategies and opportunities coming your way in December and early in the New Year. As we head towards the conclusion of 2023, our office will be releasing a study that outlines Hawai'i's pathway to decarbonization and the challenges, opportunities, and actions necessary to achieve its ambitious goals. Act 238, adopted by the Hawai'i Legislature in 2022, set the statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit to be at least fifty percent below 2005 levels by 2030.

Making progress on our 2030 targets is critically important to keep Hawai'i on track to create a carbon-negative economy by 2045, as required by Act 15, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018. As a preview to the report, Hawai'i must make substantial progress in adopting energy efficiency measures and replacing our use of fossil fuels in all types of transportation and in our electricity sector to get there. While doing this, we must be mindful that the costs of such an energy transition should not be borne on the backs of our residents and businesses.

Therefore, you may expect the report to be a wake-up call about the extreme costs and risks of perpetuating the use of low sulfur fuel oil for power generation. HSEO is focused on solutions to reduce the cost burden of energy to Hawai'i residents and will have updates on options in early 2024.

Among these is a new program mentioned in this issue that HSEO hopes to offer by mid-2024 to enable single-family and multifamily households in Hawai'i with discounts for efficiency upgrades that are predicted to save at least 20% of the home's energy use. Residents with low and moderate income will be a prime focus and the program will be crafted in a way to substantially cover the costs to purchase the efficiency upgrades and appliances that qualify for the program.

HSEO is also finalizing its legislative package for 2024 that will include ways to ensure Hawai'i's firm renewable energy and long duration storage needs that will be detailed in the January 2024 newsletter.

With Aloha,





[Check out the State's Decarbonization Strategy Webpage!](#)

Look out for the Decarbonization Strategy

Pursuant of Act 238, HSEO is in the final stages of drafting the Economy Wide Decarbonization Report. The report will ultimately "analyze pathways and develop recommendations for achieving the State's economy-wide decarbonization goals" as established by HRS 225P-5. **HSEO will release the report at the end of the year after submitting it to the State Legislature.**



New IRA Rebate Programs Coming in 2024

The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides more than \$390 billion to support clean energy and address climate change, including [\\$8.8 billion in rebates](#) for home energy efficiency and electrification projects. The program funds have been allocated using the standard formula meaning that the Hawai'i State Energy Office will receive \$68 million over the next eight years.

The Department of Energy (DOE)'s Office of State and Community Energy Program has released the applications for states and territories to apply for full program funds for both the Home Efficiency Rebates and Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR). Even though funds have been allocated, states must submit an application that details how they plan to implement the programs to achieve energy savings, reach low- and moderate-income customers, and ensure funds are well-spent.

The DOE has selected Hawai'i and four other states for assistance to fast-track a full application for the HEAR program by the end of this year meaning that rebates will be available to consumers as early as next Spring. Rebates under the Home Efficiency program are expected to be available later in 2024.

The DOE envisions that the rebate programs will help grow the equitable clean energy economy by scaling access to and demand for home energy upgrades for all.

This website includes information about the IRA [Home Efficiency Rebates](#) and [Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates](#). Information about Hawai'i's rebate programs will be available on our website in January.



*Kōke'e Lodge Cafe in Waimea, Kaua'i, a participant and awardee of HGBPs 10-Entry Level Program. The video crew is taping an interview with the cafe mgr. interviewed by Clean Energy Wayfinder, **Peyton Flint**.*

Recap of the Hawai'i Green Business Program's Statewide Fall Forums

The [Hawai'i Green Business Program \(HGBP\)](#) promotes and recognizes energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation practices that businesses and organizations implement in their facilities. The HGBP provides opportunities for businesses to share these practices with their peers and others to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness and benefit to the environment and community in the green business forums and site tours.

In pursuit of this program's mission to facilitate more opportunities to participate and to help businesses on the neighbor islands as well as on O'ahu, this Fall 2023, HGBP hosted a series of forums statewide to share best practices from [recent awardees of the HGBP](#) and feature presenters on rebates and incentives for greater energy and water efficiency. The forums were sponsored by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) to support the expansion of the HGBP to work with [Clean Energy Wayfinders](#) to address small businesses located statewide.

Over 100 participated in these hybrid events, which enabled the HGBP manager and staff to meet many of the participants in person, establish a positive rapport, and provide an opportunity to communicate on a more personal level. The virtual option was also provided for those who were not able to be there in person. Having both options available was valuable and effective. The forums and HGBP awardees were also videotaped, with the support of HTA, for future posting on multi-media outlets so many others will be able to see and hear from featured green businesses in Hawai'i.

The HGBP is accepting checklists for the next round of 2023-2024 green businesses to be recognized next Spring 2024. The deadline to complete and submit the HGBP checklist is December 29, 2023.

[Get recognized for your green practices and be a part of the HGBP!](#)



Recent awardees and presenters participated in the Hawai'i Green Business Program Forum held at Prince Waikiki, a Resorts & Hotels awardee, this past November.



***Parker Kushima**, Outreach and Community Engagement Specialist & Clean Energy Wayfinders Coordinator, and **Dante Hirata-Epstein**, Energy Justice and Climate VISTA, presenting on Solarize at the Hau'ula community center.*

Get to know Solarize808!

Solarize808 is a community-led solar purchase campaign dedicated to fostering a vibrant Hawai'i and promoting 'āina stewardship through renewable energy. Affordable Solar PV systems with battery storage are now available, presenting the potential to reduce monthly bills or upfront costs, depending on the chosen financing program. The system's discounted price, coupled with State and Federal tax credits, could lead to a substantial reduction in utility bills, especially once the system is paid off.

Recognizing that the decision to transition to rooftop Solar PV + Storage is significant, Solarize808 has integrated various elements to make this shift accessible. From flexible financing

options to experts to vet solar contractors for bulk purchasing discounts, robust consumer protection measures, and partnerships with energy efficiency programs, a comprehensive approach is in place. The overarching goal is to guide the community toward greater energy sovereignty on the path to a more just and clean energy future.

Solarize808 serves as a liaison, connecting families with reputable solar contractors to tap into the economic benefits of locally generated energy sources. The program is open to all O'ahu residents, though households in Wai'anae Moku and Ko'olauloa will be prioritized for initial participation.

Come talk story with Solarize808's organizers and partners at Christmas on the Avenue in Nānākuli, December 9, 2023, from 4-10 PM. They will also present more information about their campaign at a "Reduce Your Energy Burden Town Hall" graciously organized by Representative Darius Kila on December 11, 2023, from 6-7 PM on Zoom.

[Learn more about Solarize808!](#)



Kiana Otsuka, HSEO's former Active Transportation Specialist, presented transportation solutions for shift

workers at the recent Transportation Demand Management Forum hosted by the Association of Commuter Transportation.

Planning for Transportation Infrastructure and Services for People Who Work Evening and Early Morning Shifts

The HSEO presented on the “Pioneering Progress: Shaping the Future of Regional TDM Programs” panel at the Association of Commuter Transportation’s Transportation Demand Management Forum on November 2, 2023. The panel took place from 1:15-2:30 PM at the Sheraton Grand Los Angeles.

The HSEO discussed the Transportation Demand Management Project for Shift Workers, a collaborative effort with the Hawai’i Department of Health. The initiative aimed to pinpoint enhancements in current transportation infrastructure and services, specifically tailored to facilitate the commuting needs of shift workers. These individuals may not adhere to the typical Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM-5:00 PM schedule and may work during second or third shifts. The primary goal was to enhance the efficiency and reliability of their commute by promoting the use of low-energy-intensive modes of transportation.

[What is Transportation Demand Management \(TDM\)?](#)

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