

Earth Day Progress: Kaua'i Utility Cuts Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Līhu'e, Kaua'i, HI – 4/22/16 – Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative's use of renewable resources to replace oil-fired power generation will reduce the utility's greenhouse gas emissions to below 1990 levels this year.

With climate change a major concern on Earth Day 2016, KIUC is on a path to generate at least 50 percent of its electricity by using solar, biomass and hydroelectric resources. That will significantly reduce Kaua'i's contribution to emissions that are among the sources blamed for global warming.

Here are some highlights of KIUC's clean energy work:

- By replacing oil with renewables, the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) released by KIUC's power plants in 2016 is expected to fall to 225,000 tons, well below the 247,000 tons released in 1990.
- The two, 12-megawatt solar projects operated by KIUC in Anahola and Kōloa each reduce Kaua'i's carbon dioxide emissions by 18,000 tons per year.
- In the past five years, as more utility-scale solar has come online and conventional oil-fired generators are used less during the day, KIUC has reduced its power plant emissions by 26 percent.
- The Green Energy Team biomass plant replaces 3.7 million gallons of oil annually burned by KIUC. Its operations are carbon neutral. Planting and rotating thousands of the fast-growing trees that the plant uses for fuel will also help clean the air.
- Clean, renewable hydropower supplies 9 percent of the energy used on Kaua'i, an amount that is expected to increase to 13 percent by the end of the decade.

On Kaua'i, 38 percent of power generation comes from solar, biomass and hydro, with oil accounting for the rest.

By 2020, the cooperative plans to get at least 13 percent of its power from hydro, 26 percent from solar plus energy storage and 12 percent from biomass, with the rest coming from oil, gas or biofuels.

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