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From left: Miles Kubo, Executive Vice President of Energy Industries, LLC., Jim Dewey, energy manager at the University of California at Santa Barbra, Matthew St. Clair, Sustainability Specialist, University of California Office of the President, and David Waller, Vice President of Customer Solutions, HECO answer questions from attendees at the Chancellors Energy Summit held yesterday at Keoni Auditorium, East-West Center. Photo by Gabe El-Swaify • Ka Leo O Hawai'i

School dissects \$15M energy bill

\$3 million increase in 2007 would come from tuitions

By Justin Hedani
Ka Leo Senior Reporter
October 25, 2006

With the lack of conservation of both energy and resources, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa has spent over \$15 million on energy alone this year — some of which is

coming out of student tuition.

As a projected cost for 2007, interim Chancellor Denise Konan said that there will be a \$3 million increase, making next year's electricity bill an estimated \$18 million. Still, the university is paying considerably less than the average residential or commercial consumer, Konan said.

Being the largest energy consumer in the state of Hawai'i, following only the Army, Air Force and Navy, which are federal programs, UH Mānoa makes up about 30 percent of the state's energy expenditures.

Of the utilities being used on campus, much of the energy consumption is due to lighting, which makes about 30 percent, and HVAC, essentially air conditioning, which makes up about 50 percent.

Because funds for energy are coming out of tuition resources and because these costs can be lowered, Konan held an Energy Summit meeting yesterday addressing the issue of economic and natural sustainability.

Using common sense

Konan explained that there are two ways to minimize energy costs, adding that conservation was the first and most cost-effective way.

"[This involves] people making conscientious decisions about their



use of electricity,” she said, “and reducing their consumption of it.”

Konan said that student and faculty cooperation in doing simple tasks on campus could help maximize conservation.

“We should turn off the lights when the room is not in use” she said, “turn off our computer screens and other office equipment when they are not in use, close the door when the air conditioning is on.”

The second way to minimize costs is through efficiency.

“[We should] engineer our system to produce the same effect using less energy,” Konan said.

This means making UH buildings more energy efficient by making modifications to existing buildings and electrical systems.

LEED Greenbuilding

In addition to over-usage of lights and air conditioning, another big contributor to energy consumption is the construction and design of projects and buildings on campus. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) awards certification for newly constructed buildings that meet certain energy and resource-saving requirements.

Steve Meder, an assistant professor of architecture, said that all newly constructed buildings on the Mānoa campus will be of “LEED silver or better” caliber. LEED ratings are ranked in the following order, starting at the lowest: bronze, silver, gold and platinum.

A HECO partnership

Konan further states that the Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO) has been a strong supporter of sustainability on campus. HECO Vice President of Customer Solutions Dave Waller, explained different ways in which HECO plans to save energy not only at Mānoa, but for the entire island of O’ahu.

One such program, called “See the Light, Make the Change,” involves turning out 100,000 compact fluorescent lights by issuing rebates for using more energy-efficient alternatives.

With other energy savers, such as solar water heating and wind powered generators, Waller said that by using the UH Mānoa campus as an example of the effectiveness and realization of sustainability, HECO can positively influence the community.

“Hawaiian Electric is behind it 120 percent,” Waller said.

Konan agreed.

“We have made some strides today,” she said, “but we know we have a long way to go to achieve campus-wide energy efficiency.”

Saving power,saving money

For 2007, officials have projected that the annual energy bill for UH will increase from \$15 million to \$18 million. Some funds for paying it are taken directly from our tuition.

Here’s what you can do to help save your tuition money:

Conserve lighting (accounts for 30% of bill)

- Turn off lights when you leave the room
- Turn off computers and office appliances when not in use
- Exchange flourescent lights with energy savers

Conserve air conditioning (accounts for 50% of bill)

- Changing temperature wastes power; choose one comfortable setting
- Close the door when AC is on
- Use natural breezes when possible



School dissects \$15M energy bill

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