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A 'Superblock' group of building managers



World peace may be too much to ask for, but if Honolulu building managers can get along in the spirit of cooperation, who knows what might be possible.

"It wasn't always like this," says Duane Komine, general manager of Hokua and cover boy for this issue of *BMH*. "It used to be that when you had a problem, you were on your own."

Building managers, and their buildings, he says, looked at one another as competitors.

That was part of his inspiration for founding the "Superblock" group, which brings together building managers in the upscale Kakaakao area for talk story sessions.

Similarly, our story on the Moiliili Resident Managers Association—which has spread well outside of that

Oahu neighborhood—shows how much managers can benefit when they come together and share experiences, both good and not-so-good.

There's much more in this issue to help make your life as a building manager or owner easier, including expert opinions from local leaders in solar, paving, painting and railings.

Consider it our way of promoting the spirit of cooperation.

Mahalo,

Don Chapman

Editor

Building Management Hawaii



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Hawaiiana Management Company Reports Strong Midyear Results



Hawaiiana Management Company, Hawaii's largest condominium association and HOA management company, reports a strong mid-year 2017 and is poised for continued success in the future.

Nineteen existing condominium associations and HOAs switched management of their communities to Hawaiiana during the first half of 2017. Additionally, the award-winning kama'aina company has been contracted for management of another 65 residential, commercial and resort associations under development.

New Hawaiiana clients include The Hawaii Times Building commercial condominium (Oahu), Makana Aloha Plantation HOA (Big Island), Ho'olei at Grand Wailea (Maui) and Waikomo Stream Villas (Kauai).

New Developments under construction which have contracted with Hawaiiana include APC Development



Hawaiiana recently held an educational seminar for association board members, covering topics such as budgets, insurance and legal issues. The seminar was attended by over 350 board members.

Partners' Aloha Pacific Center commercial condominium; Stanford Carr Development's Kahoma Village condominium association (Maui); DR Horton Hawaii's two new developments Ho'oluana at Koheha Loa condominium association and Koheha Loa Homeowners Association (Kauai); and West Point Investment Corporation's two

new developments Hapuna Beach Residences condominium and Hapuna Estates at Mauna Kea community association (Big Island).

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Hawaiiana was recently selected as managing agent for the historic Hawaii Times building, a commercial condominium, located in downtown Honolulu.



The MRMA 'Club' for Resident Managers

It's 'the place to get the news hot off the press,' say members

By Don Chapman

It started in the late 1990s with three building managers in the Moiliili area of Oahu gathering for a brown-bag lunch to socialize and talk about mutual concerns. Thus was born the Moiliili Resident Managers Association (MRMA).

Today, membership numbers about 200 and stretches far from the neighborhood of Moiliili.

"I was there from the beginning," says Donna Edwards. "Mike Venable's wife would make sandwiches and bring some soda pop. It was interesting because the only people were building managers. It was like therapy, a support group."

Venable, the late resident manager at Hale Kulanui condo, was a driving force in the early days.

"We represent," he said, "a community of citizens whose lives can be peaceful, secure and without the daily hassles of life outside the community in which they live. The ultimate outcome is in the hands of the resident manager, no one else."

Venable and the other founders of MRMA also had owners in mind: "Their investment is ultimately determined by the everyday habits of the resident manager."

"Mike liked to say that MRMA is a 'community outreach program,'" says Ben Merritt, another early MRMA joiner who today is general manager of Harbor Square downtown.

Merritt, by the way, is a retired Navy nuclear engineer.



Donna Edwards has a passion for building management and horses.

"If you have a problem, somebody else has probably had the same problem and can help."

"People ask me if there is any carry-over from that job to managing a condo, and I always say yes, it's all facilities-oriented. "A condo is basically just an up-

side-down submarine, and that's the way I treat 'em."

Edwards, who came to Honolulu from Memphis, started out at 1555



Ben Merritt

Pohaku in Kalihi, moved on to Nuuanu Brookside (where she was named IREM manager of the year) and today runs things at the Sovereign on Bere-tania. She credits much of her growth and success to MRMA membership.

“When it first started, I was one of the few females—they called me Elly May, like Elly May Clampett from *The Beverly Hillbillies*—and I was fortunate that some of the more experienced male managers took me under their wing.

“Over the years, it’s been a lot of networking with good people. It’s kind of like a club. And if you’re interested in changing buildings, this is the place to get the news hot off the press (when an opening occurs). And if I have a problem, there are all these people I can call.”

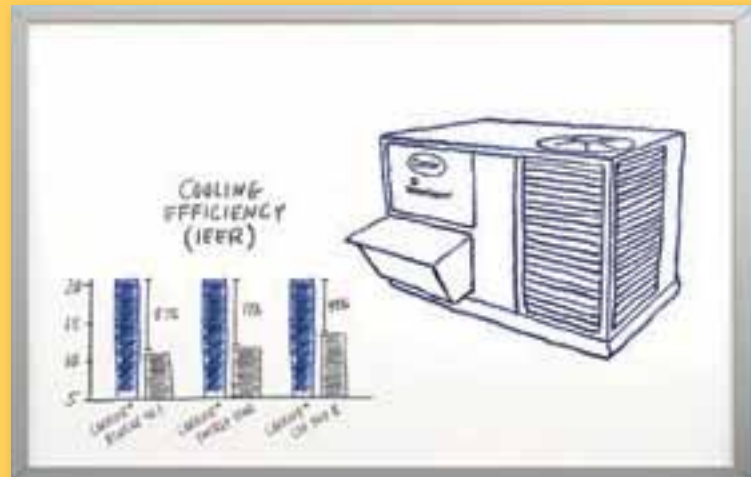
“If you have a problem,” adds Merritt, “somebody else has probably had the same problem and can help. I’ve gained a lot of experience because of the knowledge of MRMA members.”

And woe to the vendor who draws the ire of one MRMA member. “The word gets around real quick, who does a good job and who doesn’t,” says Edwards, a horsewoman who has been a *pa’u* parade rider. And from the beginning, MRMA has cultivated a close relationship with the Honolulu Police Department, as well as the mayor’s office.

MRMA meets every third Thursday of the month at the Waikiki Yacht Club for lunch, the cost picked up by a long list of preferred vendors.

“We always have a good time and learn a lot,” says Edwards.

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Railing Replacement Can be Challenging, Necessary, and Fun



Abel Libisch

BY ABEL LIBISCH

Remodeling a half-century-old building is always a challenge. Keeping an original structure that was built in a different era with different demands, while restoring it to compete with the brand new neighboring resorts is not an easy thing to do. Bringing the railings into compliance with the latest building codes adds to the challenge.

“When talking about railings, we need to make a distinction between guardrails and handrails.”



When talking about railings, we need to make a distinction between guardrails and handrails. While guardrails are a life-safety preventative measure, handrails need to be recognized as a separate component, installed to assist people with walking up and down stairs.

When replacing the railings on an older building, we first focus mainly on the guardrails, as they are critical for the safety of the building. After spending decades exposed to Hawaii’s climate, most of the older steel and aluminum railings on the Islands are badly corroded or damaged, and therefore cannot be

repaired. Regularly cleaned and painted railings may look safe, but corrosion often hides under the fresh paint. Regular inspection of older guardrails should be mandatory.

Another problem with older railings is that they are no longer in compliance with the latest building codes. Hotels and condominiums built in the 1960s and ’70s frequently have 36-inch-tall guardrails, with openings greater than four inches between railing components. Replacing the railings on an older building usually changes the appearance of the building, as the new codes call for a minimum height of 42 inches on guard-

rails, with all openings less than four inches. Working closely with architects, engineers and the building department is crucial to find the best options to comply with the latest building codes, while trying to keep the appearance of the building as close to the original as possible.

An interesting feature of older buildings is that they commonly don’t have handrails installed at open staircases. Handrails are generally installed at a height of 36-inches and their shape and size should be comfortable for the human hand. When replacing an older, 36-inch-tall guardrail with a new, code-compliant 42-inch-tall guardrail,



an additional 36 inch tall handrail needs to be installed at staircases. Handrails must be continuous for the full length of a flight of stairs and must have 12-inch extensions in the direction of travel at the top and bottom of the staircase. There must also be a minimum distance of 1.5 inches between the handrails and walls or guardrails, called "knuckle clearance." A common problem with older buildings is that they were not designed to have separate handrails installed. This leads to staircases becoming too narrow once the new railing system is in place. Clear width of a staircase is a critical factor as they serve as fire escape routes and cannot be less than three feet wide.

As a solution, changing the design of the guardrails may become necessary. For example, core-mounted railings may be replaced with side-mounted railings, which will create additional space on the staircase. These dramatic changes to the building's appearance will always need to be approved by the building department. Every older building has its own history and might hold unique challenges, which we simply cannot be prepared for. That is what makes railing replacement fun!

Abel Libisch, Architect and Project Engineer at Elite Railings & Windows, Hawaii's most respected supplier and installer of aluminum railings and windows for condominium and commercial installations. Working alongside architects, engineers and consultants helps us remain at the forefront of technology by utilizing state-of-the-art products, materials and techniques available for all types of railing and window installations.



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Railings: Too Often Ignored



Damien Enright

With the unfortunate incident that took place recently at one of our local shopping centers, guardrails and the condition of our railing systems here in Hawaii is a topic that has come and should be front and center.

A properly designed guardrail system is there to protect a person, large or small, from falling over an edge or drop-off. Many times, it is the only barrier out on a lanai preventing a small child from falling tens or hundreds of feet. It is a scary thought, isn't it? But for some reason guardrails are one of the last things that are considered when it comes to properly servicing and maintaining our buildings.

It has always puzzled me to see priorities put on various things such as lobby renovation projects, PV systems, even big landscaping or painting projects, but very rarely are property managers, building owners and board members mandating that their railings be inspected, and failing railings to be safely replaced.

I hear it all the time that the proper monies were not set aside within the reserves for replacing the railing system, and so when pickets and posts start to wobble loose, owners and boards of directors are left stuck. With funds not in place, and a natural fear of talking about assessments or loans, band-aids are a typical solution to get the boards/owners just a few more years out of the current rail system.

The railings on a building, along with the concrete the railings are attached to, are two of the most important items that boards need to monitor and maintain in order to minimize liability—and more importantly prevent future accidents.



“For some reason guardrails are one of the last things that are considered when it comes to properly servicing and maintaining our buildings.”

Here are a several simple questions that every manager/owner should ask themselves:

1. Have my building's rails been inspected within the last one to three years? If not, why not?
2. Have there been any band-aid fixes or spot repairs completed on my rails within the last three to five years? If so, were they designed by an engineer or architect? Have they been inspected since installation? How about the rest of the rails?
3. If my railings are over 10 years old, have funds for railing replacement been included in my reserve study?
4. What am I doing as a manager to ensure that my property's rails are in good working order?

Being proactive with your guardrails can not only protect against someone getting hurt, or worse, but it can save a building from going through an unforeseen financial crisis when the inevitable hits and the railings start to fail.

Railings need to be inspected by a qualified person every few years. This is good practice and should be a general rule of thumb for every building. Thinking long term when it comes to life safety will not only help you plan better for the future, it is also good for our community.

Damien Enright is president and RME of Structural Systems, a railing replacement and spalling repair contractor. He is a director for the SEAOK and a member of AIA, ASCE, AIA, BIA and ICRI (International Concrete Repair Institute),



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HAWAII'S SPALL REPAIR AND RAILING EXPERTS

Good Prep, Great Painting

By Karl Van Zandt

What you need to know about painting for superb results

“The prep is the most important part.”

This phrase is used so often in the painting industry that it’s become a cliché. But what does that mean, exactly? The combination of sun, wind, rain and salt air work to continuously attack and break down paint coatings. To give paint the best chance to function properly as a protective coating, it must be able to strongly adhere to the surface

it’s applied to, known as the substrate. Substrates vary according to building construction. Some common types for Hawaii are wood siding and trim, cementitious planks and siding (hardiplank siding),



Karl Van Zandt

poured concrete, CMU block (locally known as hollow tile), and stucco or EIFS artificial stucco (known by its most common brand name, STO). The preparation required for proper adhesion of paint coatings varies, depending upon which substrate, and what existing conditions, are present.

General Surface Preparation

General surface preparation includes cleaning, scraping, caulking, patching, rust treatment, sanding and priming/sealing. Cleaning and scraping are obviously important because dirt and debris or loose old paint on the substrate will guarantee early paint failure by getting between the paint and the substrate, preventing a bond. Chalking is a common condition of aged paint, and happens when the paint film breaks down and pigments are exposed on the surface like dust.



Flaking rust corrosion needs to be removed and the remaining rust treated and sealed with special primers to help prevent further rust. Concrete, stucco, EIFS and CMU Block all have a cementitious composition, and water can leach through these materials, bringing minerals to the surface that break the paint bond. This is known as efflorescence. Any loose contaminants on the surface can prevent a proper adhesion of your paint coating.

Existing glossy surfaces, especially oil-based paint films, will also resist good adhesion and will need either sanding or primer, or a combination of both. Caulking is needed to seal cracks to prevent water intrusion into the substrate where it will escape back to the surface and create bonding issues. Rot or termite damaged areas will require proper excavation of rotted material, hardener and sealing of the cavity, and patching with Bondo or other filler materials. Many of these issues will be present on a single project to be painted, and proper surface prep

will address all existing conditions in preparation for coating.

Primers

Once the surfaces are properly cleaned and prepped, a primer may be required. There are as many different primers as paints, and they each have unique purposes. Either your paint contractor or your paint store representatives should be able to help direct you to the appropriate primer for your project. As a general rule, oil-based primers are best as a penetrating sealer for bare wood substrates. Oil-based primers have a superior bonding that makes them good for glossy surfaces, and they are usually required for existing oil-based surfaces. Because they are primers, once cured they can be coated with water-based finish paints by design.

Latex or acrylic primers are good for a variety of uses, and generally work well over previously painted surfaces. Because they are water-based,

they don't penetrate as well into bare wood which usually has some residual moisture that can work against the bonding of a water-based primer. Bare concrete or cementitious substrates are primed with special masonry primers or conditioners that can neutralize the high pH levels of these substrates, and fill their porous surfaces to properly seal them. These primers are typically water-based. Specialized rust primers or metal primers are formulated with anti-corrosive properties to protect metal from future corrosion.

For previously coated surfaces in decent shape, often a primer is not needed, as the existing coating is already sealing the substrate, especially when using a premium finish that is sold as a "paint and primer in one." Just make sure the surface is clean, sound (adhering well) and not too glossy. Bare substrates that have never been coated with paint should almost always be sealed first with an appropriate primer.

Commercial applications dealing with large areas of concrete, CMU block or stucco, or horizontal areas (ledges, wall caps, eyebrows) may need to have

an elastomeric intermediate coat. This intermediate coat will act as a waterproofing to prevent moisture seeping into the substrate to cause issues. Elastomeric paints are rubberized coatings that will also help bridge small cracks that sometimes appear in large areas of concrete, block and stucco. These coatings require professional application to ensure they perform properly. They are not recommended for wood surfaces as residual moisture in wood wants to escape as vapor, and the elastomeric can trap that vapor, creating a bonding issue.

If the various primers and substrates are confusing, a paint store representative can create a recommended specification for your project, using a combination of their primers and finish paints. These specifications are usually created for larger commercial projects, but can be created for smaller residential projects as well.

Ongoing Maintenance

Once your project is painted, you can maintain it best by regularly checking horizontal areas where water pools,

especially at windowsills and other trim areas. Areas without proper drip edges at the bottom of siding or other overhangs will tend to wick moisture into the substrate and create rot issues in wood, or efflorescence in concrete. Joints between different material substrates are another area to check as the varying materials expand and contract at different rates, opening cracks that can let in moisture. The "weather side" of your building that receives the most sun and rain will usually show wear and failures first. Regular inspections, especially of these trouble-prone areas will help you keep on top of small issues so they don't become big issues, and can help extend the durability of your paint system by years.

Karl Van Zandt is the owner/RME of CertaPro Painters of Hawaii and has managed the painting of hundreds of Oahu's residential and commercial buildings over the last decade. Under his leadership, the painter crews at CertaPro Hawaii have earned numerous awards for quality and service and maintained a 99 percent customer referral rating.



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Nick Sonoda

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Sometimes people ask, what is the best paint? Or, who makes the best paint? Those questions have more answers than most can imagine. I think the better question is, “What is the best paint for my specific situation?”

Have you ever wondered why paint manufacturers make so many different paints? It’s because each situation is different, and each product is engineered to perform in a different way. You wouldn’t tow a trailer with a Ferrari or try to drag-race a semi-truck . . . well, some might, but things usually work better when you use things as they were intended.

Selecting the proper paint for the job is by far the most important step when selecting an exterior paint for your building. Every now and then, someone will use a paint and absolutely love it—so much that their ambition takes over and they start painting everything with it. Sooner or later, they start seeing issues in certain areas, and before you know it the paint they loved a few months ago is now the worst paint ever! Without knowing it, they metaphorically towed a 40-foot container with their Ferrari, and now the brakes are failing and the motor’s about to blow up.

Looking at all the different options for exterior

paints can make someone crazy! There are hundreds of exterior products available and in stock right here in Hawaii, not to mention the countless others if you are willing to make special orders. It is simply not feasible for a building manager or board of directors to research that many options. The best way to go about this is to seek advice from a paint manufacturer, construction consultant, architect or engineer. When seeking advice from a paint retailer, I would recommend requesting an outside field representative, preferably one who has been around for a while. They can walk your property, talk about your expectations and ensure you get the right recommendation.

Now that you have a paint rep or other knowledgeable source coming to see you at your property, start thinking of exactly what your goals are for the

project. Are there areas that have been prone to excessive concrete spalling? Does water penetrate into the building in any area? How long do you want the paint job to last? What about your color scheme? Are there any unusual circumstances? Are there any existing paint issues? Voicing all your concerns will all help your expert come up with a plan.

After you explain what you want, and the expert comes up with a recommendation, the next question is always, how much does it cost? Another loaded question! Most people ask for cost, but only hear the price. What does that mean? The cost includes the real value of a product/service. If you can finish a paint job in one day instead of two, the cost savings of an entire day of labor is tremendous even if the price of the paint is twice as much. In addition to the labor savings, you typically gain several beneficial product attributes as well. That \$50/gallon of paint starts looking better when thinking of it that way, doesn’t it?

If you are contracting the work out to a painter, the logic remains the same in terms of product selection. Typical construction projects are usually 80 percent labor and 20 percent material costs. Say you have a contract to repaint your building for \$80,000; material costs based on this ratio would be \$16,000. After reading this, you’re now thinking you should upgrade the materials from a conventional acrylic paint to a super-premium product, but the new product costs 50 percent more. This would take the contract price up by \$8,000 or 10 percent.



See 'EXTERIOR' on page 23

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Avoid Painting on Moist Surfaces or in Bad Weather



Sheldon Ibara

For those people who have been the unfortunate recipients of a poor quality paint job, the experience can be very unpleasant as there is nothing more frustrating than to have a fresh coat of paint peel off in sheets. As any paint professional will tell you, proper surface preparation is the key to any successful painting project. Maintaining a surface that is dry and clean, and having the proper profile to accept a good quality primer, are the optimum conditions needed to avoid adhesion problems in painting.

Painting over a surface that is damp or even slightly wet can have detrimental consequences. As moisture is trapped under the paint film, and the affected areas are exposed to direct sunlight, moisture is drawn to the surface, causing blistering to occur. At this point, the normal recourse is to cut open the blisters and to allow the areas to dry completely before painting over again.

While it may be difficult to accurately predict the weather 24 hours in advance, the use of an early moisture resistance paint may be a product to

consider, especially in areas that are more susceptible to rain. Most major paint manufacturers today have such a product that helps the paint to cure and resist blistering when exposed to a light mist or morning. Obviously painting should be avoided if adverse weather conditions are expected.

While maintaining a dry surface is important, ensuring a clean surface is just as crucial in avoiding adhesion issues. Far too often adhesion failures occur because the surface was not free of contamination prior to material application. Most water-based cleaners/

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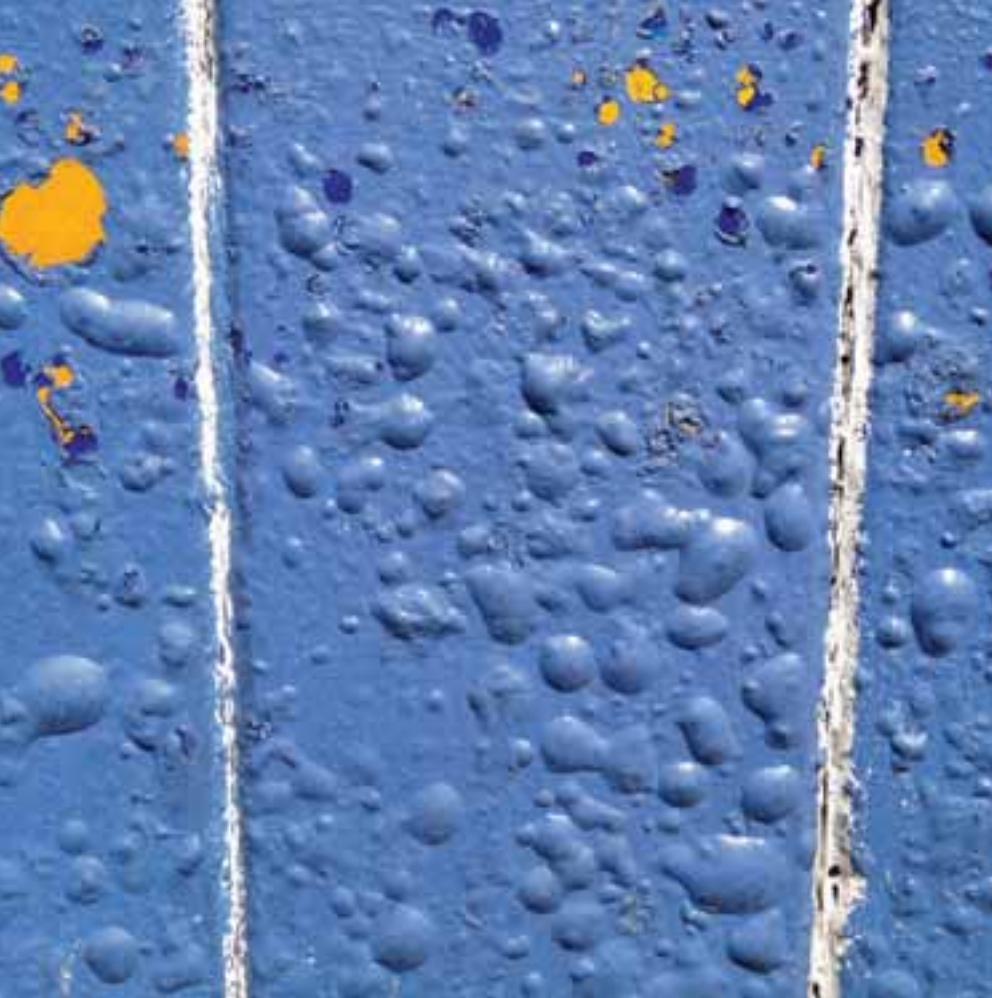
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degreasers on the market today are suitable to remove dirt, dust, soot, salt deposits, minor grease and oil stains. At times, it may be necessary to use a heavy duty cleaner to address contamination that is more persistent. Paint manufacturers typically recommend using a cleaner that contains the same solvent composition as the primer. For example, using a water-based cleaner would be recommended if the primer is water-based. Similarly, using a solvent-based cleaner (thinner/reducer) would be best if the primer is solvent-based.

Once a surface is clean, sanding may be necessary to remove the gloss from a surface and to allow for better adhesion of the primer coat. One should keep in mind that if an existing surface has residues from a cleaner, polish or wax, and it is sanded, these contaminants may unintentionally be pushed further into the substrate, thereby creating a surface that has the potential for adhesion issues. In this situation, the use of a liquid deglosser, sometimes referred to as liquid sandpaper, is recommended to remove the gloss and, at the same time, clean the surface of any contaminants.

"While maintaining a dry surface is important, ensuring a clean surface is just as crucial in avoiding adhesion issues."

While sanding does help to prepare a surface for painting, there are situations where more aggressive means are

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necessary to create the profile required for the primer coat to bond to. Chemical etching or mechanical abrasion are often needed when preparing a concrete floor for coating or when painting a metal substrate that is intended for heavy use. Typically for residential and light commercial applications, if the profile created resembles 80-grit sandpaper, then the surface should be ready for priming.

Selecting an appropriate primer is critical for the proper adhesion of the finish coat. Within the last few years, “paint and primer in one” products have become more prevalent in paint and home improvements stores. While these products are typically good quality, 100 percent acrylic paints, one should consider if the priming features of these products are best suited for the intended application. For instance, using a “paint and primer in one” would be fine on a wall that is being repainted the same color, is free of surface contamination and has very minor surface imperfections. Using the same product on a concrete wall that is chalky or has a high pH level, however, would not be the best option. In these situations,



using a separate primer designed to address specific surface conditions should be considered. Most major paint manufacturers have concrete/masonry primers that are specifically made to have better adhesion to chalk residue or have the ability to seal the alkalinity in new concrete, thereby preventing “burning” or blemishing of the paint film to occur. Once the primer coat is fully dried and adhesion is confirmed, then the finish coat can be applied.

Creating and maintaining a surface that has been properly prepared for

priming and painting is critical at the onset of every job. Only by minimizing the chances of adhesion problems due to improper surface preparation will you help to ensure that your next painting project is a success.

Sheldon Ibara is Business Development Manager for JD Painting & Decorating, Inc. and began his career in the paint industry in 1998. For further inquiries, please call 841-7100 or send an e-mail to sheldon@jdpainting.com.

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EXTERIOR

Continued from page 16

Now let us consider the old product would have lasted seven or eight years and the new super-premium will last 10 to 11 years. That 10 percent increase in your total price just gave you a lifespan increase of 43 percent! Not only do you save money in the long run, you have residents who are not being inconvenienced by another construction project sooner than necessary.

The super-premium products now available on the market are, without doubt, some of the best seen in a very long time. They can be formulated to have great UV resistance, abrasion resistance, flexibility and the ability to clean easily. They also have great sealing properties and many other important characteristics. As each manufacturer develops their own proprietary resins and colorant systems, they are in constant competition to create the best products possible for each situation. Today's consumers are now seeing the benefits of this new technology with longer lasting paints, more vibrant colors that last, and paints that are much easier and safer to apply than in years past.

When speaking to your chosen expert, challenge them with questions. What makes product A better than product B? Why is that important? What limitations does your product have? Where have you used this system/product in the past? How long do you expect this paint job to last? Ask anything else you might be curious about. After all, it's our job to answer questions like these and address concerns. Don't be afraid to get a second opinion either, but if you get conflicting information, you might seek the advice of someone who doesn't have anything to lose or gain from the project.

Remember, the best paint used in the wrong place doesn't do any good. Seek the advice of a professional and follow it to the best of your ability.

Nick Sonoda is the area sales manager for Benjamin Moore in Hawaii. He has nine years of industry experience and enjoys helping people regain a better understanding of paint and why it's so important.



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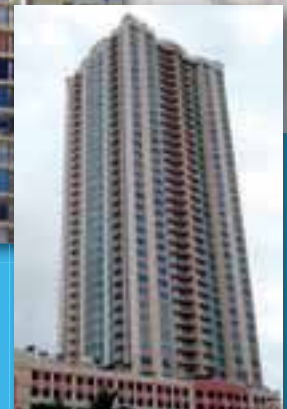
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Maintaining, Protecting and Preserving Your Asphalt Pavement



Kia Kamaau

Asphalt pavement maintenance may not seem as sexy as the latest landscaping trends, the look and savings from new LED lighting, or how much your new solar array is going to do for you. But maintaining your pavement should not be overlooked when implementing strategies to increase curb appeal and reduce maintenance costs. If you want to create something beautiful and find savings at the same time, look no further than the pavement that has been right in front of you this whole time. This article will give you a brief overview of the necessity of pavement maintenance and four things that you must have in any successful pavement maintenance plan.

Without maintenance, anything will wear out over time, and the more worn out things get, the more expensive they are to replace. Asphalt pavement is a simple blend of two main components, molten liquid asphalt and crushed rock or aggregate. In Hawaii, we have the best weather, but the combination of sun and moisture takes its toll on pavement. As asphalt ages and is exposed to heat and ultraviolet sunlight, it becomes more brittle or oxidized, leading to cracking and deterioration. Moisture penetrating into the underlying base structure can cause larger cracking, potholes, rutting, ravelin and loss of structural strength. Chemicals such as those in oil and gasoline can also soften and erode your asphalt. Maintenance over time is more cost effective and extends the life of your pavement. Think of your pavement like your vehicle—would you rather replace the engine every few thousand miles or the oil?

The top four things your pavement maintenance plan should include are crack filling, pothole repair, sealcoating, and line striping. A maintenance sched-



“The top four things your pavement maintenance plan should include are crack filling, pothole repair, sealcoating, and line striping.”

ule that includes these four things will more than double the life cycle of your pavement while giving you maximum curb appeal.

Cracks in your pavement come

from two main sources. First is from base erosion. This happens when the base settles under the asphalt, causing cracking from beneath that eventually surfaces. Second, and the most common, is from the sun, as mentioned above. Filling cracks immediately will help reduce the risk of larger problems and expenses later. There are multiple products on the market to fill cracks and they each serve different purposes. If you call a place to purchase pavement crack fillers, be prepared to give them information on how wide, deep and long your cracks are, along with the type of surface you are repairing. And if you are asking them for a recommendation via email, include some pictures as well.

Potholes occur when cracks are not repaired soon enough and most can be repaired easily with a pothole patch product and a tamper.

Sealcoating periodically with a pavement sealer should be at the center of an effective pavement maintenance program. Once you have filled cracks and potholes, or after your new pavement has cured, you should add a sealcoat layer. A properly applied sealcoat covers your pavement, becoming a protective wear layer that stops water penetration and is resistant to oil and gasoline. Sealcoats can be applied every few years at a fraction of the cost of repairing or replacing your asphalt pavement. Sealcoat is like the case you buy to protect your cell phone from wear and tear. We would much rather replace a cell phone case a few times than bearing the full cost of a new phone replacement. Now apply that same rationale to your pavement by buying a less expensive sealcoat layer to protect your investment and reduce the need for additional maintenance cost.

See ‘ASPHALT’ on page 29

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Re-Surfacing: What Does It Really Mean?

By Chris R. Laird

Paving contractors are often asked by property managers and owners to resurface asphalt areas such as parking lots. What does that really mean? Does it mean a complete asphalt re-construction or an asphalt overlay or simply some asphalt repairs along with a sealcoat? This article will hopefully answer these questions while providing some competent information for owners and property managers to base their important financial decisions on.

Here's a brief breakdown of the three re-surfacing scenarios.

1) Your asphalt parking lot or area has the following conditions:

- Cracked or “alligatored” areas that have what appears to be a white dusty material coming out of them.
- Cracked and “alligatored” areas that cover the majority of your asphalt lot.
- A significant amount of potholes.
- A large amount of rock debris that has come off of the parking lot and is collected throughout the lot.

If these conditions exist, plan on an asphalt re-construction of your parking lot. This involves the complete removal of the existing asphalt down to the base course. Sometimes even the base course will need to be re-conditioned along with new base course and re-compacted to maximum density. Then paved with hot asphalt and compacted for a new parking lot. Out of the three options listed above, asphalt re-construction tends to cost the most, but it gives the owner the best long-term solution and in a lot of cases does not have too much of a cost differential from the other options.



2) Your asphalt parking lot has the following conditions:

- Asphalt is in decent shape but has a lot of loose rock and debris on it from wear and tear.
- Small amounts of cracking and “alligatored” areas exist but are a small percentage of the total lot area.

Your lot may be a candidate for an asphalt overlay. Basically, the existing asphalt surface will be cleaned off of all loose debris and dirt, then tack coat or SS-1H will be uniformly applied to help with the bonding of the old surface to the new one. After this is done, the new layer of asphalt will be paved and compacted in place. Asphalt overlay is a cheaper way to get a new surface look and feel, but owners must be aware that an overlay can change the original flow of water and cause ponding where it did not exist before. Plus, there will be a change in height elevation of the new surface.

3) Your asphalt parking lot has the following conditions:

- Asphalt is in good shape and has minimal wear and tear.

- Small amounts of asphalt areas need repair.

Then your lot is a good candidate for a sealcoat. Sealcoating helps preserve your asphalt and stretch out its life by giving it a new wearable surface and “lock-in” rock from being turned out by vehicles and heavy traffic. We always recommend it within a year of a new paving job to help it last as long as it possibly can. When seal coating is done on a regular maintained schedule, the results and longevity of the asphalt is significantly increased.

Now is the part of the article for property managers and owners where they really need to internalize the following information. What will you get when you tell three bidders (asphalt contractors) to bid on re-surfacing your parking lot? If you are not specific, we can guarantee you will get a mixture of all three of these scenarios. It has become very common for us to see this happen and the wrong application ends up being done to the property because the most inexpensive (cheapest) contractor gets the job but does not have the correct equipment or knowledge to






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do the project and bids it based upon what they can only do instead of giving the customer what is the right application. It is imperative for property managers and owners to be crystal clear about what they want and ask the correct questions, such as:

- What is the scope of work you plan on implementing? Compare all bids based on scope.
- Ask why each contractor has a different solution to the re-surfacing!
- Do you have the proper equipment to do the project?
- How much experience does your company have doing this?
- Is your company licensed for this type of work?
- Provide a timeline for the project along with a schedule.
- How long will this last?
- What do you recommend for proper maintenance?

Armed with this knowledge, property managers and owners can get more detailed answers to a broad request and in turn make a much more informed decision that will benefit their assets.

Chris R. Laird is President and RME for DC Asphalt Services, which specializes in all asphalt and concrete work. He has been actively involved in the asphalt industry for the last 20 years. Additional information about the company can be found on its Facebook page and at www.dcasphalthawaii.com.



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How Important Are Asphalt Consultants?



Jon Young

Do it yourself (DIY) or hire a consultant? That is the question asked by many property and facility managers when it comes to taking care of their asphalt parking lots.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Can I make an evaluation of the pavement condition?
- Am I familiar with the applicable rules, regulations and standards?
- Do I know what paving and maintenance options are available?
- Do I know how to make a bid package of plans and specifications?
- Am I familiar with construction permits needed and typical practices?

It's a DIY project if your answer to the above questions is a "yes," but if most of your responses are a "no," it may be time you consider hiring a professional civil engineering company as your consultant.

Property and facility managers need to maintain or improve their parking lot for the comfort and use of their tenants or customers. Often, they request contractors to bid on their job without any plans or specifications. This process typically results in the bidders having different interpretations of the scope of work. The submitted bids end up having very different quantities and costs, making it difficult for a manager to determine which bid will give them the results they desire.

As part of their services, a consultant can:

- Evaluate the existing pavement deficiencies and determine the appropriate repair.
- Determine if the pavement needs to have a surface treatment applied



or the lot repaved.

- Help the manager to prepare a clearly defined scope of work that balances the options for improvements within the available funding.
- Discuss construction phasing of the project to minimize the effect on the occupants of the facility.
- Prepare a set of plans and specifications that contractors can use to estimate their work, resulting in comparable bids.
- Inform the manager of the required permits and provide help and guidance for obtaining them.
- Review the bids for compliance to the plans and specifications.
- Assist during the construction to see that the work is in general conformance with the plans and specifications.

If you decide to hire a consultant, how do you find one? A couple of suggestions for finding a consultant are: 1) ask other managers who they have used for their facilities, and 2) check with the Hawaii Asphalt Paving Industry for their list of consultant members who have experience with the design and construction of parking lots.

Before you select a consultant, you may want to discuss your project with two or three companies to gain an under-

standing of their approach to solving your situation. Select the consultant who has the best understanding of your needs and has the qualifications to provide the services needed for the project. Based on these criteria, the selected consultant may not have the lowest fee, but will strive to design a quality project that will save money not only during design and construction, but over the life of the project. Most importantly, select a consultant that you feel comfortable working with.

If you are unfamiliar with the requirements of the design and construction process, please consider hiring a consultant to help you. A consultant will act as your expert on parking lot improvements, and will work with you to achieve your goals for the project with considerations of your schedule and budget. Best of all, a consultant will help to ensure the result of your project matches your expectations and is something you can be proud of.

Jon Young is the executive director of the Hawaii Asphalt Paving Industry (HAPI). His previous work experience includes being a senior project manager at Belt Collins Hawaii, an engineering design consulting firm, and a site design and construction manager at Gentry Homes Ltd.

ASPHALT

Continued from page 24

The beautifying effect of a new road or parking lot will do wonders for the look of your property. A proper sealcoat should give you a nice new deep black look. Your ugly duckling can become a swan.

Line striping usually is the most noticeable part of a newly sealed or paved area because the bright colors really pop on top of the deep black surface. Because of this, a poor striping job will also really stick out, so it is important the workmanship and products used in the striping process be of the same high quality as the sealcoating job.

As a property manager, you take pride in making certain your properties are adequately maintained. From buildings to grounds, your level of commitment to maintenance reflects in your property's image. Your roads and parking lots are the "welcome mat" to your property, it is the first impression customers and tenants



see when they arrive. Does your pavement project a neat professional image?

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maintenance product provider in the State of Hawaii. Specializing in product testing, he has a strong understanding of how to optimally specify various products in different applications of a pavement-maintenance strategy.

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The Benefits of Solar for Condos and Townhouses



Gail Slawson-Eich

Condo and townhouse owners too often think they are out of luck when it comes to enjoying the benefits of solar. In many cases, this couldn't be farther from the truth. So what's stopping your community from going solar? It could be the high up-front costs, inability to take advantage of tax credits, not enough roof space, or not understanding the financing options available. These are all valid concerns that I will address.

Let's start with the basics. A photovoltaic (PV) solar system for a condominium complex would typically include state-of-the-art solar panels with 25-year warranties, inverters that convert DC to AC electricity, battery storage and system monitoring.

Installing a PV solar system has two huge benefits. It lowers your monthly electricity bill, plus it reduces your carbon footprint. Acquiring, transporting and burning fossil fuels to power our lives is costly and it pollutes our precious environment. Switching to a renewable energy, powered by the sun, ensures a sustainable and bright future for our children and grandchildren.

So how do you take advantage of the benefits of solar when upfront costs are so high and when most associations can't take advantage of tax credits? It's simple: with a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). So what is a PPA? It's a financial agreement between you and a solar energy developer, where the developer pays for and installs a PV solar system on your property, and you agree to purchase the energy produced by the system at a significantly lower rate than the local utility company.

PPAs are typically 20-year contracts with either a fixed or agreed-upon adjustable rate. The best part is that the



"If you have a roof that needs replacing within 15 years, the solar energy developer will likely insist that your roof be replaced now, and typically they'll pay for most or all of it."

developer pays for the system, maintains the equipment and ensures the performance of the system over the life of the contract, so you don't have to worry about a thing.

What happens at the end of the 20-year PPA contract? PV systems are designed to last more than 25 years, so there is still plenty of performance capability left at the end of the contract. The developer usually offers the building owners three options at the end of the contract.

1. You can have the PV system removed at no cost to you.
2. You can continue and/or renegotiate the PPA contract.
3. You can buy the PV system from the developer.

What if you have an old roof that needs replacing or limited roof space? This is so exciting I can't wait to tell you about it! If you have a roof that needs replacing within 15 years, the solar

energy developer will likely insist that your roof be replaced now, and typically they'll pay for most or all of it. That's right, the developer will pay for your new roof. This means you can shift the reserve money you have earmarked for a new roof to something else. I have an idea, why not invest those new-found funds into installing energy efficient LED lighting throughout the property? This would further increase your energy cost savings and reduce your environmental impact on the planet.

What if you don't have enough roof space for solar? Unfortunately many condo complexes have this problem. I suggest you take a look at your parking and other common areas that could benefit from shading. Tastefully designed structures to support solar panels can be erected almost anywhere on your property. Tenants will love, and even pay more, for a covered parking stall.

Now what about those tax credits? If your building is owned by a profit-generating and/or taxable entity, then by all means purchase a solar system outright and enjoy the tax credits.

Owning your own system is the best investment and will save you the most money in the long run, but you will have upfront costs. Most AOA's are not-for-profit and therefore don't qualify for solar tax credits. Most solar developers and their investors have lots of tax liabilities and love, love, love profit-generating investments with tax credits. With a PPA, developers invest money up front and enjoy returns for years to come, while property owners invest little to no money upfront and enjoy savings for years to come. It's a win-win situation. Who could ask for anything more?

The Benefits of a Solar Power Purchase Agreement:

- Little or no upfront cost. The developer usually pays for everything.
- Reduced energy costs, typically 10-30 percent below the local utility rate.
- Helps the planet by reducing your carbon footprint.
- Hedges against inflation by offering either a fixed PPA rate or known incremental rate adjustments. Local utility energy rates can increase more than 5 percent per year.
- Limits risk. The developer is responsible for maintenance and performance of the system.
- Better leverage of tax credits. The developer and/or their investors own the system and are better positioned to take advantage of available tax credits. AOA's are not.
- Increases the property value. Lower energy costs equal increased property value.
- Don't forget about the free re-roofing!

Gail Slawson-Eich, MBA, managing director of OceanHead Solar & Electric, an electrical contracting company specializing in solar and energy efficiency. She has worked in the technology and construction industry in Hawaii for nearly 20 years. She received her MBA from UH's Shidler College of Business.



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A Case for Solar-Powered Air Conditioning in Hawaii

By Joe Awong Jr.

Utility rates here in the Islands aren't getting any cheaper, and we have learned how to heat our water with a solar water heating system because of that. Now we have applied that same methodology to innovate a hybrid energy system that created a niche market of solar-powered air conditioners. These air conditioners are cooling offices, school classrooms and homes across our islands.

Why not let the sun help power one of your key operating costs?

Hybrid energy-efficient air conditioners save more.

With the forward movement toward micro-grid systems that are self-consuming, the focus has been on integrating energy-efficient appliances to address the largest power-consuming products. Solar powered mini-split systems are able to directly harness abundantly available sunshine to help power one of the most costly comforts of our daily lives, air conditioners!

What kind of energy savings can be expected?

A real-time installation in a commercial setting was tested and vetted by an independent study conducted by our local utility. Results showed the following savings for a LEZETi split system *without* and *with* PV. Testing was conducted utilizing PV input of 750 watts. Test equipment monitored the unit for 12 days without PV connection and 11 days with PV connection. The AC unit cooled a workroom approximately 300 square feet in area, and the thermostat kept constant at 62 degrees operating 24 hours a day during the test period.



"Why not let the sun help power one of your key operating costs?"

Create capacity within your existing NEM

Many businesses and residences have been able to reduce or eliminate their electric bills down to the base fees through the implementation of PV systems. Over time, more appliances may have been added to the office or home, causing a rise in monthly electric bills. Air conditioners, in comparison to other appliances, typically require higher kW. Adding a solar-powered air conditioner on a completely separate system can free up space on an existing NEM to create more capacity.

How does this work with our utility today?

LEZETi solar-powered air conditioners are categorized by Hawaiian Electric as a basic appliance with zero

feedback to the grid. Nothing special and no Hawaiian Electric approval required. There are differences between this A/C unit and a standard mini-split system. LEZETi solar-powered air conditioners can receive direct DC power from the sun and their SEER rating goes as high as SEER 35. Standard mini-split systems do not offer that high-efficiency rating.

Greenpath Technologies is a full-service solar power systems contractor. The company provides turnkey photovoltaic installations including system consultation, engineering, design, installation, permitting, maintenance and financing. Greenpath distributes and installs solar-centric products such as solar-powered air conditioners and portable power systems, and provides electrical, roofing and waterproofing services.



Mango Solar Ground Mount PV Installation | Waianae, HI

ABOUT US

Greenpath Technologies is an NHO renewable energy project developer delivering solutions in production, energy management, and sustainability serving customers in commercial, residential, industrial and government sectors. For over a decade, we've been providing full scale engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) services, including Project Development, Financing and Operations & Maintenance.

INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Our strong partnerships with technology and equipment providers, engineers, and speciality contractors enables us to provide truly turnkey project delivery in the renewable energy field.

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- Energy Storage Systems
- Modular Chiller & Hybrid A/C Systems
- Energy Management Services
- Project Financing
- Energy Services Company (ESCO)



James Campbell HS Solar A/C Installation



Parking Deck PV Car Port

PHOTOVOLTAICS | ENERGY STORAGE | AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS | PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Battery Systems to Power Buildings



Joseph Saturnia

A change is coming to the way we power our residential and commercial properties in Hawaii. As developments in the renewable energy sector continue to lower costs and introduce new technologies, consumers will have new options on how they get their electricity and how much they pay for it.

Most photovoltaic (PV) systems installed in Hawaii are grid-interactive. That is, they work in conjunction with the utility's electrical grid to provide power to reduce a customer's demand from the utility. The technology is designed so PV systems depend on the utility to "form" the grid. These PV systems rely on the grid and are subject to the grid's availability. If the grid goes down, so does the PV system.

With the advent of lower-cost, longer-lasting battery systems from manufacturers such as Tesla and LG, consumers are now at the dawn of a new era, one in which the consumer can take control of their own power. They can install their own power plants consisting of PV, batteries and backup generation. Their power plants can now be the primary source of electricity, using the utility grid as a backup (if at all).

The term used in the renewable industry for this type of setup is "microgrid." A microgrid is a small local source of electrical supply that is usually attached to a centralized national grid but is able to function independently. Microgrids based on PV and battery technology provide clean, renewable energy at a lower cost without the vulnerability of grid power outages.

Photovoltaic systems, combined with battery storage and backup generation (such as generator or fuel cell) are poised to become the primary power



As microgrids become more prevalent, property managers and maintenance personnel will need to add power plant maintenance to their list of skills.

plant for many residential and commercial customers in the near future. The lower cost and independence make them very attractive to consumers who are looking to lower costs and isolate

themselves from the vulnerabilities of the utility grid.

The benefits of a microgrid go beyond cost savings and reliability. Consider the impact of a natural disas-

ter. If a hurricane hit Oahu tomorrow, utility grid power would most likely be interrupted for days if not weeks. Being without power for more than a day has serious impacts on daily life. Communications will be down, refrigerated food will spoil, transportation will be interrupted.

Now consider an office building or condominium that has its own microgrid. With independent power, lights will stay on, food will stay cold and if the tenants own electric cars, they will still have reliable transportation!

The new developments in microgrids will affect the roles and responsibilities of property managers and maintenance personnel. As microgrids become more prevalent, property managers and maintenance personnel will need to add power plant maintenance to their list of skills. These include having an understanding of a building's electrical infrastructure as well as the monitoring and maintenance necessary to keep the microgrid working reliably and efficiently. Forward thinking property managers and maintenance personnel should start



getting familiar with the technology now so they are well prepared for the coming changes.

Microgrids are an exciting technology that offer many benefits to residential and commercial customers alike. The lower cost electricity and energy independence offer compelling reasons for implementation. With microgrids will come additional responsibilities for property managers and maintenance personnel. Like all facilities, the

successful operation will require a good understanding of the technology and robust monitoring and maintenance.

Joseph Saturnia is president of Island Pacific Energy, a leading renewable energy developer based in Honolulu. Island Pacific Energy has been operating renewable energy plants since 2007, supplying some of the most recognizable names in Hawaii with clean, renewable energy.

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The Benefits of Energy Storage



Rick Reed

With the end of net energy metering and the anticipated conclusion of the customer grid supply program, many energy consumers are wondering what the next steps are for residential and commercial scale distributed energy. Customer self-supply (CSS), the only remaining tariff program without a capacity limit, is the answer. The CSS program is unique in that it requires that the customer consume all generated power on-site, and prevents them from exporting any amount of power to the utility grid. This usually requires some type of energy storage technology, often in the form of a battery.

What Is Energy Storage?

Energy storage for residential and commercial applications can take many forms. The most common and well-known technology to store electrons is batteries. Energy generated from a solar photovoltaic system can be stored in a chemical battery, like lithium-ion or lead acid, and then discharged throughout the day using a charge controller and a smart inverter. Batteries come in a variety of sizes, capacities and configurations to suit any energy need.

Storage technology can also use other types of energy, such as thermal or mechanical. Solar water heating systems are examples of thermal energy storage systems. In this case, heat stored in water acts like a battery. Ice energy storage is another example of a thermal storage system. Mechanical and kinetic energy merge in flywheels and pumped hydro storage systems which discharge energy when needed through material movement. Mechanical

storage is still relatively rare in residential and small commercial applications. However, materials cost reductions and increased efficiency are speeding the adoption of this type of technology. For instance, Kauai is now developing a large utility-scale pumped hydro system where stored water will act like a giant battery.

Store Now, Use Later

The primary benefit of energy storage technology is its ability to efficiently and effectively discharge energy over time. In grid-connected net energy metering PV systems, energy generated from the sun is immediately utilized by home loads or exported onto the grid. When storage is added, the consumer can store excess solar energy and use it at other times during the day when stored energy may have more value—for both the consumer and the utility grid. In short, battery storage allows consumers to achieve almost complete energy independence

while providing benefits to the grid.

Storage also provides power during grid outages. Many energy storage systems have the capability to serve loads in the house or commercial buildings even when utility power is unavailable. Storage systems can be sized and configured to run the entire house or building without utility power. They also can be configured to serve just a few critical loads, such as a refrigerators and lights. Also, being the only house on the block with the lights on brings its own satisfaction.

Incentives Galore!

Currently, energy storage systems installed as part of a PV system qualify for both state and federal tax credits. These tax incentives can cover more than 50 percent of the total cost of the system after taxes. Hawaii state regulators and legislators are also exploring additional incentives that capture the value that energy storage provides the utility grid.

Additionally, as the market supply and varieties of energy storage technologies increase, total system costs will continue to decrease. Average battery costs are already significantly lower than they were just a few years ago. Hawaii's ambitious renewable energy goals make it an outstanding market for consumers seeking ways to lower their electric bill while reducing our state's dependence on polluting, imported fossil fuels. There has never been a better time than today to consider purchasing a battery storage systems for your home, office or commercial property.

The market for energy storage in Hawaii is real and growing. As a property owner, getting in on the





Will Giese

ground floor will allow you to maximize your energy savings, add value to your property, and further reduce Hawaii's dependence on polluting fossil fuels. For a wealth of reasons, energy storage makes sense today!

Richard "Rick" Reed joined The Solaray Corporation (TSC) in Honolulu in 1982 and was named TSC president in 1987. TSC owns and operates Inter-Island Solar Supply, a diversified distributor of renewable energy products, and SunEarth, a solar equipment manufacturer located in Fontana, California. Mr. Reed is a Director of the Hawaii Solar Energy Association (HSEA), and has completed a number of terms as its president. He has chaired the HSEA's legislative and regulatory affairs committees and represented the HSEA in numerous PUC Dockets. Mr. Reed has served on the boards of the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation (SRCC), and the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) in Washington, D.C. He is a founding member of the University of Hawaii Energy Policy Forum, the Hawaii Renewable Energy Alliance, and EchoFirst, which was acquired by SunEdison in 2013. He holds a B.A. from Claremont McKenna College and an M.A. in East Asian History from the University of Hawaii. He was an East-West Center Grantee from 1977 – 1978.

Will Giese has been with Inter-Island since 2015. Formerly a solar PV designer and EMT, Mr. Giese's work focuses on policy analysis and communications. He is heavily involved in regulatory and legislative issues regarding solar energy in Hawaii. Mr. Giese holds a bachelor's degree in Environmental Public Policy from the University of Tennessee and is currently pursuing a Master's degree at the University of Hawaii–Manoa.

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Taking Solar a Step Further

Cruz Romero

To say that residents and business owners of Hawaii love solar is an understatement. We pay the highest electricity rates in the country so, it only stands to reason that we would take matters into our own hands. Now we're going a step further.

This new trend, or movement as it were, is called "grid defection," whereby sustainable energy producers add energy battery storage to the equation, and effectively say good-bye to the utility grid.

A quick look at the numbers shows there are two major factors at play here.

We enjoy an abundance of sunshine—it varies from island to island and city to city, but Honolulu, according to the weather geeks, averages 271 sunny days annually.

Against this backdrop, however, the average monthly residential electricity bill in the Aloha State is \$203, which is 89.7 percent higher than the national average of \$107 per month. The average commercial electric bill is \$1,566, which ranks second in the nation, while the average monthly industrial bill runs \$133,212, again ranking second, reports Electricity Local, an online source that crunches utility data nationwide.

Hawaiian Electric Co., better known as HECO, which owns the utilities on the islands of Oahu, Maui and Hawaii, says rates are high because, unlike other states, it "relies on expensive oil shipments to produce electricity."

But HECO's rate-payers have pushed back, and by the time roughly 16 percent had adopted photovoltaic systems, regulators called a halt to new applications for net energy metering, a billing program that credited them for electricity they added to the grid.

HECO had had enough—enough renewable energy for the time being, that is. And while it's still willing to fork out 15 cents per kilowatt hour to buy green energy, it's not exactly worth it to the consumer. Not compared to using



Utility consumers should carefully analyze their monthly bills to ascertain the size of battery they need and the energy output they require.

the power they can produce via battery storage.

Yet we don't expect storage batteries to fly off the shelves. Not yet anyway. The permitting process needs to be ironed out. Where there's market demand, though, supply will follow—it's Econ 101. Meanwhile, we're getting ample inquiries and one of the first questions people ask is how much batteries cost. Everything has a price tag, right? Yes, if you take a one-size-fits-all approach to energy storage. But that won't do, and here's why.

Utility consumers should carefully

analyze their monthly bills to ascertain the size of battery they need and the energy output they require. This is particularly true for commercial and industrial customers who are subject to higher rates for peak time usage.

Achieving energy efficiency may also be part of the plan, as it might be wise for a customer to acquire newer appliances or lighting fixtures that use less electricity.

There are more than a few big-name energy storage batteries out there. Don't

See 'BATTERY' on page 46

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| ✓ Batteries | ✓ Coolers | ✓ Poncho/Raincoat | ✓ Sand Bags |
| ✓ BBQ Grills | ✓ Duct Tape | ✓ Plastic Storage Bins | ✓ Tarps |
| ✓ Bottled Water | ✓ First Aid Kit | ✓ Plywood | ✓ Trash Bags |
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Harmony at Hokua

Rising through the ranks to oversee Honolulu's first luxury condo, top building manager Duane Komine says his secret lies in 'hospitality'

By Don Chapman | Photos Nathalie Walker

In a musical band, the drummer holds everything together. Guitarists can run off and riff, singers can soar, keyboardists can improvise on their own. But it all comes back to the drummer, keeping the beat going, steady as stone. Others can leave, the drummer stays home and holds things together.

"I really believe my management style is because of my music background," says Duane Komine, award-winning drummer and award-winning building manager. He's been general manager of Hoku since before the luxury 40-floor condo opened 11 years ago. "It begins with being patient."

He started playing drums while attending Kaiser High, and after graduating became a fulltime musician.

"I played with Don Ho, Marlene Sai, Society of Seven, and had my own group, Country Living. I was the Brothers Cazimeros' drummer for 30 years. Long time. I have a Hoku Award from Roland Cazimero's Pele album.

"When you're a musician, you play your song and nobody claps, you can't walk off the stage. Similar to building management, they're not going to clap for you the first time they meet you, you have to keep doing the show before they appreciate what you do. I have four 'sets' to do. When you play a song and nobody claps, you want them to clap, you want them to be happy with what you're doing, and you have to keep doing it until they really like it. And then you get the claps.

"At my annual association meeting, when they introduce me and my staff, we get claps. That's unusual."

Hearty as that in-house show of approval is, the applause was never louder when a thousand building management folks rose to salute Komine moments after he was named manager of the year at IREM's 2015 national convention in Salt Lake City.

"We were going up against heavy hitters from around the coun-



try,” Komine recalls. “It was like the Academy Awards, everyone is introduced and then there’s this long pause and finally the emcee says, ‘Alooooooha!’ I was like, what, did we win?”

Yes, he did, and it put an exclamation point on everything he’s been doing since he started doing janitorial work at Crystal Park, near the old stadium park in Moiliili.

“Since I was there, the association asked if I’d just clean the place up,” he says.

From there, he was on to Piikoi Tower, “where I became the onsite manager, meaning I was hands-on—I did the pool, I did the yard, and that’s where I got my ARM accreditation. And I really enjoyed it. Then Royal Capitol Plaza, the first condo in this HCDA area—that building and 1350 Ala Moana were the only buildings standing up at that time. I opened that building, spent three, four years, then Nauru Tower opened up, and I didn’t apply—they came and asked me, and I was quite frightened, I thought the building was too big. It was huge. So, Nauru Tower, and the rest is history, I came over here.

“The first three buildings I was still a musician playing at night, which was approved by the boards.”

Hawaiiana Management Company’s Phyllis Kacher, who nominated Komine for the award, said, “When you consider that IREM is worldwide, Duane actually was named the No. 1 manager on the planet! Nobody has done more to raise the bar for residential managers than Duane. He has single-handedly transformed the way managers are viewed by the public, resulting in better pay and benefits, renewed pride in the industry and higher property values for homeowners.”

Today, in addition to running things at Hokua, he also is consulting general manager for One Ala Moana and consultant for Park Lane: “It keeps me busy.”

On the surface, it seems so simple, going from the bright lights of Waikiki to managing what is generally regarded as the benchmark for Honolulu luxury condo living. In fact, it took the attention to detail that a drummer would understand.

“When I was in the janitor mode and just being a resident manager, I went to the big boys,” Komine says. Meaning he cold-called managers of the biggest buildings in town—Marco Polo, 1350. “I’d ask for a few minutes of their time,



managers in the business, how did you do this, how do you do that? And they all gave their time to this young guy. I took that information and ran with it.”

He also ran for and was elected to the Ala Moana-Kakaako Neighborhood Board.

“I like to know what’s going on,” he explains. “I’m a glutton for information.

“And I created my own organization in the past seven years, the Super Block, which consists of all these buildings from Anaha down to Trump Tower. There’s about 15-20 building managers who come to my meeting. (They include his brother Ron, manager at 1350 Ala Moana.) It’s veteran managers with comparable buildings. What we learn in that circle in one hour might take years to learn on your own in the past. We walk in as a group, we know each

other, and talk about anything—what temperature do you keep your pool, what about rules, or vendors you may not like? And you get all these answers back—you just did your homework.

“It’s funny, 20 years later, those guys I first went to see, they’re attending my association meeting. This is why I keep an open door, if a young building manager calls, I will give the time to talk with them. All of my operations managers have gone on to other buildings—Capitol Place, One Ala Moana, Nauru.”

Because of Komine, Hokua is leading the way in what IREM calls “hospitality management”—not just “building management.”

“What I’ve done—my secret—is go back to basics,” he says. “When we were opening Hokua, I was tasked with creating resort condo living. I know

condo living; I don't know resort living. I've been to resorts, but never lived there. About that time I met this guy, Davie Felipe, GM now at Anaha, the Howard Hughes project. I was attracted to his demeanor—he was at a resort for 17 years, Moana Surfrider, so he had a whole different way of running a tower from my way, and accidentally it came together.

“So now we get most of our employees from hotels. Hospitality, you can't train for it—either you have it or you don't. To smile and have an honest look in your eyes, you have to have it. So when I see people like that—waiters, valets—I give them my card and say call me if you're interested in the condominium side, there's more of a set schedule and good benefits. I can teach them the condo side, they already have the hospitality. I hired three people from (a restaurant at Ala Moana Center). There was this girl, she was a really good waitress, she said she wanted to get into the hotel business because of the money. I gave her my card and she's working here now. Two guys I met there—hospitality was amazing!—they're working here now. They may move on, I understand, but let's enjoy the ride together for a while. So I go back to basics.

“And I'm mentoring the GM of a restaurant, he wants to move to this side, so he comes over here every Monday for a whole year to learn how we do things, and he's got his ARM accreditation.”

Whether new hires to Hokua's 32-person team come from a hotel or restaurant, another condo or UH's TIM school, Komine makes sure those with management dreams take advantage of IREM classes and seminars.

“No doubt about going to the IREM ARM class,” he says. “When I took the class, I came back to the building a different person, and I saw the building from a different angle. I go to every seminar I can. ARM is certified internationally, you can take it anywhere. It tells the owners and the association I'm qualified, not just some musician coming off the block.”

But in some ways, managing a building is like playing music.

“I love this environment,” Komine says. “Like a musician, you go out and shake people's hands.”

That sound you hear coming from Hokua is harmony, in perfect time.

Anatomy of a Catastrophe

Before Hokua opened 11 years ago as Honolulu's first “luxury resort-condo living” building, all 248 units sold out in one day. They include two-floor penthouses that today go for \$28 million—as BMH goes to press, one is available.

So imagine how residents felt barely eight months after Hokua opened when some units began to spring major leaks—in a totally random way.

“That was catastrophic, and frankly we didn't know what was going on,” says general manager Duane Komine. “We had no clues and nobody to ask.”

He takes down a binder from a bookshelf in his office, starts paging through photos.

“This is what a catastrophic leak looks like—rain,” he says. “Rain and flooded floors.

“Once it started, the question—every day, every night—was who is going to be next? It could be anybody. We ended up with about 25 units that did rupture, but those 25 also caused damage to the units below, so it doesn't matter if the leak happened in your unit.

“It turns out the brass in cinch clamps was dezincifying, and that caused them to leak—no quality control, they came from China. The staff did an investigation. We had to find a company that would repair this building. Then all of a sudden, our insurance company decides not to cover us because we're high risk.

“Nobody in Hawaii ever had that problem. After us, other buildings had it, but now they had a guideline. So we went out to get bids to repair the building—there's 50 to 60 clamps like that in every unit, and

you don't know where they are. We tried scanning and all these things. Finally, the original developer said we'll do that for you, but it was a pretty high price tag, about \$9 million. And their story line was they would cut holes and look for them, but if they cannot find every clamp, too bad, so sad, no guarantees.

“But there was a Mainland company, SageWater, for some reason they contacted me at the 12th hour. They said they specialize in dezincification and wanted to make a presentation. This was a Friday, they're on the Mainland. I said you have till Monday to get here because we're supposed to sign the contract on Monday. They got here Sunday, made their presentation to the association board Monday—changed our lives forever. They are a re-pipe one-stop plumbing company. Their approach wasn't to look for the clamps, they said we're going to pull all that stuff out and run new ones in, and put on the appropriate clamps. Plus, we'll leave you with a 25-year warranty, and the price was like \$2 million. They cut about 30, 40 holes—every day for four-five days they were in a unit, but you still had water and you could stay in your apartment. The other company, you would have to move everything out and you couldn't come back until they said so.

“We became a Cinderella-ending story. It was a horrific beginning, but the owners got their money back through all the lawsuits we had. There were a lot of very happy people. And Hokua units continue to grow in value.”

— Don Chapman



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"The scope of work presented to SageWater was daunting to say the least. SageWater staff held numerous town hall meetings with the intent to inform our owners about what to expect leading up to the project. Their workers were on time and

ready to get started every morning and their cleanup crew was on the job at the end of every workday. When a SageWater representative said they would "take care of it" or "get back to you," they did so in a timely manner.

The bottom line is that SageWater reached "substantial completion" of the scope of work of our drain waste pipe replacement two months ahead of schedule and below the initial budget."

— **SHANNON NODA-CARROLL**,
Board President, 1717 Ala Wai

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- 1350 Ala Moana
- 1717 Ala Wai
- The Consulate
- The Contessa
- Hokua at 1288 Ala Moana
- Kahala Towers
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Chris Herndon, Dennis Maher, Iris Grudi, Kawelu Medeiros



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Superblock

PHOTOS BY NATHALIE WALKER

The May gathering of the “Superblock” group of building managers happened at Symphony Honolulu, hosted by general manager Raymond De Smet. It provided managers of upscale condos in the Kakaako area a chance to check out the year-old building, enjoy lunch and an inspirational presentation by Phyllis Kachner of Hawaiiana. The Superblock group was founded by Duane Komine of Hokua (see cover story) and provides members support and a forum for sharing best practices.



Jonell Guzman, Jen Simonson, Anina Carmack



Bill Richardson, Jonah Felipe, Ed Wolf



Amber Stone, John Horvath, Brandi Miranda, Rob Ochimas



Jon Eveland, Cynthia Minn, Ryan Benavente, Bob Cope



Duane Komine, Phyllis Okada Kacher



Leland Nye, Violet Kaneshiro



Leona and Duane Komine



Benjamin Oates, Marni Ramirez



Ron Komine, Davie Felipe, Terra Garrigus, Reggie Eubanks



Ray De Smet, Jen Simonson, Edmar Felix, Ed Wolf, Francisco Ramirez



BATTERY

Continued from page 38

be fooled by a company that pitches its product as a “backup battery,” meaning a system that’s good for only a few hours, or just enough power to keep the lights on during a utility blackout. iDemand Energy Storage batteries contain a management system that provides a constant flow of power to each and every cell so that they operate evenly and consistently without interruption. We refer to this as “uninterrupted energy storage,” or UES.

Whether it be a temporary or prolonged blackout, our batteries put the utility company in the backup position. Yet even if the power goes out for a short time, a retailer who can’t ring up sales, or the sushi restaurant around the corner that can’t keep its food at the right temperature, stand to lose thousands of dollars. Perhaps even tens of thousands if the power is out longer.

Emergencies aside, the prospective battery buyer seeking grid indepen-

dence also wants to plot out his or her return on investment. This is relatively easy to do when they compare what they’ll spend by owning their own power to what they’d have paid for standard utility rates.

A good battery system should come with a good warranty. While most brands are warranted for 10 years, we recommend an industry-leading 25 years.

Last, but not least, consideration must be given to the battery’s chemical composition. The brand we suggest is comprised of fifth-generation, lithium ion phosphate, LiFePO₄, prismatic cell technology, which is safe and does not self-ignite.

Cruz Romero grew up in the solar industry and has over 15 years of experience in the industry. Cruz is the vice president of Hi-Power Solar, and has been researching energy storage units for the last seven years. Hi Power Solar is the exclusive dealer and distributor of iDemand Energy Storage batteries in Hawaii. Cruz has most recently overseen commercial projects such as Word of Life, West Physicians and Kalani High School.

new PRODUCT

Public surfaces are infamously filthy and laden with germs. But thanks to a new paint from Sherwin-Williams, the world—including condo common areas—just got a little cleaner.

It’s called Paint Shield, and is said to kill more than 99.9 percent of staph (*staphylococcus aureus*), MRSA (*Methicillin-resistant staph*), *E. coli*, VRE (*Vancomycin-resistant Enterococcus faecalis*) and *Enterobacter aerogenes* within two hours of contact.

OK, enough of the Latin. Suffice to say, these are some nasty bacteria on most surfaces.

Sherwin-Williams says this interior latex paint is ideal for non-critical areas of hospitals, as well as nursing homes, doctors’ offices, athletic facilities, community centers, schools, resorts, spas, residential housing and cruise ships. It comes in 550 colors in S-W’s popular Eg-Shel finish.

For more information, visit swpaintshield.com.



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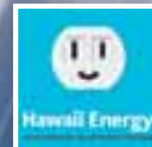
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