

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Free residential energy efficiency workshops***

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—February 22, 2011—Free residential energy efficiency workshops, “How to Save Energy and Lower Your Electric Bill,” facilitated by Yen Chin are being offered around the island by The Kohala Center and the County of Hawai‘i Department of Research and Development.

Since no two households are exactly the same and can differ greatly from one another, these workshops will help participants evaluate possible energy saving measures for their own home. Workshop participants will learn how to understand their HELCO bill, how to use their electric meter to track down energy waste, how to determine the amount of electricity their electrical appliances and devices use, and how to make smart financial decisions to reduce their home energy usage.

Workshop sites, times, and dates are:

- Na‘alehu Community Center, 10 a.m. Thursday, February 24
- Cooper Center, Volcano Village, 1 p.m. Sunday, February 27
- West Hawai‘i Civic Center, Kailua-Kona, 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 2
- North Hawai‘i Education and Research Center, Honokaa, 6 p.m. Thursday, March 3
- Ocean View Community Center, 10 a.m. Saturday, March 5
- Waikoloa Village Association Community Center, 6 p.m. Monday, March 7
- North Kohala Public Library, Kapa‘au, 1 p.m. Tuesday, March 8
- Tutu’s House, Waimea, 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 8

Walk-ins are welcome; please bring a copy of a HELCO bill and calculator. For more information or to sign up for the free residential energy workshops, see <http://www.kohalacenter.org/energyworkshops/about.html> or call (808) 887-6411.

“Hawai‘i Island residents pay high prices for energy,” Chin said. “Whether we buy gasoline, propane, or electricity, we pay much more than folks who live on the Mainland. So learning how to use less energy can make a big difference for our pocketbooks, and most of us can use a lot less by making small changes in our daily habits.

“My workshop tries to avoid offering sweeping general recommendations. Instead it seeks to show folks how to do an analysis of their own usage, so that they can make well informed decisions,” Chin said. “A family of four that heats water with electricity and pays a monthly

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HELCO bill of \$250 could save \$25–\$50 per month by seriously applying what they learn at this workshop.”

Chin has worked for Seattle City Light on residential conservation, for HELCO managing a solar water heater program, and for Hawai'i County Economic Opportunity Council conducting energy efficiency workshops for program participants.

The County of Hawai'i Department of Research and Development is sponsoring this workshop with grant money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Kohala Center is partnering with the County to educate island residents about residential energy efficiency as part of the pathway to greater island energy self-reliance.

The Kohala Center is an independent, not-for-profit center for research and education *about* and *for* environment. By respectfully engaging Hawai'i Island as the world's most vibrant classroom and laboratory for humanity, The Kohala Center builds teaching and research programs for energy and food self-reliance as well as ecosystem health to enhance island environments, serve island communities, and advance the work of the academy. See <http://www.kohalacenter.org>.