

Summary

- Excessive use of electricity may result in a surcharge for guests
- A surcharge of US\$ 0.50 per KWHr may be imposed when certain thresholds are exceeded
- The surcharge is capped to an average of US\$ 12.50 per day over the stay duration
- Solely at our discretion, the surcharge may be waived in some cases

Overview

We include the use of the air conditioning equipment with rental of our condos. We ask guests to use cooling appropriately. For the most part, guests do this. As Maui Electric continues its relentless rate increases, the “outlier” guests are forcing our hand: we are imposing an electricity surcharge of US\$ 0.50 per KWHr when electricity consumption is well beyond average. We may let guests know during their stay of apparently excessive consumption. We will inform guests of the surcharge within two days after departure (but strive to do so on the day of departure). Finally, the surcharge will be no more than US\$12.50 times the stay duration.

The surcharge scheme described below may look a little complex. We think this is better than a general rental rate increase that hits low usage guests as well as high usage guests. This approach also keeps the “A/C decision-making” in the hands of guests by attaching the cost consequences to specific guests.

Guests who keep their daily electricity consumption below 35 KWHr will likely not accumulate enough of a surcharge to be worth the effort of billing.

Details

Some condos charge a flat rate of as much as \$ 25 or \$ 30 per day to have air conditioning available. Separately or in combination, some condos have timers and door switches that turn off the A/C after a time period or when a door is opened. We chose to let our guests decide on cooling the condo but we requested that guests be careful in their use of the A/C (use the ceiling fans and ocean breeze when possible, reasonable temperature settings, close windows and doors when the A/C is in use, turn the A/C off or increasing the temperature setting when leaving the unit). Electricity rates are largely stable or drifting down across most of the USA but Maui Electric continues to increase its rates. Not to put too fine a point on it, but some guests have abused our A/C policy with electricity consumption at double the rate of guests before or after them. As a result, we have changed our A/C policy. Guests will still have full control over cooling choices. To contain our escalating electricity expenses and to encourage guests to be more economical in the use of electricity, we may bill guests for high electricity consumption.

Maui Electric claims living units the size of our condos consume about 600 KWHr per month – about 20 KWHr per day. We have had guests with an average usage of less than that 15 KWHr per day. We have also had guests that average over 40 KWHr per day with more than 60 KWHr used on some days.

Heavy electricity usage is generally associated with excessive air conditioner usage – too low a set temperature, overly aggressive cooling at night, cooling while windows and doors are open, cooling while not in the unit. Of course, the water heater, the oven / cooktop, and the washer / dryer consume power, too. However, those appliances are used episodically rather than the long periods that the A/C can be on.

We have established a target of 30 KWHr per day for our guests. We exclude electricity usage on the arrival day and the morning of departure. If, during a stay, average electricity usage exceeds 30 KWHr per day (again, excluding the arrival day and departure morning) then we would bill \$0.50 per KWHr for the excess usage. We have had guest parties that averaged just about 40 KWHr per day; under this approach, there would have been an excess electricity consumption surcharge of \$ 5.00 per day (or about \$ 30.00 for a seven day stay).

We are also establishing an excessive peak usage threshold of 40 KWHr in a day. Any day that exceeds 40 KWHr may be billed \$ 0.50 per KWHr for the excess above 30 KWHr (and we will not include these excess days in the average usage computation).

For context, we live in the Phoenix, Arizona area. During the summer, as you probably know, the average high is over 100 °F. As do most of our condo in Kihei, we have mini-split A/Cs in our 2,000+ sq ft home. We maintain comfortable temperatures consuming 25 – 30 KWHr per day. Admittedly, there are just two of us but Phoenix does not have the benefit of cooling morning and evening sea breezes.

An example of **very high usage** over the course of a six-night stay (five days “in play”) follows:

Day	Usage (KWHr)	Excessive Average Usage	Excessive Peak Usage	Remarks
1	41.5			Excluded – arrival day
2	39.0			
3	45.1		\$ 7.55	(excluded from average)
4	38.1			
5	23.4			
6	50.5		\$ 10.25	(excluded from average)
(7)	49.5			Excluded – departure morning
		\$ 5.25		Excess average use fee (39.0+38.1+23.4) - 3*30 → 10.5 excess KWHrs

Total excess electricity billing: \$ 23.05 for this example. We probably won't bill guests for small surcharge amounts but more than \$ 20 in less than a week is enough to get our attention.

We collect daily electricity usage. We may let you know when we see unusually high consumption. Some condos have meters in the unit making consumption information instantly available.

In terms of a Hawaiian vacation in total, this electricity surcharge isn't much – but it does provide a material incentive for more deliberate use of air conditioning.

Last updated 22 July 2019