

# President's Report 2026

I have been on the Board of Directors at Makaha Valley Towers since February 2024. I have served as Board President for one year. We have successfully faced many challenges. This dedicated Board has worked diligently to steer the Owner's Association to meet all needs, while minimizing any cost increases, touting a miniscule 1.99% increase for the current year 2026, while still maintaining fully funded Reserves. To date, my greatest revelation is the sheer volume of the workload carried by our employees each and every day. They are extremely dedicated and unbelievably productive. They perform their daily tasks; and, whenever called upon, go above and beyond, as I've witnessed firsthand during our two tragic fires and our recent windstorm that took down trees, limbs and damaged building parts. They came in on Superbowl Sunday and cleaned up the debris while the winds still raged. We are blessed indeed to live on this beautiful island, in this extraordinarily well-maintained facility.

I would like to note that we have 30 employees, and they all do a great job. From General Manager Joanna Miranda and her team:

1. Office Staff: Ashlyn Gagarin, Norma Kane, Coreen Kikila, and Facility Supervisor Shaughna Aloua.
2. Maintenance Department: Dominador Edra, Robert Banis, Michael Gonsalves, and Alan Keaunui.
3. Landscaping Department: Wilfred Agtang, Edmund Arcibal, and Elmer Manibog.
4. Janitorial Department: Nestor Viejo, Dioscoro Ubod, Wilfredo Mateo, Maxim Sewen, and Sofronio Mateo.
5. Security Department: Chief of Security Henry Souza and Security Officers: Linda Pililaau, Samantha Akiona, Janeen Moniz Victorino, Simi Leo, Brian Boc, Saul Robins, Arlene Maganis, Malia Jones, Timuani Cook, Skylark Lopes and Brian Rabago-Ulep.

A big Mahalo (Thank You) to all our employees who work so diligently to make Makaha Valley Towers a wonderful place to live.

This report will provide you with general information on the projects that were accomplished in 2025, in addition to the daily operations required to keep Makaha Valley Towers running.

## **Electrical**

On April 22, 2025, an electrical shutdown was conducted in Core 4, Building J to replace a main breaker serving the 33 series of apartments. Wasa Electrical Services identified a defective main line breaker that was causing repeated power outages from the 10th to the 16th floors. The breaker was replaced, restoring power to the affected apartments. The repairs, performed by a licensed contractor, amounted to \$10,709.42.

On December 16, 2025, a power outage affected parts of Makaha including Makaha Valley Towers. Although HECO restored power to the valley, electricity to buildings A, B and C, apartment series 01 through 12, was not restored. Wasa Electrical was called to troubleshoot the problem. Generators were brought in to temporarily provide power to these buildings. A defective part was found in the high voltage room. Repairs were made and power was restored to buildings A, B and C.

### **Plumbing**

In 2025, various plumbing repairs were undertaken. These included work on the hot water return pipes on the roof, repairs in the main boiler rooms, replacing cracked drain lines, addressing leaking water supply lines, and replacing faulty riser valves under the building. All repairs were completed by a licensed contractor at a total cost of \$69,979.49.

### **Backflow Prevention Assembly**

On July 30, 2025, a water shutdown to the entire complex was necessary to replace the backflow preventer assembly for the property. This device prevents water on our property from returning back into the public drinking water system, and is required to be operational by the Board of Water Supply and the Department of Health. The work was performed by a licensed contractor at a cost of \$21,918.32.

### **High Rise Water Booster Pump System**

On June 25, 2025, a faulty motor and variable frequency drive (VFD) were replaced for booster pump #1 at a cost of \$7,382.20.

### **Air Conditioning**

On April 4, 2025, Carrier Hawaii, our air conditioning contractor, performed a complete overhaul of chill water pump #1 for chiller #1. This essential repair was to ensure the continued efficient operation of chiller #1. The cost of these repairs was \$25,457.00.

### **Air Conditioning Cooling Towers**

On Thursday December 4, 2025, Carrier Hawaii replaced a defective fan motor on one of the two air conditioning cooling towers. The cost of these repairs was \$27,642.00.

### **Air Conditioning Chill Water Riser in the 01 Series**

The air conditioning chill water risers in the 01 series of apartments needed reinsulating from apartment 101 to 501. The need for these emergency repairs became apparent after multiple residents reported excessive moisture and discoloration in their closets. Building staff promptly investigated and discovered that the existing insulation had failed, leading to recurring condensation issues and causing damage.

To address the issue, the deteriorated insulation was removed, and new insulation was installed. In addition, the concrete firestop around the chill water pipes needed to be removed so the insulation could continue between floors. The required concrete firestop was reinstalled. The steel pipe clamps that support the weight of the pipes were also replaced. The cost of these repairs by a licensed contractor was \$12,709.00.

### **Elevator Machine Room Air Conditioner Replacement**

The ductless split air conditioning units located in our four elevator machine rooms are responsible for maintaining a cool environment for our elevator equipment, which is essential to prevent overheating of sensitive components such as electrical contacts and wiring. Recently, the unit in Core 2 ceased operating, prompting immediate attention due to the critical nature of its role. RMI Air Conditioning, the contractor responsible for maintaining these air conditioning systems, inspected the unit and determined that necessary replacement parts were no longer available. As a result, it was recommended that the entire system be replaced.

A new Mitsubishi ductless split air conditioner system was ordered to ensure reliable cooling for the Core 2 elevator machine room. The process involved the removal of the old ductless unit and installation of the new system. The total cost for equipment and labor was \$16,260.00.

### **Fire Extinguishers**

In November 2025 National Fire Protection company conducted the required annual fire protection equipment inspection of our 184 fire extinguishers and 153 fire hoses. Maintenance and repairs were done as needed. The cost for this required annual inspection was \$6,583.24.

### **Landscaping**

To prevent the possibility of our coconut trees being infested by Rhinoceros Beetles, we have taken a precautionary approach and had the coconut trees on our property treated by a licensed contractor by using an injection treatment procedure. This will be done on an annual basis. The cost of treatment will be \$85.00 per tree.

In June 2025, our in-house landscaping staff re-installed metal bands on all the coconut trees. Aluminum or sheet metal bands are necessary to reduce the threat of rats nesting at the top of the trees and causing damage.

The semiannual coconut tree trimming was accomplished. The work was done by a licensed contractor at a cost of \$23,098.42 for 171 coconut trees.

### **Common Areas**

- All building common area lighting, including apartment entryways, walkways, and lobby lights are cleaned on a quarterly basis. Mailboxes are also cleaned quarterly. Building walls are normally cleaned annually and walkways are scrubbed quarterly, in addition to the daily cleaning.
- \$3,298.37 was collected from the recyclable aluminum cans that are collected in the upper lobbies of all four cores. The money collected is deposited into the Association's general bank account.
- Our submetering savings from the Board of Water Supply (BWS) for the year 2025 was \$44,489.67. MVT installed submeters many years ago to measure water consumption on irrigating our landscaping and our air conditioning cooling towers. The submeters measure the actual volume of irrigation and cooling tower water that we use, and that is subtracted from our water consumption/sewer charges. We receive a credit adjustment on each monthly service bill.

Makaha Valley Towers maintains a very stringent concrete spalling repair program. Seal Masters of Hawaii was contracted to repair multiple areas of concrete spalling in various areas on the building. Concrete spalling is a condition involving the rusting and expansion of structural steel within the concrete, leading to cracking and weakening of the surrounding concrete. Untreated concrete spalling can lead to significant damage, compromising the structural integrity of the building.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Berry  
President

## **Research regarding November 6, 2025, and January 30, 2026, Fires**

Although the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) had initially reported that the fire that occurred at the Towers on November 6, 2025, “occurred while charging a micro-mobility device.” According to the write-up on HFD’s website, the cause of the fire has been classified as accidental. The ACTUAL cause of the fire is still under investigation and has not yet been determined. The Association plans to inform owners of the cause of the fire when this information is disclosed by the fire investigators.

Speculation that the fire was caused by an electric micro-mobility device has raised broader questions about the safety of charging batteries and battery powered appliances at Makaha Valley Towers and what residents and the Association may do to prevent fires.

The Board has consulted with an engineer licensed in the State of Hawaii with expertise in forensic engineering and root cause failure analysis, including risks related to lithium-ion and lithium iron phosphate batteries. The Board has also consulted with the Association’s insurance professional who has researched the position of insurers regarding charging of batteries and battery powered appliances. The following briefly summarizes information obtained by the Association:

1. Although rechargeable battery powered devices and appliances have been around for decades, fire safety has become a greater concern only recently with the proliferation of battery powered electric vehicles, electric bikes, and electric scooters, as well as higher capacity batteries in handheld devices and laptop computers.
2. There does not appear to be any state, federal or local statute, ordinance, rule or regulation that prohibits occupants of high-rise or any other residential buildings from charging batteries inside apartments or dwellings.
3. Although rechargeable batteries, along with cooking, electrical work and electrical cords, are known causes of fires in Honolulu, HFD has not recommended that condominium associations prohibit occupants from charging batteries or battery powered appliances inside apartments. The HFD website contains the following information on batteries and charging:

### **Lithium-ion Batteries**

Handle batteries carefully and only use the battery designed for the device.

§ Keep lithium-ion batteries at room temperature.

§ Avoid excessive charging, direct sunlight, and a hot/humid environment.

§ Store separately; away from anything that can catch fire, including other lithium-ion batteries.

§ Discontinue use if the battery exhibits the following:

- odor
- drop damage
- leaking
- change in color or shape
- too much heat
- odd noises

### **Charging**

§ Use charging cords and blocks approved by the manufacturer for the specific device model.

§ Replace cords that are damaged, frayed, or sticky to the touch.

§ Charge devices, especially cell phones, on a hard, nonflammable surface.

- Never charge devices on beds, couches, or cloth.
- Charge in a cool, ventilated area. Avoid direct sunlight and heat.

§ Avoid excessive charging.

§ Contact the manufacturer for more information.

### **Discarding**

§ Avoid putting rechargeable batteries in the trash or in piles. Recycling is the best option.

§ If you are unsure of how and where to safely discard batteries, visit [opala.org](http://opala.org).

4. We often look to the insurance industry for guidance on safety issues as insurance companies have a vested interest in condominium associations operating in a safe and prudent manner. According to our insurance agent, Sue Savio, the insurance industry has not issued any guidelines or restrictions on charging batteries or battery powered appliances inside apartments.

5. The HFD describes the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) as the “leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards.” NFPA has not taken the position that condominium associations should prohibit charging of batteries or battery powered appliances inside high-rise apartments. Instead, it provides tips similar to those provided by HFD. See:

<https://www.nfpa.org/downloadable-resources/safety-tip-sheets/lithium-ion-battery-safety-for-consumers-tip-sheet>

6. The Association has no intention to prevent handicapped or disabled persons with mobility issues from using battery powered wheelchairs, carts, scooters or other mobility aids on the project. The Board will at all times comply with both the federal and state the Fair Housing Acts.

Based, in part, on the above, the Association does not, at present, believe that there is sufficient justification to prohibit residents from charging batteries (or appliances containing batteries) inside apartments. Nevertheless, it is important that the users of appliances containing rechargeable batteries carefully follow the instructions in manuals and manufacturers' guidelines.

The Association will continue to monitor changes in federal, state and local statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations, developments in the insurance industry and changes in the practices of community associations locally and nationally. If things change in the future, for example, if insurance companies advise condominium associations to restrict charging of batteries in apartments, if the HFD advises condominium associations to do the same, or if there are other changes that justify measures to stop residents from charging batteries inside apartments, the Association will take appropriate action, including but not limited to the adoption of rules and regulations.

In the interim, the Association plans to do whatever it can to collect and disseminate information on fire safety to include not only safe practices for charging and using batteries and battery powered appliances, but also other safe practices to minimize the risk of fires.

The fires on November 6, 2025, and January 30, 2026, showed us that the Association's new fire alarm system worked flawlessly. Residents helped each other, one resident risking his life to save another resident, and the Association's employees were well trained and served us well. The safety of the Towers depends on all residents cooperating and working together.