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ISO New England Requests Voluntary Electricity Conservation

Precautionary step due to expected high temperatures

Holyoke, MA—July 16, 2013—Extremely hot temperatures and high levels of humidity expected this week in New England could drive regional electricity use to near-record levels. Although power system resources are currently adequate, supplies are likely to become tight and ISO New England Inc., operator of the region's bulk electric power system, is asking consumers to voluntarily conserve electricity as a prudent, precautionary measure to help keep supply and demand in balance during this heat wave.

“As the heat continues to build throughout the week, electricity demand is expected to increase significantly, which is likely to result in tight system conditions,” said Vamsi Chadalavada, executive vice president and chief operating officer of ISO New England Inc. “The ISO is asking consumers to voluntarily conserve as a precautionary step to help manage system conditions.”

Taking simple, practical steps to reduce electricity use, particularly between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., will help maintain system reliability. ISO New England suggests several ways to reduce electricity consumption and advises that these measures be taken consistent with one's health and safety:

- Raise air conditioning thermostats by a few degrees if health permits. A suggested temperature range is between 74°F–78°F
- Turn off unneeded lights and appliances
- Turn off unnecessary office equipment
- Shut off air conditioners when leaving home for extended periods of time
- Defer laundry and other chores requiring electricity until the early morning or late evening hours

Peak demand forecasts

New England's electricity usage is forecast to reach near record-breaking levels throughout the week, with the highest peak demand forecasted for Thursday, July 18, at 27,800 megawatts (MW). Today's forecasted peak demand is 27,500 MW and Wednesday's forecasted peak demand is 27,700 MW. Last summer, electricity usage peaked on July 17, at 25,880 MW. New England's current all-time record for electricity usage is 28,130 MW, which was set on August 2, 2006. In New England, one megawatt of electricity can power approximately 1,000 homes.

Operating procedures to maintain reliability

ISO New England continues to monitor the power system closely. If demand for electricity were to outstrip supply, the ISO has a series of well-established steps it can take to bring the system back into balance when forecasted demand is expected to be high, including calling on demand-response resources to curtail their electric energy use and seeking additional power from neighboring regions.

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