New England expected to have sufficient electricity supplies this winter

HOLYOKE, MA—Nov. 16, 2026—ISO New England, the region's electric grid operator, anticipates having sufficient resources to meet consumer demand for electricity this winter.

The outlook is based on analyses of several components of the power system, including anticipated consumer demand, the availability of power generation and energy storage resources, stored fuel supplies, and the region's transmission and natural gas pipeline systems. It also reflects new additions to the regional power system since last winter, ongoing operator training, and operational tools designed to manage winter conditions.

Stored fuel supplies entering this winter are expected to be slightly higher than those available at the start of the 2025/2026 winter season. Although changing global fuel markets can influence supply chains and delivery schedules, current assessments indicate sufficient fuel supplies should be available throughout the winter.



ISO Minute: Preparing for Winter Power Grid Operations

In this ISO Minute video, step into ISO New England's control room, where system operators work around the clock to prepare for winter conditions.

Additional resources will bolster reliability

Several new power sources have come online since last winter and will aid in system reliability this season, including additional offshore wind generation and a full winter of the New England Clean Energy Connect transmission line. Overall, ISO New England expects the region to have more than 30,000 megawatts (MW) of available capacity.

The ISO projects that consumer demand for electricity will peak at 20,483 MW under normal weather conditions. During extreme cold weather, demand is forecasted to peak at 21,457 MW. Last winter, the coldest in 20 years, saw winter consumer demand reach its highest level in seven years, peaking at 20,182 MW on Jan. 25, 2026.

El Niño Impacts

This winter's El Niño conditions are expected to bring variable temperatures and increased storm activity to the Northeast. Although forecasts indicate warmer-than-average temperatures and slightly above-normal precipitation across New England, periods of extreme cold are still possible. Throughout the winter, ISO-NE closely monitors weather patterns, including polar vortex conditions, which can drive higher energy demand and affect power system operations.

ISO-NE analyses and tools help ensure reliability

From December through February, ISO-NE publishes a weekly 21- day forecast that identifies potential fuel or reliability concerns before they become reliability issues. The forecast incorporates weather conditions, fuel availability, and other factors, giving resource owners the opportunity to reschedule planned maintenance or arrange for additional fuel deliveries. This tool proved critical in maintaining New England's system reliability during last winter's prolonged cold snap.

If unexpected conditions arise, such as a sudden loss of generation or transmission issues, highly trained system operators inside ISO New England's control room have various tools available to maintain the balance between electricity supply and demand. These tools include postponing maintenance, increasing imported energy, or calling on reserve resources.

Understanding factors that affect winter electricity costs

Winter is often associated with higher wholesale electricity prices in New England because colder weather can increase demand for both electricity and natural gas, the primary fuel used to generate power in the region. Fuel costs are a key factor in wholesale electricity prices, and periods of high heating demand can lead to increased wholesale electricity market prices.

While ISO New England administers the region's wholesale electricity markets, it does not own power plants, set retail electricity rates, or control fuel prices.

Wholesale market costs represent about one-third of an average retail electric bill. For a breakdown of other factors that affect power bills, see the Understanding Electricity Prices in New England handout.

2026/2027 Winter Fast Facts

- Winter peak forecast: 20,483 MW under normal weather conditions; 21,457 MW under below average temperatures.
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecast: El Niño conditions are expected to bring warmer-than-average temperatures, slightly above-normal precipitation, and periods of increased storm activity.
- Last winter's demand peaked at 20,182 MW on Jan. 25, 2026, during Winter Storm Fern.
- The all-time winter peak demand is 22,818 MW, set on Jan. 15, 2004, during a cold snap.
- All-time peak demand: 28,130 MW, on Aug. 2, 2006.

Press Contact: Media@iso-ne.com

Created in 1997, ISO New England Inc. is the independent, not-for-profit corporation responsible for the reliable operation of New England's electric power generation and transmission system, overseeing and ensuring the fair administration of the region's wholesale electricity markets, and managing comprehensive regional electric power planning.

iso-ne.com iso-ne.com/isoexpress @isonewengland isonewswire.com iso-ne.com/isotogo