ISO New England must carry a reserve of electricity supply that can be called on to produce electricity should a contingency occur on the power system, such as:

- Unexpected high demand due to extreme weather
- A generator goes out of service for mechanical problems
- A transmission line or circuit breaker trips due to lightning strike or other issue or becomes overloaded
- A neighboring grid requests assistance
- A serious threat is made to the power system

The ISO maintains two categories of reserves: resources that can provide energy within 10 minutes and resources that can provide energy within 30 minutes. Typically, the ISO maintains an operating reserve of between 1,560 MW and 2,250 MW in 10-minute reserve, plus an additional 625 MW or so in 30-minute reserve.

The ISO implements OP 4 when available resources are insufficient to meet anticipated electricity demand plus required operating reserves—called a “capacity deficiency”—so that we can ensure a continuous, reliable flow of electricity.

The Scope and Sequence of OP 4’s 11 Actions

- The ISO can implement OP 4 actions New England-wide, by local control center area, by state, or targeted to a specific area
- Actions can be implemented in any order; some actions can be implemented in advance of an anticipated capacity deficiency
- The ISO can skip OP 4 actions and move immediately to emergency actions such as controlled power outages (under OP 7), if necessary

Four Types of Public Notifications During OP 4

- **OP 4 Actions 1-3 and 5-9:** No public appeal for conservation
- **OP 4 Action 4:** Public appeal for voluntary conservation, issued only if conditions warrant
- **OP 4 Action 10:** Urgent public appeal for voluntary conservation
- **OP 4 Action 11:** Governors’ appeal

*If ISO New England issues a public appeal for voluntary conservation, the External Affairs and Corporate Communications teams will activate bridgelines to update OP 4 contacts on power system conditions. We will send dial-in info by email for each event.

*These alerts do not trigger any additional communications with OP 4 contacts.

**These alerts do not trigger any additional communications with OP 4 contacts.**