

News Release

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CORRECTED Version: the drought peak was
“hourly” not “instantaneous” in paragraph eight.

California ISO: challenging 2014 summer but reliability held firm Drought, heat waves and fires make for busy grid operations, but reliability maintained

FOLSOM, Calif. – The California Independent System Operator Corporation (ISO) grid operators managed reliable electricity delivery this summer through major wildfires, historic drought conditions and heat waves.

This summer’s highest level of demand reached 45,090 megawatts at 4:53 p.m. on September 15, 2014. This compares to 45,097 megawatts set on June 28, 2013 and 46,846 megawatts on August 13, 2012. The ISO’s highest peak on record is 50,270 megawatts on July 24, 2006.

On a local level, southern California set new demand records that underscore the impact from above normal — hot — temperatures recorded during the summer, especially along the coast. San Diego Gas & Electric area experienced record use on Monday, September 15 and then topped that on September 16 with an all-time record demand of 4,895 megawatts. The standing record peak was 4,684 megawatts set on September 27, 2010.

Southern California Edison area also experienced heavy loads reaching 23,266 megawatts on September 15. This was just shy of the area’s all-time peak of 23,388 megawatts set on September 7, 2011.**

Meanwhile, one of the ISO’s newest participating transmission owners, Valley Electric Association of Pahrump, Nevada, which serves a 6,800 square mile area south of Las Vegas and a sliver of California, set a new demand record of 120 megawatts on July 1, 2014.

“No matter the conditions, the ISO’s main objective is to keep the power flowing to the nearly 30 million consumers we serve,” said Eric Schmitt, ISO’s Vice President, Operations. “We had challenging drought conditions that limited hydro electricity production, hotter than normal temperatures and wildfires that threatened high-voltage power lines. Yet, grid operators working round the clock overcame those challenges to maintain reliability.”

The ISO region, which covers most of California and a small part of Nevada, experienced numerous wildfires this year, but only a limited number threatened the high voltage grid. The San Diego County fires in mid-May triggered the year’s only transmission emergency as 14 blazes threatened high-voltage lines serving the area as well as to the distribution lines that connect homes and businesses to electrical substations. Although there were several tense hours as the May 14 firestorms raged, grid operators from the ISO, working with San Diego Gas & Electric operators, managed to avoid electrical interruptions on the high-voltage grid.

In the [2014 Summer Loads and Resource Assessment](#), released in May, the ISO forecast we would have 1,300 megawatts to 1,669 megawatts less hydroelectricity available this summer. With historic drought conditions, there were 1,628 megawatts less of in-state hydro power this

summer. The hourly peak hydro generation for the summer occurred on July 31, 2014 with 5,016 megawatts.

Solar production hit a new peak on September 29, 2014 with 4,903 megawatts. The ISO has about 5,500 megawatts of utility solar resources connected to the grid. Meanwhile, wind facilities set a production record on April 12, 2014 with 4,768 megawatts — about 5,900 megawatts of wind resources are interconnected. Counting all renewable resources (including small hydro, biomass, biogas, geothermal), the ISO has 15,226 megawatts of clean power on the grid.

The ISO is working with asset owners over the next several months to properly schedule maintenance on power plants and the transmission system without disrupting electricity delivery this winter and prepare for next summer.

**SCE does not serve the City of Pasadena, which is included in the ISO totals for the area.

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Thanks for re-posting!



The California ISO provides open and non-discriminatory access to one of the largest power grids in the world. The vast network of high-voltage transmission power lines is supported by a competitive energy market and comprehensive grid planning. Partnering with about a hundred clients, the nonprofit public benefit corporation is dedicated to the continual development and reliable operation of a modern grid that operates for the benefit of consumers. Recognizing the importance of the global climate challenge, the ISO is at the forefront of integrating renewable power and advanced technologies that will help meet a sustainable energy future efficiently and cleanly.