



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PATH 15 TRANSMISSION CONSTRAINTS LEAD TO CONCURRENT STAGE ONE AND TWO EMERGENCIES No Power Interruptions Forecasted

(Folsom, CA) The California Independent System Operator (California ISO) declared concurrent Stage One and Two Electrical Emergencies today, Thursday, December 21, 2000—for Northern California only. The emergency status is in effect from 7:30 a.m. until midnight and conservation is encouraged. All this week, power flowing from Southern California to Northern California has hit a bottleneck at the transmission link known as Path 15. Because imports from the Northwestern U.S. have slowed to a trickle, Northern California's need for electricity has been placing big demands on power plants in the Southland. Because only so much electricity can be transported due to the limited transmission capacity, operating reserves are predicted to dip to below five percent in Northern California.

Today's forecasted consumption of electricity is expected to peak around 6:00 p.m. at an estimated 33,695 megawatts. At this time, the California ISO expects to maintain the reliability of the power grid without activating voluntary load management programs. **The ISO urges interruptible customers to wait to shed their contracted electrical load until specified to do so by their local utility.** Interruptible customers, mainly commercial and industrial users, receive a reduced rate in exchange for a commitment to come off line when asked to do so for reliability purposes.

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A Stage Two Emergency is declared when operating reserves dip below five percent or are expected to within the next two hours. If an operating reserve shortfall of less than one-and-a-half percent is unavoidable, Stage Three will be initiated. Involuntary curtailments of service to customers, including “rotating blackouts,” are possible during this emergency declaration. The California ISO’s Electrical Emergency Plan (EEP) is part of the state’s enhanced reliability standards created by landmark legislation Assembly Bill 1890, which restructured California’s electricity industry.

California ISO is charged with managing the flow of electricity along the long-distance, high-voltage power lines that make up the bulk of California’s transmission system. The not-for-profit public-benefit corporation assumed the responsibility in March, 1998, when California opened its energy markets to competition and the state’s investor-owned utilities turned their private transmission power lines over to the California ISO to manage. The mission of the California ISO is to safeguard the reliable delivery of electricity, facilitate markets and ensure equal access to a 12,500 circuit mile “electron highway.”

Information about the California ISO control area’s electricity supply and the current demand is available on the web at www.caiso.com.

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