

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Stephanie McCorkle
Director of Communications
1 (888) 516-NEWS

California Breaks All-Time Record Demand For Peak Power

Call for Conservation Continues as State Faces Stubborn Heat Wave

(Folsom, CA) The California Independent System Operator (California ISO) managed record high demand for power yesterday. With the help of consumers conserving, the ISO successfully matched megawatts to meet the new record for peak demand of 46,561 megawatts set at 2:41 p.m. That surpassed the previous record of 45,431 megawatts set July 20, 2005 by 1,130 megawatts—roughly equal to the output of two medium power plants.

Today's energy usage could break yesterday's new record, with the forecast demand of more than 47,000 megawatts at about 4:00 p.m. today. Barring unforeseen events, the California ISO expects to be able to serve that high demand. However, the ISO is urging Californians to conserve power as much as possible today and especially across the peak hours of 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. when energy usage is at its highest point.

“We have been coordinating with utilities and planning all year for the type of conditions we are seeing this week,” said ISO President and CEO Yakout Mansour. “Our control room operations performed exceptionally well as did utility dispatch centers across the state. Consumers played an important role as well in the smooth grid operations, helping us avoid even a Stage One Electrical Emergency. We want to thank them for their conservation efforts.”

So far, power plants that supply energy to California are performing well, but continued heat can stress power plants and the power lines that carry electricity across the state. “We're only midway through a major heat wave that began last week,” said Vice President of Operations Jim Detmers. “Reducing high demand through conservation helps us manage the grid, and helps manage customer energy bills too.”

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Record Peak 2-2-2-2

Conservation gives us an extra cushion—if we lose a major power plant or transmission line,” said ISO Director of Operations Jim McIntosh. “The ISO is urging people to set their thermostats at 78 degrees when home and turning them up to 80 or off when away. Consumers are asked to refrain from using other major appliances during the afternoon hours.”

The California ISO is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation charged with managing the flow of electricity along California’s open-market wholesale power grid. The mission of the California ISO is to safeguard the reliable delivery of electricity, and ensure equal access to 25,000 circuit miles of “electron highway.” As the impartial operator of the wholesale power grid in the state, the California ISO conducts a small portion of the bulk power markets. These markets are used to allocate space on the transmission lines, maintain operating reserves and match supply with demand in real time.

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