



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Patrick Dorinson
Director of Communications
1 (888) 516-NEWS

ELECTRICAL EMERGENCY DOWNGRADED TO STAGE ONE California ISO Urges Consumers to Continue Conservation Efforts

(Folsom, CA) The state's power supply situation is improved today, Wednesday, March 21, 2001 and the California Independent System Operator (California ISO) is currently in a Stage One Electrical Emergency, meaning operating reserves are between five and seven percent. Several generating units returned to service and the level of imported power has increased, boosting the supply available to serve California's electricity needs. **The California ISO is cautiously optimistic that customer outages will be avoided today.**

The conservation efforts of Californians, particularly Tuesday evening, were significant and helped to reduce the duration and impact of yesterday's blackouts. The California ISO asks customers to continue their voluntarily reductions during this time of tight supply. More than 11,500 megawatts of in-state generation remain unavailable with power plants completing repairs and needed maintenance. Today's Stage One Emergency is in effect through midnight tonight. Peak demand on the transmission system is expected to reach 29,443 megawatts around 6:00 p.m. today.

Media briefings are not scheduled for today. If today's conditions deteriorate, an immediate notification will be distributed. **Please remember that continuously updated information about the California ISO control area's electricity supply and the current demand on the power grid is available on the web at www.caiso.com.**

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Stage One of the state’s Electrical Emergency Plan is initiated to advise the public of potential power shortages and to ask all customers to conserve electricity to ensure there will be enough power to meet demand. The request for demand reduction is not intended to disrupt employment or curtail industrial production or commerce. However, if the conservation measures are insufficient in lowering the demand for power, load management programs that implement voluntary curtailments of power are possible.

A Stage One Emergency takes effect when electricity operating reserves fall below seven percent. A Stage Two is declared when reserves drop below five percent. At this level, large commercial customers that have signed up to voluntarily curtail power during high demand days will be asked to do so. If an operating reserve shortfall of less than one-and-a-half percent is unavoidable, Stage Three is 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 enacted by landmark legislation Assembly Bill 1890 that led to the restructuring of 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 25,526 circuit mile “electron highway.”

Other helpful contacts:

Pacific Gas and Electric	415/973-5930
Southern California Edison	626/302-2255
San Diego Gas and Electric	877/866-2066