

For Immediate Release:

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Heat Wave Drives Another Record for Power Usage

Demand Response Programs are called to help keep demand in check.

RENSSELAER, N.Y. – The statewide demand for electricity reached a record for the second day in a row – and for the third time in two weeks – Wednesday as New Yorkers kept air conditioners humming and fans blowing to beat the heat and humidity of an unrelenting heat wave.

The NYISO's Demand Response customers, however, helped keep the statewide electricity load from climbing even higher by curtailing afternoon usage today, said officials from the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO), which manages the state's high-voltage electricity system and operates the state's wholesale electricity markets.

The hourly average peak load hit 33,939 megawatts (MW) during the hour beginning at 1 p.m., breaking Tuesday's record of 33,879 MW, set between 4 and 5 p.m.

"This heat wave is a test of the state's bulk power system and our electricity markets," said Mark S. Lynch, NYISO President and CEO. "We are passing the test. Our markets are working, our demand reduction programs have helped reliability, and our control room operators continue to expertly manage New York's grid and work with neighboring control areas to keep the power flowing."

To maintain operations within reliability criteria, the NYISO called on businesses in its Special Case Resources (SCR) and Emergency Demand Response (EDRP) programs from 1 to 7 p.m. in New York City and Long Island, and in from 2 to 7 p.m. in Western New York. The measures resulted in load reductions of 416 MW in New York City, 226 MW on Long Island and 450 MW in Western New York

Peak loads are measurements of the average total electric demand by consumers for a one-hour period. Peak demand usually occurs in the late afternoon, in winter and summer. Throughout the year, the NYISO works with transmission owners (utilities) and power plant operators to maintain reliable service.

Continued heat and humidity could result in increased power demand downstate on Thursday; although a statewide record for electricity usage is not predicted.

The NYISO suggests the following practices to reduce consumption:

- Set air conditioners to a higher temperature than normal
- Refrain from using major appliances such as washing machines, electric stoves, clothes dryers and dishwashers until the early morning or late evening hours

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- Draw curtains and blinds to prevent solar heating
- Turn off lights when not needed
- Go to an area mall or swimming location where you can cool off while giving your air conditioner a break
- Open attic vents to relieve strain on cooling systems

Breaking Records: New York peak load records, 1997 to 2006

- Aug. 2, 2006; 33,939 MW
- Aug. 1, 2006: 33,879 MW
- July 17, 2006: 32,624 MW
- July 26, 2005: 32,075 MW
- Aug. 9, 2001: 30,982 MW
- July 6, 1999: 30,311 MW
- July 15, 1997: 28,699 MW

Megawatts in perspective

It takes about:

- 440 MW to power a city the size of Albany (pop. 100,000)
- 200 MW to power Times Square
- 160 MW to power Penn Station and Madison Square Garden
- 7 MW to power an office building the size of the United Nations
- 3 MW to power a large suburban shopping mall
- 1,000 MW to light 10,000 100-watt light bulbs

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The New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) – www.nyiso.com – is a federally regulated, 501(c) 3 nonprofit corporation established in 1999 to facilitate the restructuring of New York's electric industry. The NYISO operates the state's high-voltage electric transmission system and administers the state's wholesale energy markets. The NYISO's market volume was \$10.7 billion in 2005.