NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
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Heat Pushes New York Power Use to Near Record Peak

Electricity demand third highest on record

RENSSELAER, N.Y. – New York State's peak electricity usage reached 33,452 megawatts (MW) today, as summer heat pushed power consumption to the third highest peak on record, according to the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO).

Between 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm, the NYISO recorded an hourly average peak load of 33,452 MW. The July 6, 2010 peak load is:

- 487 MW lower than the NYISO's all-time record peak of 33,939 MW, which occurred on August 2, 2006, and 427 MW lower than the second highest peak of 33,879 MW which occurred on August 1, 2006;
- 828 MW higher than the highest peak recorded during the month of July (32,624 MW), which occurred on July 17, 2006;
- 2,608 MW higher than the 2009 peak, which occurred on August 17, 2009 (30,844 MW). The 2009 peak was the lowest annual peak since 2004.

"While electricity use reached near record levels, New York's power system performed well and there were sufficient resources to reliably serve the needs of consumers. The NYISO works with power producers, transmission providers, energy service companies, and government officials to maintain reliable electric service during peak demand periods and throughout the year," NYISO President and CEO Stephen G. Whitley said.

Peak loads are measurements of the average total electric demand by consumers for a one-hour period. Peak demand usually occurs in the summer and can increase 60 percent above the average level of electricity use. Average electricity use in 2009 was 18,126 MW. One megawatt of electricity is enough to power between 800 and 1,000 homes.

Power demand can spike sharply during extreme summer weather conditions, as air conditioning and cooling systems increase electricity consumption. The power system must have adequate capacity to meet peak demand, even though demand spikes to peak levels only a few days each year.

For 2010, the reserve standard set by the New York State Reliability Council requires that 38,970 MW of power resources be available to meet the needs of New York electricity consumers. Available resources exceed this amount, with 43,001 MW available to meet peak demand. That total includes 38,105 MW of in-state generation, 2,251MW of demand response resources, and 2,645 MW of potential capacity imports from neighboring grid systems.

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