

For Immediate Release:

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NYISO Forecasts Adequate Electric Capacity for Winter 2015-2016

Rensselaer, NY – New York’s electric system has the capacity to meet demand for electricity and the necessary operating reserves during extreme cold weather conditions through the 2015-2016 winter season, according to the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO).

The NYISO anticipates a peak load demand of 24,515 megawatts (MW) for the winter season. The forecast is comparable to last winter’s peak of 24,648 MW. New York’s record winter peak was set in 2014, during polar vortex conditions that pushed the load to 25,738 MW.

Peak demand is a measurement of the average total electric demand by consumers for a one-hour period. One megawatt of electricity can serve approximately 800 to 1,000 homes.

The winter peak forecast is based on average winter weather conditions, with composite statewide temperatures of 15-16°F. If extreme weather produces colder conditions, with temperatures in the 5-6°F range, peak demand across the state could increase to approximately 26,100 MW.

Installed generation capacity in New York state this winter amounts to 41,312 MW. Net external capacity purchases of 338 MW also have been secured for the winter period. When combined with the 885 MW of projected demand response, which enlists consumers to reduce electricity use during peak conditions, the total capacity resources equal 42,535 MW.

The electric system requires surplus power supplies to guarantee that sufficient electricity is available in the event of unanticipated power plant outages, transmission outages or unexpected increases in power consumption. Each day, New York’s grid operators maintain 2,620 MW of operating reserves, which means additional generation resources are scheduled above the amount needed to meet the projected demand for electricity on that day.

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