

BPA NEWS

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BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION
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Heat wave poised to break BPA's summer peak for electricity use *Readiness actions in motion agency-wide*

Portland, Ore. – The Bonneville Power Administration's electric power and transmission experts are working together to keep the electrons flowing to millions of Northwest consumers and businesses during the expected heat wave this week, which they anticipate will break BPA's record for peak summertime electricity consumption.

The previous BPA summertime record was set on July 16, 2014. During that week, when the mercury soared, air conditioners and fans were humming and electricity peaked at 7,861 megawatts at 6 p.m. Compare that peak to a typical 80 degree summer afternoon when electricity consumption may be 600 MW less. For reference, one MW can power more than 700 Northwest homes.

With the region yet again facing a potential multi-day summer heat wave above the 100-degree mark, BPA is preparing for extremes.

"As we take a number of steps BPA-wide to get ready, it's also important to note that in the utility business, unforeseen issues can emerge at any time," said Janet Herrin, BPA's Chief Operating Officer. "The goal is to be as prepared as possible so if something does occur we can quickly restore delivery of power where needed to meet demand, whether from wholesale power generated at federal dams or power coming from other sources."

Herrin also stated, "All of our hot weather operations across BPA must take into account our commitment to both public safety and environmental sustainability."

BPA, headquartered in Portland, Oregon, sells wholesale electricity from 31 federal dams and one nuclear plant to 142 electric utilities, serving millions of consumers and businesses in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, western Montana and parts of California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming.



BPA delivers power via more than 15,000 circuit miles of lines and 260 substations to 511 transmission customers.

One variable BPA's experts are monitoring closely are the wildfires burning near electrical transmission corridors in multiple locations in the Northwest. Winds can intensify or shift in a matter of seconds, which drive the path of flames in any direction. In addition, excessive heat over multiple days places additional stress on all parts of the grid and can cause power lines to sag, sometimes by a factor of several feet, which is why BPA works hard to keep rights-of way beneath high voltage transmission lines clear of vegetation and debris.

BPA's preparedness steps range from delaying certain maintenance activities that can be safely scheduled for another week to working with federal dam operators to ensure the water intakes for hydro turbines are free of debris and optimized for power generation. The agency has also stepped up its non-wires efforts. These are tools and processes that can be employed as an alternative to building transmission lines and can increase reliability during times of extreme weather and high power demand.

BPA has also reached out to its workforce throughout the Northwest to take the proper steps in staying hydrated and reducing heat exhaustion. "A stronger, healthier workforce has fewer safety incidents and also is better prepared to respond to unplanned events," said Brad Bea, BPA's chief safety officer.

At the conclusion of this summer heat event, BPA will share with the public whether or not a new summer peak was recorded.

BPA also encourages consumers who are interested in energy savings tips and heat wave preparations being made in their communities to plug into their local utility provider.

Media, please note: Fresh photos and video are available, including images with BPA line crews working on high voltage lines.

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