



***For Immediate Release***

**Alberta Electric System Operator Sets Summer Power Demand Record**

(Calgary, AB – August 19, 2008) – The Alberta Electric System Operator reports a new summer “peak” in demand for electricity was set yesterday driven by recent hot weather and continued growth in Alberta.

At 2:00 p.m. on August 18, 2008, Albertans established a new record when they used 9,541 megawatts (MW) of electricity, breaking last summer’s record of 9,321 MW set on July 19, 2007 by 220 MW.

“Although the heaviest demand for electricity in Alberta typically occurs during the winter,” says Warren Frost, Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) vice-president of Operations and Reliability, “the Alberta economy continues to grow at a healthy pace and this coupled with noticeable increases in air conditioning load in the province have resulted in the new record demand on Alberta’s power system.”

The province set a winter peak last January 28, 2008, when Albertans used a record 9,710 MW of power at 6:00 p.m. The high demand was attributable to the combined factors of a prolonged cold snap, reduced amount of daylight hours and increased lighting load.

“Our system controllers monitor the grid 24 / 7, working closely with transmission facility owners and power generation owners to ensure that even during times of high demand, we have reserves available and procedures in place to meet the electricity demands of all Albertans,” explains Frost.

Electricity consumption in Alberta has grown by 28% since 2000. In that same time period, summer peak has grown at an average annual growth rate of 3.7%. This growth in power demand is equivalent to adding two cities the size of Red Deer each year, straining the integrated transmission system to operating near its limit and underlining the critical need to reinforce the transmission system.

**Here are some things you can do to reduce the demand straining the electricity system:**

- Run major appliances (washer, dryer, dishwasher) during off peak hours (after 6:00 o'clock p.m.)
- Turn off unnecessary lights
- Turn off non-essential electrical appliances
- Keep blinds and drapes closed to keep homes cool

*As an independent system operator, the AESO leads the safe, reliable and economic planning and operation of Alberta’s interconnected power system. The AESO also facilitates Alberta’s fair, efficient and openly competitive wholesale electricity market, which has about 200 participants and approximately \$8 billion in annual energy transactions.*

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