

# Media Release

## For Immediate Release

### **Frigid Temperatures Drive Electricity Demand to New Record**

CALGARY, ALBERTA (January 15, 2012) – Alberta’s demand for electricity reached an all-time high of 10,315 megawatts (MW) during the hour of 6 p.m., breaking the previous record of 10,236 MW set on December 14, 2009.

“The heaviest demand for electricity in Alberta typically occurs during the winter,” says John Esaiw, Director of Forecasting for the Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO). “A cold snap, reduced daylight hours and overall growing demand on the Alberta system are all factors that combine to push demand to record levels.”

The AESO’s system controllers monitor the electricity grid 24 hours per day, seven days per week, working collaboratively with transmission facility owners and power generation owners to ensure that even during times of high demand, contingency plans are in place and reserves are available to meet the electricity demands of all Albertans.

The AESO’s forecasts indicate that over the next 20 years, more than 11,000 MW of new generation is needed to replace retiring generation plants that reach the end of their operating lives as well as keep up with anticipated load growth. This new generation will ensure we have enough power to meet the needs of Albertans as our economy grows. That’s almost double the current amount of electricity that can be produced in the province today.

Albertans can help reduce the demand on the electricity system by:

- Running major appliances (washers, dryers, dishwashers) during off-peak hours (after 7 p.m.)
- Turning off unnecessary lights
- Turning off non-essential electrical appliances
- Connecting a timer to a vehicle’s block heater

The AESO forecasts demand 24 hours in advance. It is located on the AESO website at: [http://ets.aeso.ca/ets\\_web/ip/Market/Reports/ActualForecastWMRQHReportServlet](http://ets.aeso.ca/ets_web/ip/Market/Reports/ActualForecastWMRQHReportServlet).

To view current supply and demand on Alberta’s electricity grid, updated hourly on the AESO’s website, visit the following link: [http://ets.aeso.ca/ets\\_web/ip/Market/Reports/CSDReportServlet](http://ets.aeso.ca/ets_web/ip/Market/Reports/CSDReportServlet).

#### **For more information**

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*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 in 2010 had about 175 participants and approximately \$5 billion in annual energy transactions.*