



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Frigid Temperatures Drive Electricity Demand to New Record

CALGARY, ALBERTA (December 7, 2009) – Alberta’s demand for electricity reached an all time high of 10,046 megawatts (MW) during the hour of 6 p.m., breaking last winter’s record of 9806 MW set on December 15, 2008.

“The heaviest demand for electricity in Alberta typically occurs during the winter,” says Jeff Nish, Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) Director of Forecasting. “A prolonged cold snap, reduced daylight hours and increased lighting 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.

Yearly peak demand growth is forecasted to average 3% over the next 20 years. The AESO also estimates an additional 11,500 MW of new generation will be required over the next 20 years to meet the growing electricity demands of Albertans.

Here are some ways Albertans can help reduce the demand on the electricity system:

- Run major appliances (washers, dryers, dishwashers) during off-peak hours (after 7:00 p.m.)
- Turn off unnecessary lights
- Turn off non-essential electrical appliances
- Connect a timer to your vehicle’s block heater

The AESO forecasts load 24 hours in advance. It is located on the AESO website at: 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.

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 \$9 billion in annual energy transactions.

For more information:

Dawn Delaney
Corporate Communications
AESO
Ph: 403.539.2846

2500, 330 - 5th Ave SW Calgary, Alberta T2P 0L4
t (403) 539-2450 | f (403) 539-2949 | www.aeso.ca

Cell: 403.671.6129

Email: dawn.delaney@aeso.ca