

Media Release / Media Advisory

For Immediate Release

Alberta sets record summer peak in demand for electricity

CALGARY, ALBERTA (JULY 18, 2011) – Recent hot weather was the driving factor behind a record summer peak in demand for electricity set in Alberta today.

At approximately 3 pm, an all-time new summer record peak of 9,552 MW was set, breaking the previous record of 9,541 MW which was set on August 18, 2008.

“Our load is quite high, but the majority of units are operating at or near maximum capacity therefore we have adequate supply to meet demand,” says Matthew Davis, Supervisor of Market Analytics for the Alberta Electric System Operator. “Our interties are also functioning properly and we currently have additional capacity in the province and from our interties should we need it. “

On a typical summer day in Alberta, demand fluctuates between 8900 to 9200 MW per hour. During the summer months, an increase in temperature of one degree Celsius equates to an additional 50 MW of electricity consumed per hour.

“The AESO’s system controllers monitor the grid 24/7,” says Davis. “We work closely with transmission facility owners and power generation owners to ensure that even during times of high demand we have procedures in place to meet the electricity demands of Albertans.”

The heaviest demand for electricity in Alberta typically occurs in the winter and is most frequently attributed to the combined factors of cold weather, reduced daylight hours and increased demand for lighting. On December 14, 2009, the province set a record winter peak of 10,236 MW of power.

Demand for power has increased 31 per cent since 2000. Despite this significant growth, no major upgrades have occurred in more than 20 years, straining the system to operate near its limit, and underlining the need to reinforce the transmission system.

For more information about the need to upgrade Alberta’s transmission system, visit www.powerinalberta.com.

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.