

<https://www.pottsmmerc.com/tncms/asset/editorial/7aca7f62-be5a-11eb-a1fe-5f8ecc2f90aa/>

Region's electric grid operator is ready to meet summer demand

By Donna Rovins drovins@21st-centurymedia.com @MercBiz on Twitter

May 30, 2021



PJM Interconnection, which operates the nation's largest electric grid says it has adequate supply to meet summer demand. The Wednesday April 29, 2015 photo shows Dominion Power's transmission lines in Chester, Va.

Steve Helber - The Associated Press File Photo

Want local news?

Sign up for our newsletter and stay informed

Enter your email to subscribe

SIGN UP



LOWER PROVIDENCE — Summer is still several weeks away, but as the region anticipates a return of hazy, hot and humid weather, residents and business owners want to know that when they need electricity — it is there.

PJM Interconnection, which operates the nation's largest electric grid, says it has an adequate supply to meet summer electricity needs for the 65 million customers it serves in 13 states and the District of Columbia — including Pennsylvania.

“Planning and preparation are key. PJM and our members continually coordinate and prepare for peak load operations throughout the year,” PJM President and CEO Manu Asthana, said in a statement.

This summer is expected to be a “relatively hot summer,” according to PJM, which is headquartered in Lower Providence. In its three-month outlook, the National Weather Service has forecast above-average temperatures this summer for almost the entire PJM footprint, including the Mid-Atlantic states, the South and parts of the Midwest.

Over the past couple of weeks, many areas across the PJM geographic footprint — including the southeastern Pennsylvania region — have gotten a preview of summer as temperatures rose to summer levels. In the Greater Philadelphia region, temperatures climbed through the 80s, to a high of 91 degrees in the Philadelphia region on May 22 and 23 and 93 degrees on Wednesday, May 26.

Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, total energy use during the summer of 2020 was lower, but PJM is expecting higher demand this summer. System operators at PJM have forecast electricity use to peak at approximately 149,000 MW this summer — a level they say they are prepared to serve.

The grid operator said it has performed reliability studies at even higher loads — in excess of 155,000 MW — for the region. Last year's peak demand was approximately 144,000 MW, which occurred on July 20. PJM's all-time, one-day highest power use was recorded in the summer of 2006 at 165,563 MW. One megawatt can power about 800 homes.

A “peak” refers to the highest demand for electricity the system will experience in one day. During the summer months, demand typically rises during the day, peaking later — when people are using more electricity to power up air conditioners, fans, appliances and lights.



PJM meets electricity needs by procuring enough resources to satisfy peak demand plus its required reserves. Resources and energy are acquired through PJM's competitive markets, which save customers billions of dollars each year in combination with PJM planning and operations according to the grid operator.

PJM has more than 185,000 MW of installed generating capacity available to meet customer needs, with sufficient resources available in reserve to cover generation that is unexpectedly unavailable, or for other unanticipated changes in demand.

In PJM's control room, system operators use technology to monitor, control and direct the power grid 24/7 to balance supply and demand.

Operators routinely predict the demand for electricity for both short- and long-term periods. This "load forecasting," helps ensure a reliable supply of power at the most reasonable cost, according to PJM.

On Friday, May 21, PJM issued a hot weather alert for Sunday, May 23 for the Mid-Atlantic and Southern regions of its footprint. A PJM spokesman said a hot weather alert is triggered when temperatures are forecast to go above 90 degrees with high humidity — which drives up the demand for electricity.

An alert helps PJM and utility partners coordinate the flow of energy and avoid capacity problems on the grid, and prepares transmission and generation personnel and facilities for extreme heat and/or humidity.

No issues were reported over the weekend, according to Jason McGovern, PJM spokesman. The preliminary peak demand for May 23 of 115,704 MW was set between 5 and 6 p.m. PJM had forecasted a peak of 116,000 MW.

PJM interconnection coordinates the movement of electricity across the areas covered by its member utility companies. PJM is made up of transmission owning utilities that operate on a regional basis — working together to plan for maintenance and operating situations. Among the members are PECO, Met-Ed, PPL Corp., PSE&G and Delmarva Power.

Founded in 1927, PJM Interconnection ensures the reliability of the high-voltage electric power system in all or parts of Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. For more information visit insidelines.pjm.com.



A “peak” refers to the highest demand for electricity the system will experience in one day. During the summer months, demand typically rises during the day, peaking later — when people are using more electricity to power up air conditioners, fans, appliances and lights.



SPONSORED CONTENT

4 Urgent Moves to Make If You Have More Than \$1,000 in...

By The Penny Hoarder



If you've got a \$1,000 in the bank, you should make these four moves quickly.

Donna Rovins

@ on Twitter



