



PRESS RELEASE

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Extreme Heat and Blackouts – What Tri-County Electric Cooperative Members Need to Know

As we approach extreme temperatures this week, you may be concerned with the reliability of the electric grid. We are not currently under any warnings of rolling blackouts, but it is a reality that what we want to make you aware of so that you can be prepared.

Blackouts result from a lack of power generation. Presently, there is a decrease in power generation, yet a greater demand for electricity than ever before. On a typical day, there is enough power generation to avoid blackouts. However, during extreme weather the electric grid can be depleted of enough energy to meet the demands of the consumers. Understanding how the grid operates is important to understanding blackouts and how you can help prevent them.

Tri-County Electric Cooperative (TCEC) members are connected to the electric grid by wires that are owned and maintained by TCEC. The TCEC electric system is connected to our power supplier Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) via Ameren transmission lines. TCEC has an all-power purchase agreement with Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC). We do not purchase our energy from Ameren.

The Department of Energy (DOE) oversees the availability of reliable electricity at all times. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is within the DOE. They regulate the interstate transmission of electricity and natural gas. FERC also regulates the wholesale sale of electricity across state lanes. To accomplish these tasks, FERC divided the country into regional areas and created Independent System Operators (ISOs). Locally, we are a part of the Midcontinent Independent System Operators, also known as MISO.

During extreme weather, MISO can declare a Maximum Generation Event. There are three different tiers of Energy Emergency Alerts:

- EEA 1 – All available generation resources are committed to meet firm load, firm transactions, and reserve commitments and is concerned about sustaining its required contingency reserves.
- EEA2 – Load management procedures in effect.
- EEA 3 – Firm load interruption is imminent or in progress (i.e. blackouts)

Recently, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) issued a warning informing all electric companies of the possibility of rolling blackouts in the region this summer caused by a shortage of energy capacity during peak usage times.

How does this affect you? With the forecasted high temperatures for the region this week, it is highly likely that energy usage will be greatly above normal and potentially create a shortage of electricity during peak usage. Unfortunately, unlike storm events that take down local power lines, these types of outages are beyond the control of TCEC's ability to restore power in a timely manner.

We ask that you continue to monitor announcements from TCEC's Facebook page. We will keep you informed in the case that a rolling blackout does occur. In the meantime, consider cutting back on your energy usage during peak times (typically 2-8 pm, Monday through Friday) by setting your air conditioner thermostats up a couple of degrees and putting off running dishwashers, clothes dryers, pool pumps and other non-essential electric devices during this period. If you have a medical condition that requires electricity, make sure you have a backup plan in the event of a large-scale blackout event.