



Important Information About Electricity Load Shedding/Controlled Outages and What It Could Mean to You

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) manages the electric load for about 90% of Texas. ERCOT is responsible for ensuring that the supply of electricity is sufficient to meet the member demand (load) for electricity.

When demand increases and/or if electric supply provided by all available power generation plants, wind farms, and other sources drops, ERCOT’s public notices (<https://www.ercot.com/>) could include the declaration of an energy emergency and subsequent series of escalating energy alerts:



2021 Energy Emergency Alert Overview

When electric supply and demand can't be balanced with normal procedures, we begin emergency operations using three levels of Energy Emergency Alerts (EEAs). Each level provides access to resources only available during tight conditions to protect the reliability of the electric system and prevent an uncontrolled system-wide outage. ERCOT currently has about 2,300 MW of additional capacity available when it enters emergency conditions.

EEA levels and actions

		
<p>LEVEL ONE</p> <p><i>If operating reserves drop below 2,300* MW and are not expected to recover within 30 minutes:</i></p> <p>Bring all available generation online and release any unused reserves</p> <p>Increase other generation supplies and use demand response to lower electric demand, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Imports from neighboring electric grids, if available: up to 1,220 MW</i> • <i>Switchable generation that can serve multiple electric grids, if available: up to 434 MW</i> • <i>Emergency Response Service (some commercial/small industrial customers who are paid to reduce their power within 30 minutes during emergencies): 820 MW</i> 	<p>LEVEL TWO</p> <p><i>If operating reserves drop below 1,750 MW and are not expected to recover within 30 minutes:</i></p> <p>Request energy conservation from public (if not already in effect): MW vary</p> <p>Reduce power by deploying remaining demand response programs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Deploy operating reserves carried by Load Resources (some large industrial customers who are paid to reduce their power): 898 MW</i> • <i>Load management programs from transmission companies: 270 MW</i> • <i>Voltage reduction by transmission companies: 100-200 MW</i> • <i>Deploy remaining Emergency Response Service (other commercial/small industrial customers who are paid to reduce their power within 10 minutes during emergencies): 820 MW</i> 	<p>LEVEL THREE</p> <p><i>If operating reserves drop below 1,375 MW, ERCOT moves into level 3. If operating reserves drop below 1,000 MW and are not expected to recover within 30 minutes and/or the grid's frequency level cannot be maintained at 60 Hz:</i></p> <p>As a last resort, instruct transmission companies to reduce demand on the electric system; typically in the form of controlled outages</p>

During an ERCOT declared energy emergency, when electric supply cannot meet member demand for electricity, the demand for electricity must be reduced by the transmission companies to avoid uncontrolled outages. This means under orders from ERCOT, electric utilities will implement controlled outages, also commonly referred to as load shedding, to reduce grid demand.

- All members should assume their power could go out for an extended period of time without advanced warning
- Members designated as **Critical Load**, in accordance with PUC 25.497, are not guaranteed an uninterrupted supply of electricity. It is the responsibility of the retail member to make necessary arrangements for alternative sources of electric power should an outage event occur.
- Residential members dependent on electric-powered medical equipment, such as those designated as **Critical Care** or **Chronic Condition**, in accordance with PUC 25.497, are encouraged to have a reliable alternative plan in the event they lose electricity. **It is important to note that those members are not excluded from controlled outages and may lose power during a load shed event. Anyone who depends on electricity for life-sustaining equipment should have a secondary and tertiary plan in place.**
- The procedure for a member to apply to be considered a **Critical/Chronic Care** residential member or a **Critical Load** can be found on BEC Power's website (<https://www.bartlettec.coop/>).
- Electric utilities will prioritize continuity of service for certain members whose service is critical to the community during an emergency or those whose service provides major support to the integrity of the electric system during an emergency. Examples include hospitals, major airports, and 911.
- Because a load shed event is an emergency order from ERCOT based on a shortfall of electricity being generated, electric utilities, including BEC Power, do not have the information to be able to notify individual members: 1) if they may lose power; 2) when they may lose power; or 3) how long the load shed event may last.
- In extreme power emergencies, ERCOT may require electric utilities to shed large amounts of load over long periods of time. In these instances, electric utilities like BEC Power may not have the ability to rotate outages without risking the stability of the entire electric grid. When this happens, some members may be without power for an extended period of time. These outages are critical for ensuring the integrity of the state's electric grid and preventing a system-wide blackout, which could be long-lasting and have a significant impact on all aspects of life.
- Electric utilities are required to continue to comply with ERCOT controlled member outage instructions until ERCOT determines that they are no longer required.
- The Public Utility Commission of Texas website (<https://www.puc.texas.gov/>) contains "Hot and Cold Weather, and General Energy-Saving Tips" and provides examples for members to reduce electricity use at times when involuntary load shedding events may be implemented.

Regardless of the nature of the load shedding event, BEC Power is committed to ensuring the safe and reliable delivery of electricity to its members 24-hours-per-day, 7-days-per-week. While BEC Power may not control the issues or conditions that require ERCOT to order load shed, we will do everything in our control to restore electricity when we are able to safely do so. In addition, we will work to keep our members informed about the situation through social media and direct communications to you.