

NERC predicts 5.9% increase in summer demand

The North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC) released its 2005 Summer Assessment May 16, which provides an assessment of projected electricity supply and demand in North America for the upcoming summer season.

The 2005 peak demand for electricity is projected to increase 5.9 percent in total compared to the actual 2004 noncoincident summer peak, although projected demand growth varies widely among the regions.

The increases in demand are not expected to create widespread brown-out conditions.

“NERC expects generating resources to be adequate to meet projected demand for electricity in North America this summer,” said Michehl R. Gent, NERC president and CEO.

“If all operating entities comply with NERC reliability standards, even under extreme conditions, the system can be operated reliably,” he added.

The assessment states that transmission systems are expected to perform reliably, although transmission congestion is expected to occur in some areas of North America this summer.

Fuel supplies, inventories and deliveries are also expected to be adequate.

Even in areas where resources are expected to be adequate to serve all customer demand, unanticipated equipment problems and extremely hot weather could combine to produce situations in which demands temporarily exceed available generation and transmission capacity.

In some local areas noted in the report, system operators may need to implement controlled demand reductions to maintain the constant balance between supply and demand needed to ensure overall bulk electric system reliability, according to the full NERC report.

To download the report, go to: <http://www.nerc.com/-filez/rasreports.html>. (NERC news release).

After floodwaters recede, beware of unseen dangers that remain

Floods are a troublesome and sometimes dangerous rite of spring in Montana, and the threat they pose does not necessarily recede along with the floodwaters.

Several kinds of illness are common in flood areas due to contaminated food and water, according to state officials.

Among the other hazards that floods may leave behind are broken gas lines, electrical hazards and structurally damaged buildings.

For those who must return to flood-stricken homes, the Montana Departments of Environmental Quality and Public Health and Human Services have compiled a list of tips for cleaning up after a flood.

“Floodwater can contain sewage or harmful chemicals,” said Howard Reid, manager of the food, drug and cosmetics program for DPHHS. “One of the most important things people can do to protect their health when cleaning up after a flood is to wash their hands in clean water—especially before eating.”

All water contaminated by flooding must be disinfected. This includes water from wells, springs and cisterns.

If flooding has disabled utilities, making it temporarily impossible to disinfect a flooded well, use bottled water. Other water used for drinking, cooking or washing should be treated.

IN CASE OF FLOOD

- Boil water for five minutes and then store in a clean container,
- Or mix five drops of household bleach into every quart and let stand at least five minutes (preferably 30 minutes to an hour) before using. Other tips offered by the state are:
- Discard food that has been exposed to floodwaters. Containers with screw tops cannot be adequately disinfected and should be discarded.
- Discard refrigerated food if the power has been out for more than six hours or the food has been warmed to above 45 degrees Fahrenheit for more than three hours. Discard most frozen foods that have thawed and sat for more than four hours at temperatures above 45 degrees F.
- Adhere to the adage, “When in doubt, throw it out.”
- Do not enter a building that has been flooded until there are no doubts about its safety.
- Be cautious entering enclosed spaces where gasses may have accumulated.
- Follow the instructions of your utility company concerning the restoration of gas and electrical service.
- Disinfect flooded clothing and bedding with bleach.

