

You asked.

We're answering.

This is the seventh in a series of responses to concerns expressed by members.

Member comment: "I've been a member for years. I try to save energy at home but am embarrassed to admit that I'm not on a load management program. Does it really make a difference?"

Our response: The cooperative's load management programs are important tools for managing the demand for electricity and for avoiding premium wholesale prices for purchasing electricity during extreme demand peaks.

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Co-op members volunteer to participate in load management for their electric heat source, central air conditioning, electric water heating and/or irrigation systems.

Load management allows Dairyland Power, our wholesale power provider, to reschedule the amount of electricity being used by consumers. Electricity cannot be efficiently stored, so the production and supply of electricity is based in real-time: the electricity being used by customers on the system must be made and supplied while it is being used. The amount of electricity being used by customers cannot exceed the amount of electricity that can be made and supplied by the plants.

Achieving the balance between demand and supply has been made a bit easier by Dairyland's decision last year to join MISO. The Midwest Independent System Operator is a group of electric generation and transmission organizations that work together to form a regional energy market. This energy market is essentially a pool of generation resources that can be accessed by its members. Dairyland can rely on the MISO system during times of high demand. During times of low demand, Dairyland can sell electricity on MISO to another MISO member. MISO maintains a schedule of all generating plants on its system and optimizes production by instructing member systems to either shut down plants or produce electricity to meet demand. The centralized management results in more efficient, less expensive production for everyone.

Membership in MISO has provided many benefits to Dairyland and our cooperative, but

there continue to be times of extremely high demand when load management is needed. Dairyland also uses load management to manage the amount of electricity it has available for use by other MISO members. During a load management event, enrolled equipment is turned off or cycled off and on for several hours. The reduction in demand from those pieces of enrolled equipment reduces the load on the system.

St. Croix Electric offers residential, farm and commercial load management programs. Upon enrollment, a load management receiver is installed on the equipment. Dairyland transmits a message to the receiver during a load management event then the receiver automatically controls the equipment as needed.

The cooperative and Dairyland typically experience load management events on the hottest days of summer when air conditioners are on full blast and on the coldest days of winter. Air conditioners on load management are cycled off and on in 15 minute increments during a load management event so that the level of comfort in the house is minimally impacted. During the winter, heat sources on load management are turned off and the resident flips over to a pre-determined alternate heat source. The current load management status is available through our website at www.sce.net under the Quick Links menu. Commercial and industrial accounts typically receive a courtesy call before a load management event begins.

Around 4,900 St. Croix Electric member

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locations participate in one or more of our load management programs for a total of 7,300 controlled loads. When Dairyland issues a full load control, our cooperative shaves 48,724 kilowatts off the load on the Dairyland system. Programs available at our cooperative include:

- Electric water heaters
- Electric home heat sources including in-floor heat and electric thermal storage furnaces
- Central air conditioning
- Agricultural irrigation systems
- Commercial equipment/facilities

Members participating in load management programs earn bill credits or receive special lower electric rates for the controlled load. For information about participating in a load management program, send an email to scec@scecnet.net or call our office at 715-796-7000.



715-796-7000

800-924-3407

www.scecnet.net