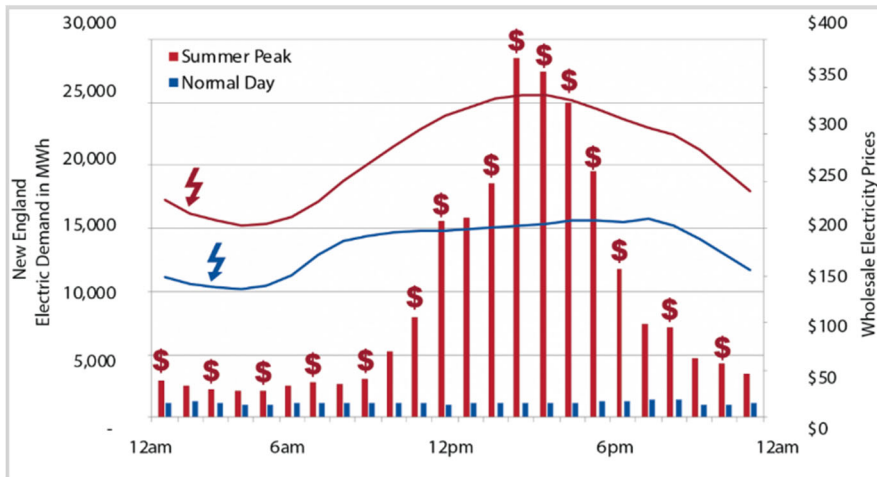


When you use power matters!

[New England's Independent System Operator \(ISO-NE\)](#) buys power in competitive energy markets to meet demand projections, which are largely temperature-dependent. In times of greatest demand, ISO-NE dispatches “peaker” plants. Peakers normally are uncompetitive because they are old, inefficient, dirty—and the most expensive.

The Green Energy Consumers Alliance explains, “For a few hours every winter and summer, electricity demand



skyrockets to almost twice the normal amount. These ‘peak events’ are accompanied by wholesale electricity prices *more than 10 times* the average year-round price of electricity. In fact, just 1% of the year accounts for 8% of our energy costs, and 10% of the year accounts for 40% of annual costs.” ISO-NE also has longer term capacity markets designed to ensure enough generators are in place to meet the highest projected peak needs. Again, the peakers drive up costs.

Source:

<https://www.greenenergyconsumers.org/>

We can do something about this. When consumers shave the peak by reducing loads in these periods of extreme heat or cold, they 1) save money, 2) help the environment, 3) forestall the need to build out even greater infrastructure, and 4) empower the demand side of the supply and demand equation.

How to be a *powerful* electricity consumer

First, sign up for Shave the Peak alerts to receive notifications about peak events. The Green Energy Consumers Alliance will let you know by text or email when a peak day is coming up and send you some suggestions for cutting down on electricity use during peak hours. [Click here](#) for a link to sign up.

Second, think about the ways you can help shut down that peaker unit by conserving energy when it most counts. The Green Energy Consumers Alliance suggests:

- The easiest way to save energy during peak events, which usually occur in the afternoon through evening, is by turning down the heat or air conditioning.
- In the summer, turn the air conditioning down or off. Use fans whenever possible, and avoid using large appliances in the afternoon and evening.
- During winter peaks, lower your thermostat a few degrees. You can also shave the peak by delaying your energy use. Wait until after 8 or 9 pm to run the dishwasher, turn on the laundry machine, or cook in electric ovens.
- Take a break from TV, computers, and other electronic devices for the afternoon—or charge portable devices beforehand and run them off of battery during the peak.
- If you have an electric car, make sure that you charge it before or after the peak, not during.

