



Con Edison Projects Record Demand for Power This Summer; Increase in Electric Use Driven By Healthy Economy

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Citing a continued upturn in the area's economy that has led to new business growth, Consolidated Edison Company of New York Inc., (Con Edison) projects that electricity use by its three million customers in New York City and Westchester County will reach new heights this summer.

If summer's heat and humidity reach levels the company has planned for, a new record peak demand of 11,650 megawatts could occur, which would surpass the previous record of 11,013 megawatts set on July 15, 1997, by 637 megawatts. The entire borough of Staten Island, for example, would be expected to use about 500 megawatts during a peak period. A megawatt is a million watts or enough electricity to light 10,000 100-watt light bulbs.

The peak load projection is important because the Con Edison system must have enough power available to meet its customers' requirements, plus an 18 percent reserve.

"Throughout the year we prepare power plants, transmission and distribution lines and substations to meet the demands placed on them by hot and humid weather. In fact, some of our summer preparations may take several years to plan, engineer and construct. Our electric system must be in high state of readiness to deliver the power needed by our customers during heat waves," said Lou Rana, Con Edison's vice president of system and transmission operations.

In order to ensure a reliable supply of electricity for its customers this summer, Con Edison has an extensive program to inspect, test, upgrade, and repair high-voltage cables, transformers and substation equipment. Before the summer begins, the company will have tested over 200 distribution cables, and upgraded the electrical capability of 153 high-voltage cables, 87 network transformers and 10 substations. Con Edison expects to invest \$414 million in its electric transmission and distribution infrastructure in 1999.

The transmission lines that feed power at up to 345,000 volts into and within New York City and Westchester are undergoing a rigorous inspection and maintenance program as well. The program also calls for the inspection and maintenance of 92 high-voltage outdoor substations.

The company's control center operators maintain an around-the-clock vigil on the electrical system throughout the year using state-of-the-art computerized monitoring tools. Their actions enable field crews to respond quickly to potential problems before outages can occur. If power outages do occur, the company's quick-response capability is designed to minimize the duration of service interruptions.

Con Edison is one of the nation's largest utility companies, with more than \$7 billion in annual revenues and approximately \$14 billion in assets. The company, a subsidiary of Consolidated Edison, Inc., provides electric, gas and steam service to more than three million customers in New York City and Westchester County, New York.