



## Public Health Administration

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### ***Health Department Urges Residents to Reduce Energy Consumption to Avoid Service Outages***

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. – Butte County and the rest of the western states continue to experience a widespread heatwave that will put pressure on our energy grid. In order to avoid electricity shortages, Butte County residents and businesses are asked to reduce energy usage between 3 and 10 pm, starting today through Wednesday.

If the entire State is not successful in conserving energy, there will be rolling blackouts through Tuesday with a projected 4,000 MW shortage each day.

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) has been in in close contact with the California Independent System Operator (ISO) to monitor the current challenges with the power grid due to high electricity use driven by this unprecedented heat wave and shifting patterns of energy usage related to the COVID-19 pandemic. ISO oversees the bulk of the electrical power system and has informed all energy companies that the heatwave is impacting all western states — so there is limited power relief or support from surrounding states.

Sign up to receive Flex Alert notifications from your utility provider: [flexalert.org](https://flexalert.org)

#### **Individuals and Business Can Take Action to Conserve Energy:**

- Set your thermostat to 78° or higher between 3 and 10 pm
- Refrain from using major appliances between 3 and 10 pm
- Turn off unnecessary lights and appliances

#### **Additional Actions You Can Take:**

- Adjust Your Thermostat
  - During peak hours or when you're not home, remember to set your thermostat at 78° or higher. Setting your air conditioner 5° higher can save up to 20 percent on cooling costs.
  - Pre-cool your home by running air conditioning at 72 degrees in the early part of the day (when it is more efficient) then turn your system to 78 or higher during the hottest part of the day when demand is the highest.
  - Use smart or programmable features to help maintain energy savings when you're not home.
- Close Windows and Doors
  - Keep windows and doors closed to prevent the loss of cooled or heated air.
  - On summer nights, open windows to let cooler air in when safe. In the morning before the day starts to heat up, close windows and blinds to keep warm air out.
  - Tilt blinds up and close drapes and shades on windows that receive direct sunlight.

- Smart Energy Use
  - Turn off unnecessary lighting and use task or desktop lamps with LEDs instead of overhead lights.
  - Enable "power management" on all computers and turn off when not in use.
  - Unplug phone charges, power strips (those without a switch) and other equipment when not in use. Taken together, these small items can use as much power as your refrigerator.
- Access and Functional Needs
  - Check in on neighbors, friends and family who may be at risk.
  - Charge medical devices in off hours and have back-ups plan for if the power goes out.
  - In addition to traditional community support channels, individuals with access and functional needs should reach out to local government for assistance.
  - Contact local utilities companies if you are dependent on power for assistive devices.
- Major Appliance Use
  - Postpone using major appliances like the oven, dishwasher, clothes washer, and dryer until cooler times of the day to avoid heating up your home.
  - Run your dishwasher and clothes washer only when full. Wait until after 9 p.m. to use these and other major appliances.
  - When possible, wash clothes in cold water. About 90 percent of the energy used in a clothes washer goes to water heating.
- Clean or Replace Your Filters
  - A dirty filter forces your air conditioner and furnace to work harder, wasting money, using more energy or natural gas.
- Adjust Your Water Heater
  - Turn your water heater down to 120° or the "normal" setting. Water heating accounts for about 13 percent of home energy costs.
- Conservation Programs
  - Consider participating in your utility's demand response program. These voluntary programs are short, temporary measures to reduce energy consumption when power supplies are critically low and a Flex Alert has been issued. Contact your local electric utility to learn about your utility's program and incentives they may offer to participate.

Learn more about extreme heat in Butte County: [www.buttecounty.net/extremeheat](http://www.buttecounty.net/extremeheat)

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