



GCEA NEWS



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Member Owned  A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Shaving Peak Demand

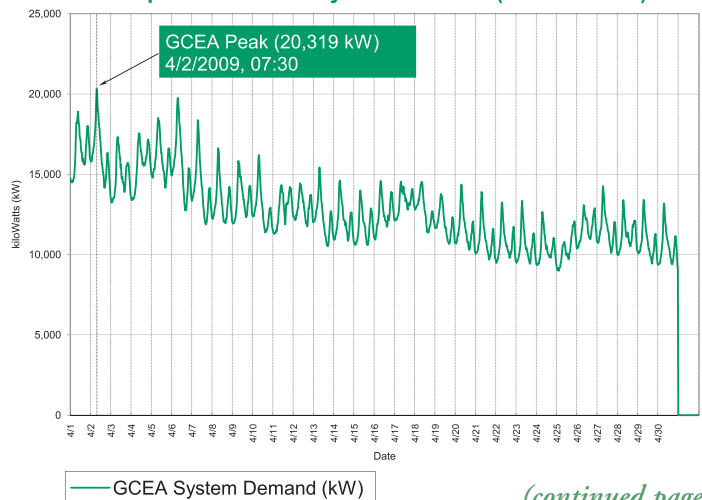
By Rocky Ferran, Staff Engineer and Vicki Spencer, Energy Use Specialist

In today's economy, our members are not just interested in reducing their carbon footprints, but also want to keep their energy costs down. Both these objectives can be achieved through demand-side management, or DSM, which is based on the idea of reducing energy demand rather than increasing energy supply.

Some of our members are already practicing energy efficiency measures and have noticed a reduction in energy usage on their monthly statements. But each member's individual use of electricity is just one part of the demand-side management formula. There is another aspect to DSM that requires participation of all GCEA members. The electricity that GCEA purchases from Tri-State has two components. One component is the actual amount of energy used by our members (measured in kWh) and the cost of this energy is relatively inexpensive. Another component is energy demand (measured in kW) which varies throughout the day, month, and year, depending upon individual lifestyles and the weather. The price GCEA pays for energy demand is much higher because Tri-State must run more power plants or purchase additional (and more expensive) electricity on the open market to meet sudden and unpredictable increases in demand. These increases may only last for a short period of time before returning to a lower, more consistent level.

The monthly demand charge that GCEA pays Tri-State is based on the peak demand for that month, or that one half-hour period during that month that the demand is the highest. The graph below shows the fluctuations in GCEA's energy demand for a typical month, in this case April 2009. You can see the high points in energy demand during the colder beginning part of the month, with the peak occurring on April 2 at 7:30 a.m. After the colder part of the month, demand returned to a lower level for the rest of the month. Since the peak reached 20,319 kW, we had to pay over \$436,000 in demand charges to Tri-State, which was more than 63% of the total amount paid that month. If demand were lowered from that peak to the next highest level of 19,750 kW on April 6, then we would have been charged roughly \$12,000 less in demand charges for April. If we could have avoided the three higher levels all together, and kept demand

April 2009 GCEA System Demand (Entire Month)



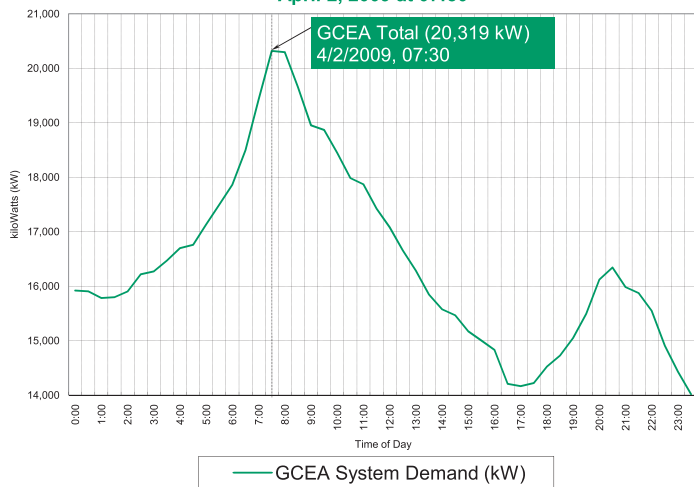
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Shaving Peak Demand (continued from page 1)

at the more consistent level of 18,508 kW which occurred on April 5, then we would have been charged nearly \$39,000 less in demand charges for that month. GCEA must pass the cost of demand on to our members, so one way we can keep energy costs down is for you to help us reduce the peak demand.

GCEA monitors the energy demand every day and by analyzing the data, we have found some reoccurring patterns. One pattern is that in the colder, winter months energy demand tends to peak from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. Another pattern is that in the warmer, summer months energy demand tends to peak from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. However, in any month the peak may occur during either of these time frames. In the graph below, you can see that the peak was 20,319 kW at 7:30 a.m.

April 2009 GCEA System Coincident Peak Demand
April 2, 2009 at 07:30



How can members help reduce these energy spikes during these high periods of use? First, and most important, is for members to be aware of the fact that how much energy you use from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. makes a substantial difference in GCEA's demand charges. Second, members can help reduce peak demand by changing some habits. For example, instead of starting the dishwasher as you leave the house for work, you could delay its start until noon, when energy demand is typically lower. If you usually start the dishwasher after dinner, you could wait to start it before you go to bed. Another demand-saving measure would be to consider putting a timer on your electric water heater. Most people take their showers or baths in the mornings and evenings during the peak demand periods. After you take a shower, the water heater kicks in and immediately starts to heat more water. However, you probably won't need more hot water right away. To reduce demand during the peak, you could program the water heater to start up during the middle of the day or the middle of the night and still have hot water when you need it.

These are just some examples of how members can work together to keep GCEA's energy costs down. When members join together to help the co-op, everyone benefits.



Lake City women are empowered with their new weatherization skills.

Weatherization/ Energy Efficiency Workshops For Women

This fall, GCEA began to offer workshops for women to learn how to weatherize their homes and make them more energy efficient. The first workshops were scheduled in Lake City and Mt. Crested Butte during October. Additional workshops will be offered from November through February in Ohio Creek, Crested Butte and the Gunnison area. All participants receive a "We Can Do It" tote bag filled with more than \$60 worth of supplies to help get started on their own projects. Funding for these workshops is provided through GCEA and a grant from the Gunnison Branch of the American Association for University Women.

Contact Vicki at **970-641-7359** for more information.



Adele Bachman and Brooke Murphy learn how to wrap a water heater at the Mt. Crested Butte workshop.

Last Chance For Insulate Colorado Rebates!

GCEA's Insulate Colorado grant from the Governor's Energy Office expires on December 31, 2009. This may be your last chance to get a 25% rebate for insulating your home's attics and walls. Contact Member Services at **970-641-3520** to find out how you can take advantage of the Insulate Colorado Program before it ends.

Facts To Consider When Purchasing A New Water Heater (or How to Compare Energy Efficiency Ratings)

By Vicki Spencer, Energy Use Specialist

GCEA is often asked about the energy efficiency of water heaters. To facilitate the efficiency comparison of different appliances, the Department of Energy (DOE) has developed a standard test procedure and the Federal Trade Commission has developed a standard label called the Energy Guide. The yellow Energy Guide label is required on every energy-consuming appliance and it gives the annual cost of operation based on the DOE standardized test. When you are shopping for a new water heater, you should compare the annual operating costs of each appliance. Although you can make comparisons while you are in the store, a helpful tool that you can use at home is the GAMA Directory which is issued by the manufacturing industry twice a year. You can access the directory at www.ahridirectory.org. Once you are at the web site, you can click on the Residential tab and scroll down to "water heaters". Then you just enter the manufacturer's name and the model number. (This directory also has information about the efficiency ratings of heat and air conditioning units).

The DOE test for water heaters develops a value known as the Energy Factor (EF). It is a measurement of the overall efficiency of the unit. The test procedure is a 24-hour test which begins with a series of 6 water draws during the first 6 hours of the test. The test simulates the normal use of the water heater during the day and the standby condition at night. The amount of energy used in total by the water heater is measured and used to

calculate the efficiency of the unit, or the EF. Water heaters with higher EF numbers are more efficient. The EF value is converted into an annual cost of operation which is printed on the Energy Guide label that is attached to each unit. Federal law requires that manufacturers have their EF values verified by an independent lab. The law also requires that each manufacturer's efficiency claims must be based on the DOE test procedures. Therefore, Energy Factors (EFs) are the most precise measurement for comparison.

Even if you are not in the market for a water heater today, you never know when your old heater might give out and you will be faced with making a quick decision about the purchase of a new one. GCEA offers its members a \$75 rebate on the purchase of a new electric water heater with a minimum capacity of 30 gallons and a 6-year warranty. If you purchase a high efficiency Marathon water heater (EF = .94) from GCEA, you will be eligible for a \$95 rebate. GCEA will also purchase green power to offset the greenhouse gas emissions from the operation of your Marathon water heater for one year. At the end of the year you may continue to purchase the same amount of offsets (four blocks at \$.50/block) at an annual cost of \$24.

Additional rebates are available if you have your water heater controlled by a timer and if your primary heating is by electric ground source heat pump. For more information on GCEA's appliance rebates, visit www.gcea.coop or call **1-800-726-3523**.

GCEA Continues To Offer A Green Power Option

GCEA continues to support members who wish to reduce the production of greenhouse gases by participating in Tri-State's Voluntary Renewable Resource Program. Under this program, GCEA purchases green power at a premium from Tri-State and then passes the cost of green power on to participating GCEA members.

Green power must be purchased in 100 kW blocks, so if you use an average of 700 kilowatt hours a month, you would want to purchase 7 blocks. The cost is currently just fifty cents for one block of green power. This means that you would pay only an additional \$3.50 each month for your energy to come from renewable energy sources.

If you are interested in supporting renewable energy through GCEA's Green Power Program, you need to complete the sign-up sheet found at www.gcea.coop or you can call the main office at **970-641-3520** for assistance.

Free Energy Audits

GCEA is offering energy audits to help members identify air leaks and measures they can take to improve energy efficiency in their homes. For more information, or to schedule an audit, call Scott at **970-641-7319**.



LEAP
warmth in every home

LEAP is a federally funded program designed to assist with winter heating costs.

The program runs November 1st through April 30th. If you need help paying your electricity bill, contact the Colorado Department of Human Services at **1-866-432-8435**.



Curtis Allen Receives 2009 Stewardship Award

On September 14th, the Gunnison Sage-Grouse Working Group honored Curtis Allen, of Ralph Allen Ranch, Inc., with the 2009 Stewardship Award. This annual award is the group's way of acknowledging people who have been exemplary in their contribution to local efforts to conserve the Gunnison sage-grouse. Curtis' interest in Gunnison sage-grouse, cooperation with Colorado Department of Wildlife (CDOW) and other agencies, and progressive livestock management over 4,000 acres of ranch land make him truly deserving of the Stewardship Award. The Working Group also presented the 2008 Stewardship Award for 2008 to Leslie Spicer who dedicated more than a decade to assisting the CDOW as a lek count coordinator and wildlife technician. Her faithfully recorded wildlife observations continue to assist CDOW biologists today.

Save Money on Your Home Heating Costs



Start saving money while enjoying great comfort by installing a Steffes Heating System. Most home owners have saved 50% or more on their annual heating bill.*

Learn more by contacting your local Power Company or go to heatforlessnow.com for more information.

Call today and start saving money!

STEFFES Heating Systems

SAVE 50% OR MORE!

*This is based on real savings on previous bills.

Community For Sustainable Energy Campaign

The Community for Sustainable Energy initiated a grassroots campaign last August asking GCEA members to write the board of directors regarding our energy efficiency policies. GCEA's board has tried to respond personally to each of the letters. However, the board was unable to respond to some members because the names on the letters were illegible and/or the letters did not include sufficient addresses and could not be found in our member database. *We apologize to anyone who did not receive a response and would be happy to discuss the letter with you.*

Paragon Computers/ Peak Internet Joins GCEA's Co-Operative Connections® Program

Paragon Computers/Peak Internet is offering GCEA members 10% off in-house labor or 1 month free Peak Internet service for new DSL accounts with a one-year contract. Paragon is open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm.

Other participating businesses and their discounts include:

Dove Graphics

10% off first order; 5% off all other orders

GL Computer Service

5% discount on all in-shop labor

Healthy Smiles

Dental Hygiene Care, Inc.

50% off teeth whitening treatment with purchase of dental cleaning

QT Cabins & Western Store

10% discount on all boots, hats and western apparel

Thurston Kitchen and Bath

30% off list price for FINA cabinetry; 5% discount on 3-piece appliance package; and 10% discount on "white glove" delivery service with appliance package purchase.

Corrections and comments are always welcome. Please contact the editor, Vicki Spencer, Energy Use/Communications Specialist: vspencer@gcea.coop or 800-726-3523 or 970-641-7359.