

System Alerts, Warnings and Emergencies

The California ISO carefully plans for times when electricity may be in short supply, and typically the power grid has ample reserves to satisfy demand around the clock. However, there are times when supply margins are tight, especially during the summer, when air conditioning drives up electricity demand. When that happens, the ISO has robust procedures for communicating with the public and market participants, and for taking action to protect grid reliability.

WHAT TRIGGERS A NOTIFICATION?

- Loss of generating or transmission equipment
- Peak electricity demand forecast
- Hot temperatures, and especially persistent heatwaves.

TYPES OF NOTIFICATIONS

Conservation notifications



Flex Alerts

A call to consumers to voluntarily conserve energy when demand for power could outstrip supply. This generally occurs during heatwaves when electrical demand is high. The ISO can declare a Flex Alert whenever there is expected stress on the system. [Click here](#) for more information on Flex Alerts, how to conserve energy, and to sign up for notifications.

Operational notifications



Restricted Maintenance Operations

Requires generators and transmission operators to postpone any planned outages for routine equipment maintenance, ensuring all grid assets are available for use.



Alert

Issued by 3 p.m. the day before anticipated operating reserve deficiencies.



Warning

Indicates that grid operators anticipate using electricity reserves. Activates demand response programs to decrease overall demand.

Emergency notifications



Transmission Emergency

Declared for any event threatening or limiting transmission grid capability, including line or transformer overloads or loss.



Contingency Reserve shortfalls exist or forecast to occur.

Strong need for conservation.



The ISO has taken all mitigating actions and is no longer able to provide its expected energy requirements.

Requires ISO intervention in the market, such as ordering power plants online.



The ISO is unable to meet minimum contingency reserve requirements, and load interruption is imminent or in progress.

Notice issued to utilities of potential electricity interruptions.

Go to www.caiso.com for the latest grid emergency information and to sign up for alerts.