

# Public Utility Commission of Texas

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**News Release**  
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## **PowerfulAdvice offers more electricity tips Texans can monitor ERCOT grid status**

Improved features on the PowerfulAdvice Web site give Texans more information to use electricity more efficiently, lower their bills, and reduce strain on the electric grid.

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) has updated the site that uses a color-coded system to alert Texans about conditions on the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) grid. PowerfulAdvice can be accessed through the PUC's homepage [www.puc.state.tx.us](http://www.puc.state.tx.us) by clicking on the colored box at the bottom of the page with Today's Conservation Alert.

PowerfulAdvice uses the following four color codes:

**Conservation Encouraged-  
Normal Conditions**

On GREEN days, no Electricity Emergency is likely, but normal conservation measures are recommended to reduce Texans' electricity bills. On GREEN days, conservation, in conjunction with shopping for a lower cost electricity provider, can significantly reduce your electric bill:

Set air conditioning thermostats to at least 78 degrees and use fans to make it feel cooler. Block the sun by closing blinds or drapes on windows that get direct sun.

Turn off lights, TVs, computers, or other electrical equipment when not in use.

Run your dishwasher and laundry equipment only when fully loaded.

Go to [www.powertochoose.org](http://www.powertochoose.org) to see if you can save money by switching to a lower cost retail electricity provider. Your choice of electric provider does not affect the reliability of your electric service, the frequency or duration of outages, or the time it will take to have your electric service restored if an outage occurs.

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**Conservation Needed-  
Power Watch**

On YELLOW days, extra conservation measures are urged because electricity shortages may occur during peak usage hours. A YELLOW Alert will be declared for days where temperatures statewide are expected to be extremely hot, leading to record or near-record electricity consumption. A YELLOW Alert also will be declared if unexpected high demand and unexpected outages of power plants occur. During YELLOW alerts there is an expected or actual declaration of Step 1 of ERCOT's Emergency Electricity Curtailment Plan (ECCP), which includes procurement of additional generation. An inability to get more generation could lead to a declaration of ECCP Step 2, which includes interruptible loads, usually to large industrial electric customers. All customers are encouraged to reduce their electricity use as much as possible.

Turn off all unnecessary lights, appliances, and electronic equipment.

When at home, close blinds and drapes that get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 78 degrees or higher, and use fans to cool the air.

When away from home, set air conditioning thermostats to 85 degrees and turn all fans off before you leave. Block the sun by closing blinds or drapes on windows that will get direct sun.

Do not use your dishwasher, laundry equipment, hair dryers, coffee makers, or other home appliances.

Avoid opening refrigerators or freezers more than necessary. Use microwaves for cooking instead of an electric range or oven.

Set your pool pump to run in the early morning or evening instead of the afternoon.

Go to [www.powertochoose.org](http://www.powertochoose.org) to see if you can save money by switching to a lower cost retail electricity provider. Your choice of electric provider does not affect the reliability of your electric service, the frequency or duration of outages, or the time it will take to have your electric service restored if an outage occurs.

**Conservation Critical-  
Power Warning**

On RED days, conservation is critical to avoiding Electricity Emergencies and controlled rolling outages may be needed to prevent uncontrolled rolling blackouts. RED Alerts will be declared when there is insufficient electricity available or expected to be available to meet customer demand and rolling outages may be needed. Customers should reduce electricity use as much as possible. During a RED alert, ERCOT will be in Step 3 of its Emergency Electricity Curtailment Plan (ECCP), which includes the deployment of emergency interruptible loads.

Limit electricity usage to only that consumption that is absolutely necessary. Turn off all unnecessary lights, appliances, and electronic equipment.

Do not use your dishwasher, laundry equipment, hair dryers, coffee makers, pool pump, or other home appliances.

When at home, close blinds and drapes on windows that get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 80 degrees, and use fans to cool the air.

When away from home, close blinds and drapes on windows that will get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 85 degrees and turn all fans off before you leave.

Use microwaves or outdoor grills for cooking. Using an indoor range or stove will heat up your house and cause your air-conditioner to run harder.

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If rotating outages are ordered, they will be limited to periods of 10 to 45 minutes unless equipment trips due to a power surge during the restoration process.

Customers can minimize the chance that power surges will occur by turning off all appliances, lights, and other electrical equipment. Leave one task light on to determine when power has been restored.

Minimize unnecessary travel, as traffic signals may go out of service and create traffic jams.

**Power Emergency-  
Rotating Outages**

On BLACK days, controlled rolling outages are occurring and are needed to prevent uncontrolled rolling blackouts. During BLACK alerts, there is insufficient electricity available to meet demand and ERCOT is in Step 4 of its Energy Electricity Curtailment Plan (EECP), which includes rolling outages. Customers should reduce their consumption of electricity as much as possible to help prevent rolling blackouts.

Rotating outages will be limited to periods of 10 to 45 minutes, unless equipment trips due to a power surge during the restoration process.

Customers can minimize the chance that power surges will occur by turning off all appliances, lights, and other electrical equipment. Leave one task light on to determine when power has been restored.

Minimize unnecessary travel, as traffic signals may go out of service, resulting in traffic jams.

*All PUC News Releases are available at [www.puc.state.tx.us](http://www.puc.state.tx.us)*