

COMMERCIAL EMERGENCY ENERGY MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Dakota Electric Association is deeply concerned about the well-being of its communities, and understands the difficult position many members are facing due to COVID-19. More than ever, we remain steadfast on delivering safe and reliable electricity.

To help members manage their electric costs, we suspended disconnections for non-payment and are waiving late fees for residential and small commercial members. Please contact us at 651-463-6212 to make payment arrangements if you need help with your electric bill.

We encourage our business members to consider the following energy-management strategies:

MAKE SOME TEMPORARY ADJUSTMENTS

Adjust your thermostat and building energy management systems to reflect the current needs of your business.

Turn off entryway heaters for entries no longer used. Some heaters only have a low setting and must be turned off at the breaker.

Turn off auxiliary heat in rooms that are not being used, such as a baseboard heater under an office window.

Ensure all product, materials and water lines will not be damaged by turning heat down or off.

REDUCE REFRIGERATION

Consolidate food from multiple walk-in coolers, freezers or employee refrigerators into one unit. This allows you to shut off power to the empty units.

FOCUS ON MAINTENANCE

Perform maintenance on equipment around your facility to ensure efficient operation. Fix any water leaks and make sure refrigeration door gaskets are sealed correctly.

REDUCE AND UNPLUG

Turn off unnecessary lighting or lit zones that are not being used. Keep security lighting in place for safety.

Unplug unused devices and equipment, including small appliances and electronics, at workstations not in use.

Evaluate which fans and motors run continuously during regular business operations but could be shut off or scaled back at this time.

COMMUNICATE AND EDUCATE

If your facility still has employees working, communicate the energy-efficient steps you are taking to reduce electricity use.

Designate one person, or a group of people, to ensure the proper energy management steps are taken before leaving the facility each day.

Discourage the use of personal space heaters, decorative lights, fans and mini fridges.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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CONTACT THE ENERGY EXPERTS®

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UNDERSTANDING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

Most commercial account bills are primarily made up of two components; demand and consumption. Electricity use is comparable to driving a car. Your overall kilowatt-hour consumption is like total miles driven in the month. Demand, billed as kW, is like your maximum speed within the billing period.

Consumption (kWh charge)

Consumption is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh) and represents the amount of electricity that has been consumed over a certain time period. Consumption should decrease in a facility as the facility is used less.

Demand (kW charge)

Demand is measured in kilowatts (kW) and represents the rate at which electricity is consumed.

Check your statement

If your facility is vacant for an entire billing period, the maximum demand should be less than previous months. If your facility is vacant for a portion of a billing period or an entire billing period, the total consumption should be less than previous months.

Reduce your demand

Whether your facility is vacant or running at full capacity, demand can be reduced by not running large electric loads at the same time. For example, run your dishwasher after other electric loads have been turned down or off for the day. Keep in mind, some electric loads may need to run at the same time to maintain business operations or to keep occupants comfortable. Typically, the largest loads for businesses are heating, ventilation and cooling systems.

Tips for landlords

Landlords taking over electric accounts between tenants must ensure the previous tenant turned off all large electrical loads before the transfer. Loads still running contribute to the account's demand reading for that billing period.

Planning construction?

Consider what equipment construction companies might use. Keep in mind the effects space heaters and compressors have on demand and consumption.

New equipment is often tested after installation. If it has high demand (kW), the test run will likely contribute to your demand reading for that billing period. Stop using unnecessary coincidental loads during the test run if possible.

RESOURCES

Dakota Electric Association

Contact Member Services for billing questions and payment arrangements at 651-463-6212.

Contact Energy Services at 651-463-6243 or your Business Account Representative regarding energy efficiency rebates, account inquiries and energy-management questions.

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (MN DEED)

Information for employers and businesses: <https://mn.gov/deed/>

- Critical sector exemption information
- Small business emergency loans, grants and guarantee programs
- Unemployment insurance
- Business related COVID FAQs

COMMUNITY BENEFIT FINANCIAL COMPANY (CBFC)

Financial support to Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Montana nonprofits and other community organizations impacted by and responding to the pandemic

Send inquiries to: <https://ottobremer.tfaforms.net/5>

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Business COVID Toolkits: Customizable workplace flyers, preparedness checklists and more

<https://www.uschamber.com/coronavirus>

<https://www.mnchamber.com/blog/covid-19-business-toolkit>