

Level Your Peak Demand This Summer

Depending on the season and your business, it is not unusual for demand charges to comprise a high percentage of a facility's total electric bill. Cooling, lighting and other systems can contribute to higher demand.

Measuring demand

High loads strain the electric grid, and customers must pay their share of the cost of having electrical infrastructure available to serve needs year round. For most facilities, the cost of electricity is made up of two components: consumption in kilowatt-hours (kWh) and demand charges in kilowatts (kW). Demand meters record energy use over 15-minute time intervals, so a single energy-intensive interval will result in a high demand reading applied over an entire month's electric bill and increase it.

Fortunately, there are strategies to help reduce demand:

Operational changes

- Reduce cooling needs by setting room temperatures as high as 78 F and allowing employees to wear appropriate comfortable clothing.
- Turn off printers and other office equipment when not in use. Also, use “sleep” modes on computers and other equipment.
- Install occupancy sensors in restrooms and conference rooms to turn off lights automatically when no one using them.

Equipment and building systems

- Use an energy management system (EMS) to ensure that high-energy-use equipment will not operate at the same time as other equipment.
- Use variable speed drives on air conditioning system pumps, motors and fans.
- Install window films, solar screens or awnings on south- and west-facing windows to lower cooling needs.

For more resources to help you reduce demand, please visit [rockymountainpower/toolkit](https://www.rockymountainpower.com/resources/toolkit).

Source: Rocky Mountain Power and Tech Resources