



## What is Beat the Peak?

Beat the Peak is a member notification system that

- Teaches members how electricity use varies during the day and across the seasons of the year
- Helps members understand that they can help reduce electricity use at specific times of the day across the whole electric system
- Relates individual member choices about electricity use to the broader effort to control costs
- Allows members to voluntarily sign up to receive notices of peak demand periods
- Sends members notifications (via text, email and/or voice messages) at times when they can help reduce electricity use, that is, when they can beat the peak need for electricity

## How and why does the price of electricity vary from hour to hour?

Higher demand for electricity causes utilities to use more expensive fuels. Utilities use their most efficient and least costly generators first. Then, as electricity demand increases, utilities turn on generators that are less efficient or that use more expensive fuels. That's why higher electricity use can mean higher costs for your cooperative.

The demand for electricity is greatest between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. in winter months. In the summer, peak electricity demand occurs between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

## How will joining Beat the Peak help me?

By joining the Beat the Peak program, members are teaming up with the co-op to save on power costs for *everyone*.

Electricity costs only pennies per kilowatt-hour, but the cost during off-peak hours of the day drops to about half that of on-peak costs — a dramatic difference. And, those higher costs must be passed on to members.

By lowering total energy use when it is most expensive, the co-op can lower total power costs. Because electric cooperatives are not-for-profit companies, the savings can be passed on to members.

## Will I get a discount on electricity costs?

No. The savings come from improvement in the *system's* peak demand, but those savings are real. Since it costs more to generate electricity during peak-use times of the day, it truly helps when we work together to reduce electricity use on winter mornings and summer afternoons.

## How does the program work?

Your cooperative and its power suppliers continually monitor the demand for energy. Using weather forecasts and historical energy use data, they predict when peak demand for electricity will occur.

In advance of that time, participating members can be notified by:

- Email
- Text message
- Voice message

Certain actions can be taken during Beat the Peak notification periods. Those actions could include:

- Adjusting thermostats by 3 degrees
- Turning off lights
- Delaying the use of major appliances such as dishwashers, washing machines and clothes dryers until after the predicted peak demand period has passed
- Postponing hot water use, which will delay the activation of electric water heaters

**Sign up for Beat the Peak notifications at**  
**[www.EnergySmartSC.org](http://www.EnergySmartSC.org)**