

Why Does Austin Utilities Activate Air Conditioning Load Control?

On average, about 70% of our cost to provide energy is our purchased power cost, and of that around 40% is for peak energy demand. The lower we can keep this peak demand, the lower we can keep rates to our customers. We use residential central air conditioning load control to help us control our peak electric load.

Air conditioning load control devices interrupt power to the condenser on your air conditioner for a short period of time each hour while allowing your fan to continue circulating cool air inside your home. We only run this program on peak energy usage days June through September with a goal to keep the number of interruptions at a minimum. Here are some improvements we have made to the program over time:



- Days of control have dropped almost 50% from an average 19 days per season to an average over the last three years of just 10 days.
- Total control time per event has dropped almost in half from 6 hours 47 minutes to just under 4 hours.
- Active load control interruptions are posted on our website for customer convenience.
- HVAC contractors are provided education on load control interruptions.
- New device technology allows us to more accurately measure the load reduction benefits.

If you want to see if the load control on your central air conditioning is activated, you can go to our website and click on the Load Control quick link.

MISO Announces Potential Energy Shortage

Recent news headlines are warning of electricity shortages this summer in the Midwest. The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), who manages the energy grid in our service territory, projected a summer peak forecast of 124 gigawatts (GW) compared with 119 GW of projected regularly available generation within their territory because of forecasted warmer-than-normal temperatures in the region. If this happens, our system may be subject to rolling blackouts in our community. A rolling blackout is a series of temporary power shutdowns when demand becomes higher than supply. By carefully cutting power to first one part, then another part of the city or region for short periods of time, the available energy supply can be shared among customers. If the grid was not protected against these potential overloads, the damage could cause a complete shutdown of the grid. Then everyone could be left without power.

Austin Utilities currently follows an energy management plan during peak periods which includes a variety of actions taken to control the city's peak electric load but that may not be enough. If regional power is at a shortage due to high demand, we could be asked to cut back load in our community. In the event power supply delivered to Austin is limited we have developed a plan to start rolling blackouts in the community, if needed, that will last approximately 30 minutes. If this happens, we will do our best to notify customers ahead of time using various media outlets and our social media channels. Electric load may be interrupted during high use periods and any unexpected loss of resources, due to situations like severe weather, often does not allow much time for customer notification.

SUMMER TIPS TO STAY COOL AND SAVE MONEY

- Set your thermostat at 78°F and use a simple box fan when in the room to reduce air conditioning costs. Be sure fan blades turn counterclockwise and turn fans off when you leave the room.
- Close curtains and shades during the day and open windows at night to take advantage of "free" cooling.
- Remember, don't try to heat or cool the outdoors! Close windows and doors when running the air conditioner. Also, make sure your air registers are clear of furniture or other obstructions so that air can circulate.
- Replace old-style lighting with LEDs and turn off lights when you are not in the room. The days are longer so when you can, use natural light.
- Replace the filter on your air conditioning regularly.
- Wash clothes in cold water whenever possible or warm - not hot.
- Understand your energy bill so you know where to focus your energy saving actions.



Sign up for a House Call energy audit for just \$50 (\$300 value) and get a list of energy saving recommendations specific to your home.

More savings for Homeowners

<https://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/certs-singlefamily-energy-guide.pdf>

More savings for Renters

<https://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/certs-renters-energy-guide.pdf>

CHILL OUT WITH COOL REBATES!

Staying cool doesn't have to break the bank. Our hot rebates will leave you feeling cool this summer and leave more money in your pockets.



2022 Cooling Rebates

AC Clean and Tune	\$25
Central Air Conditioning start at	\$100
Ceiling Fan w/LED Lights	\$25
Electric Heat Pump start at	\$100
Smart Thermostat	\$50
Window Air Conditioning	\$50

See rebate application for complete terms and conditions.

Purchasing Tips:

- Look for the ENERGYSTAR and WaterSense logos for appliances and equipment that perform the same but use less water and energy.
- Check minimum efficiency requirements ahead of time to make sure your purchase qualifies for a rebate.

**CONSERVE
& \$AVE®**

Anyone can become an Energy Hero!

Energy Heroes receive notifications during energy peaks so they can help us reduce electric load. No action is too small and every action helps. Just send an email to PeakAlert@AustinUtilities.com with 'Add me to your list' in the subject line. Include your cell phone number and service provider to receive alerts via text message.

**SIGN UP
TODAY!**

Peak Alerts are typically only called a few times per year during the months of June through September, and for just a few hours each day. (Business customers are eligible to receive special program recognition and benefits. See our website for details.)



**Thank you to these businesses
for helping to reduce our peak
energy demand!**

Visit austinutilities.com to join the program.

City of Austin
Fox Electric Co., Inc
Medicap Pharmacy
Willow Pet Hospital
Diamond Ridge Printing
Austin Public School District
Jay C. Hormel Nature Center
Hormel Foods
Moline Awards/United Pack & Ship
Austin Area Commission for the Arts

Sterling Drug-Main Street
Bell Liquor
Diane's Salon Classics
Simplified Technology Solutions
Fraternal Order of Eagles
Southern MN Women's Center
CliftonLarsonAllen
Austin HRA
The Hormel Institute
MJ O'Connor, Inc.

Employee Spotlight

Mark Nibaur General Manager

Since 2010 Mark Nibaur has held the position of GM for Austin Utilities. His experience as a lineman followed by a degree in Business made him a perfect fit for AU. Mark is known for his involvement in the community, however he says the best part of his job is serving our customers and working alongside amazing employees and a dedicated board of commissioners. The community is fortunate to have a great municipal utility serving our community.

Mark and his wife Lori have two grown boys and a daughter that passed away when she was young. They recently became grandparents to two lovely girls. Mark grew up on a farm and loves all outdoor hobbies especially golf, tennis, fishing, hunting, hiking, biking, gardening and traveling. He is a member of many civic and volunteer organizations as well. In 2021 Mark donated a kidney through the organ exchange program. He definitely likes to stay busy! Retirement is a few years away yet but when it happens he plans to upgrade those part-time hobbies to full-time.



Build It and They Will Come

Austin Utilities recently worked with local conservationists to set a pole and platform on our property in SW Austin. The site is located near water which attracts



eagles because it is a good source for food. The nature center was contacted for advice on the location and nesting platform. Our hope is an eagle will find it attractive enough to build a nest and continue to expand the bald eagle population.



It's not too late to watch the Purple Martins on our new webcam

before the birds start their journey back to Brazil mid to late August. Austin Utilities became Purple Martin landlords when we installed our houses in 2019 to support the birds who are seeing a slow decline. When it comes to living in the wild, Purple Martins are out of practice. They've grown so used to birdhouses, they no longer know how to search for nests out in nature.



The bird camera is now viewable from any web browser and can be accessed from the Austin Utilities website. http://216.188.192.245/view/viewer_index.shtml?id=119

Austin Utilities Board of Commissioners

Thomas C. Baudler **Jeanne Sheehan**
Steve Greenman **Kristin Johnson**
Jay Lutz

To contact or find more information on AU's elected Commissioners visit www.austinutilities.com/pages/board



Congratulations to all our Easter Buddy coloring contest winners. Each winner received a Meter Buddy gift bag with a Mini Murph pizza coupon donated by Papa Murphy's. The grand prize went to Eve who also won ten dollars in Chamber Bucks.



Grand Prize: Eve - Age 12
Parent Mike Kewatt

Age 0-6

Brooks - Age 6 - Parent Brandon Schaefer
 Lori - Age 6 - Parent Linsy Miller
 Violet Jean - Age 5 - Parent Tanaya Emery

Age 7-12

Analyah - Age 10 - Parent Matias Martin
 Sydney - Age 8 - Parent Denise Kubiak
 Haven - Age 10 - Parent Sam Dahl

Austin Utilities Office will be Closed Monday, July 4th

HAPPY Independence Day



Austin Utilities
 1908 14th St NE Austin, MN 55912
 Office: 507-433-8886
 Email: talk2au@austinutilities.com
 Website: www.austinutilities.com