

ASK THE EXPERT!



DEMAND Q&A

Mike Birkeland – VP of Electrification and Member Experience

Q. Why add a demand charge?

A. A cost-of-service study showed we need to better match the cost of peak usage with peak power costs on the grid. The buildout of solar and wind energy can cause shortages in power markets when the wind isn't blowing and the sun isn't shining. When a power supply and demand imbalance occurs, BEC has to pay more for power. The addition of a demand charge better reflects the way your cooperative pays for wholesale power. A demand charge accounts for these higher grid costs during times of peak demand. This change will better align member rates with the cost of wholesale power.



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Q. How is my demand calculated?

A. "Demand" measures the highest amount of power used at one time each month. Running more appliances and devices at once increases your demand. The average demand is measured in kW (kilowatts) on the general service (main) meter. The 60-minute interval with the highest demand is used to calculate the monthly peak demand on your bill. Typical BEC households average a demand of 4.6 kW per month.

Q. What about Off-Peak?

A. Off-peak meters and programs are excluded from a demand charge since these loads are shut off during peak demand periods. Off-peak programs and loads do not contribute to supply and demand imbalances on the grid. Off-peak loads help balance the grid (and BEC's costs) when controlled during peak demand periods.

Q. How can I track my demand?

A. You can track your demand several ways.

- 1. On your bill:** Your monthly demand is posted in the Account Detail section of the bill.
- 2. SmartHub:** View demand in real-time through the SmartHub mobile app or through SmartHub on our website. In the menu, select Usage, then Usage Explorer, change the Usage Type to [kWh and Demand (kW)] and a line will appear to show your demand.
- 3. MyMeter:** Select Demand (kW) in the chart view to see your demand. You can also set notifications for your demand – if it goes over a certain kW in an hour, day, week or billing period.



Q. How can I lower demand?

A. Don't use too many high-power appliances at once. Spread out electric use to minimize your demand charge. For example, avoid running your air conditioner, electric oven and clothes dryer at the same time (see graphic to the right for examples of how running multiple items at one time can affect demand).

