

Beat the Peak FAQs

What is the Co-op's Beat the Peak program? Beat the Peak is a Pedernales Electric Cooperative program designed to encourage members to shift energy use away from the peak periods of 2-6 p.m., every day from June through September.

Do I have to participate? This is a free and voluntary program designed to help reduce PEC's power costs and raise awareness about energy use.

If I participated last year, do I need to pledge again? No, all members who volunteered to Beat the Peak in 2011 are still part of the program in 2012.

What does Beat the Peak do? PEC's Beat the Peak program has the potential to save money for our members and their Co-op. By working together, we can reduce our demand and energy requirements during the peak-demand hours of 2-6 p.m., from June through September, when the Co-op pays significantly more for electricity. If every member shifts just two kilowatt-hours of electricity away from those peak-demand hours every day, we estimate we can save more than \$2 million on our power costs between June and September.

How does Beat the Peak work? We know that our peak time periods for the upcoming summer months will occur between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. daily. Beat the Peak is designed to engage our members to take additional voluntary steps within their homes and businesses to conserve electricity during these times. Some of these steps include:

- Turn off unnecessary lights and adjust air conditioning thermostats up by 3 degrees.
- Delay the use of major appliances such as washing machines, dryers, dishwashers, and hot water usage.
- Turn off pool pumps during this time.

How do I know when a Beat the Peak period will occur? Peak periods occur daily in the months of June through September during the hours of 2-6 p.m.

Why are we launching Beat the Peak?

- To help lower PEC's power costs and save resources.
- To conserve energy everywhere possible.
- To educate and engage our membership.

Why does an electric utility want me to reduce my consumption or lower my bill? PEC is a cooperative owned by our members. Our goal is to provide reliable power at the lowest possible cost for everyone while encouraging energy efficiency. Power costs account for the majority of PEC's total operating expenses, 65 percent in 2011. A large portion of the power supply cost is determined by the amount of energy used and maximum level of power required during peak periods, when members are using the greatest amount of power and when electricity costs the most. By working together, PEC and its members can Beat the Peak by reducing the power consumed during peak periods – 2-6 p.m., from June through September – and consequently reduce power supply costs.

What are other benefits? We know that PEC thrives on active members and stakeholders, an engaged Board and motivated employees. When everyone works together, establishing common goals, sharing ideas and working in unison to reach them, it is a powerful partnership.

How can I join the Beat the Peak team? Participating is fast, easy and free. Members can volunteer on our website (www.pec.coop), over the phone or by visiting any PEC office.

Once I've volunteered, how can I Beat the Peak? Use electricity wisely and follow these simple guidelines during peak-demand hours between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

- Set the thermostat on your air conditioning unit up 3 degrees during peak hours of 2 p.m. and 6 p.m., and be sure to use ceiling fans and close your drapes to help keep your home cool.
- Delay using hot water so that the demand for your water heater is less during the peak times.
- Delay using major appliances like clothes washers, dishwashers and other electric devices.
- Learn more about your home's overall energy efficiency and find sources of energy waste. Take the Energy Efficient Home Tour at www.touchstoneenergysavers.com to learn valuable energy savings tips and download a free Home Energy Savings Guide.
- If you're purchasing new appliances or electronic devices, look for ones with the Energy Star rating. Visit the Department of Energy's website at www.energystar.gov to find out more.