



## Important Information Regarding Electricity Load Shedding and What It Could Mean to You

Victoria Electric Cooperative continually monitors the grid conditions from The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT). ERCOT is responsible for ensuring that the supply of electricity is sufficient to meet member demand (load) for electricity in most of the state.

When electric supply provided by all available power generation plants, wind farms and other sources becomes insufficient to meet consumer demand, ERCOT begins emergency operations to avoid uncontrolled blackouts. As a last resort, ERCOT will instruct electric utilities to implement controlled member outages to reduce the member demand for electricity on the ERCOT grid. This is referred to as load shed and will last until the power emergency is resolved by ERCOT.

Since a load shed event is an emergency order from ERCOT based on a shortfall of electricity being generated, electric utilities, including Victoria Electric Cooperative, do not have the information to be able to notify individual members that they may lose power, when they may lose power or how long the load shed event may last. During a load shed event we urge our members to conserve energy by turning all large appliances in the off position. Since those items use large amounts of electricity, it will help prevent the system from being overloaded when the power is restored.

ERCOT may require electric utilities to shed large amounts of load over long periods of time. In these instances, electric utilities like Victoria Electric Cooperative may not have the ability to rotate outages without risking the stability of the entire electric grid. When this happens, some members may be without power for an extended period of time. These outages are critical for ensuring the integrity of the state's electric grid and preventing a system-wide blackout, which could be long-lasting and have a significant impact on all aspects of life.

Electric utilities are required to continue to comply with ERCOT controlled member outage instructions until ERCOT determines that outages are no longer required.

Regardless of the nature of the load shedding event, Victoria Electric Cooperative is committed to ensuring the safe and reliable delivery of electricity to its members 24-hours-per-day, 7-days-per-week. While the Cooperative may not control the issues or conditions that have required ERCOT's order to shed load, we will do everything in our power to restore electricity when we are able to safely do so. In addition, we will work to keep our members informed about the situation through local media outlets, social media, website updates and direct communications to you.

Residential members dependent on electric-powered medical equipment, such as those designated as **Critical Care** or **Chronic Condition**, in accordance with PUC §25.497, are encouraged to have a solid back-up plan in the event they lose electricity. **It is important to note that acceptance into the Critical Care program does not guarantee uninterrupted or continuous power supply, nor exemption from planned service interruptions.** Anyone who depends on electricity for life-sustaining equipment should have a back-up plan in place. **Critical Care** designates must continue to fulfill their financial obligations with the Cooperative or risk termination of service in accordance with VEC Tariffs for Electric Service. The



procedure for a member to apply to be considered a **Critical Care** residential member can be found on the Cooperative's website at: <https://www.victoriaelectric.coop/content/critical-care-information>.

The VEC **Critical Load Program** is a registry of approved nonresidential electric service locations that are classified as public safety, industrial, or natural gas infrastructure. When planned outages or service interruptions for nonpayment are scheduled, we will attempt to provide advance notice so preparations can be made. For unplanned outages, VEC will prioritize **Critical Load Program** participants for restoration as much as practical. Service locations designated as **Critical Load** are not guaranteed uninterrupted or continuous power supply, nor exemption from planned service interruptions. **Critical Load** designates must continue to fulfill their financial obligations with the Cooperative or risk termination of service in accordance with VEC Tariffs for Electric Service.

To be considered for designation as critical load, in accordance with PUC §25.497, the nonresidential electric service location must fall into one of the following categories:

1. **Public safety:** A member for whom electric service is considered crucial for the protection or maintenance of public safety, including but not limited to hospitals, police stations, fire stations, and critical water and wastewater facilities.
2. **Industrial:** An industrial member for whom an interruption or suspension of electric service will create a dangerous condition or significant disruption on the member's premises.
3. **Natural gas infrastructure:** A member that supports natural gas-fired generation, including gas control center or gas compressor plant.

To request an application for **Critical Load** designation, you may click the link to the application, <https://victoriaelectric.coop/sites/default/files/2022-04/VEC-Critical-Load-Application.pdf> or please email [CriticalLoad@victoriaelectric.coop](mailto:CriticalLoad@victoriaelectric.coop) with the subject line as: **CRITICAL LOAD APPLICATION REQUEST**.

If you have any questions about the program, please email [CriticalLoad@victoriaelectric.coop](mailto:CriticalLoad@victoriaelectric.coop) or call (361) 573-2428.