

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 3, 2000

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Potential Electricity Shortages in California

The increased demand for electricity during summer heat waves can make it a challenge for electric utilities to meet the demands of their customers. Currently, the supply of electric power is tight in California due to record demand for electricity. The State faces the possibility of rolling blackouts in some areas. These conditions put both consumers and businesses at risk.

The Federal Government is among the largest consumers of electricity in California. It is important that we lead by example in taking energy-conserving steps to reduce the risk and severity of power outages. Therefore, I direct that:

-- Managers of Federal buildings in California take steps to reduce consumption of power to the maximum extent practicable consistent with the health and welfare of employees; and,

-- Federal agencies coordinate with other State and local government agencies to minimize the use of electricity in all government buildings in California.

Further, although most of the electricity in the Western United States is generated and marketed by privately and publicly owned utilities, the Federal Government also generates and markets electricity in the region. For the duration of the current power shortage emergency, I direct that:

-- Federal agencies that generate electricity take all possible measures, consistent with existing laws and regulations, to maximize the amount of electricity that can be delivered to California; and,

-- Federal Power Marketing Administrations take all steps necessary to maximize the availability of electricity in California.

I also direct Federal agencies to work with the State of California to develop procedures governing the use of backup power generation in power shortage emergencies.

Although these are important steps that can help reduce the risk of power shortages in the short term, we need a more comprehensive approach for the long term. I therefore further direct each of you to continue working towards the goals of Executive Order 13123, Greening the Government Through Efficient Energy Management, and to continue working with the Congress on comprehensive electricity restructuring legislation, which can promote greater investment in generation and transmission facilities, enhance the efficiency of the interstate transmission grid, and promote energy efficiency programs.

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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Today, I am directing all Federal agencies to take steps to reduce consumption of electricity in California to the maximum extent possible. As one of the largest power consumers in California, it is critical that the Federal government take every possible step to reduce non-essential power consumption at Federal facilities in the state.

During power shortage emergencies, it also is important that we increase our generation of power in the West, much of which is supplied to California customers. Therefore, I also am directing that Federal agencies that generate power, and the Federal Power Marketing Administrations, take all possible steps to maximize the amount of electricity that can be delivered to California.

These short-term measures will assist California utilities and consumers in meeting electricity needs during this critical period.

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