



**NEWS ADVISORY**

April 4, 2007

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# **DWP REPORTS ON PLANS TO PROVIDE POWER DURING COMING SUMMER HEAT**

## **REPORT ISSUED IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL**

In response to growing concerns from the Los Angeles City Council over the reliability of power during the summer months, the Department of Water and Power reported to the Council's Energy and the Environment Committee on its plans for preventing and responding to power outages. Nearly 80,000 DWP customers lost power during the heat waves of 2006, and with temperatures expected to climb even higher in 2007, committee members emphasized the need to provide reliable power, reduce consumer demand, and have a coordinated strategy for outreach and response during power outages.

"Climate trends and our growing population means greater demands on the power system this year than last year," said Council President Eric Garcetti, who introduced the motion asking the Department to report on their plans. "We need to upgrade our aging infrastructure to accommodate this increased demand. People's homes, their businesses, and in some case, their lives depend on it."

"Last year's power outages served as a warning that we must be proactive in upgrading our power on during the hot months ahead. We can and must do better to protect the well being and health of people throughout our city," said Councilmember Jan Perry, who chairs the committee. "It's also important that we continue to educate people on how they can take simple steps to help reduce energy consumption like switching to florescent bulbs and reducing usage of appliances during peak hours."

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“The West San Fernando Valley was hit particularly hard last summer by these power outages, where temperatures were above 100 degrees for many days,” said Councilman Dennis P. Zine, who represents areas including Woodland Hills and Tarzana. “These outages were devastating for our residents, our seniors, and our emergency medical facilities like West Hills Hospital and Kaiser. Seniors suffered the most in this unbearable heat with no air conditioning; we need to have assurances that this type of widespread outage will not happen again this summer.”

Since last year’s outages, the Department has upgraded 1300 of the more than 126,000 transformers, whose failure was the main cause of the interrupted service in 2006. Even with an accelerated replacement cycle for transformers, the average age of the power distribution system is 40 years. In addition to addressing infrastructure issues, DWP has pledged to distribute more than 1 million compact fluorescent light bulbs, which can substantially reduce residential demand.

In response to the specific comments provided by DWP, the committee asked the department to report back in 30 days on a number of specific issues raised during the meeting:

- the Department’s forecasting of power demand
- further initiatives to reduce customer demand and promote energy efficiency
- an accelerated plan to upgrade the city’s aging power infrastructure
- a warning system to advise residents of high-demand days
- and a strategy for communicating and responding to customers during outages.

The hearing date is set for May 2.