

Horizon Utilities tested *peaksaver*[®] load control system for the first time

Air conditioners cycled to reduce provincial demand for electricity

Hamilton/St. Catharines – July 10, 2008 – When the humidex climbed to nearly 40 degrees on Tuesday, Horizon Utilities, along with several other utilities in the province, tested the *peaksaver*[®] load control system by activating thousands of customers' *peaksaver* devices for the first time.

peaksaver, an electricity demand management program funded by the Ontario Power Authority (OPA), enables local electric utilities to remotely cycle central air conditioning units of participating customers off and on during high electricity demand periods to help reduce the strain on the electricity grid.

"With more than 70,000 *peaksaver* devices installed in residences and small businesses across the province," notes Brian Smith, Manager of Conservation and Demand Management for Horizon Utilities, "approximately 54 megawatts of demand was shaved off the provincial load. This is the equivalent of removing 15,200 homes from the grid and more than 43 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired power generation."

Activation of the *peaksaver* devices between two and six o'clock on Tuesday afternoon involved more than 1,800 Horizon Utilities customers in Hamilton and 1,100 in St. Catharines who had previously registered with the program and, in return, received a free programmable thermostat, as well as \$25.

During the *peaksaver* activation, although air conditioners are cycled off and on at 15-minute intervals, the furnace fan continues to circulate air so residents hardly notice a difference.

"I didn't even know *peaksaver* had been activated on Tuesday," says Gerald Dean, a retiree who originally signed up to receive a *peaksaver* programmable thermostat valued at \$250 in order to save money on his energy bill. "I came home in the middle of the activation and didn't notice any difference in temperature."

"People are concerned about climate change, air quality and the dollars they are spending on energy," says Smith. "Simply by calling 1-866-323-0206 and signing up for *peaksaver*, our customers can do their part to help curb climate change, improve air quality and save money on their energy bills."

peaksaver customers enjoy the added benefit of being able to access their thermostat over the internet so they can control the temperature in their home or business remotely.

"In addition to driving up demand for electricity in the province, homeowners should be aware that air conditioning can account for up to 50% of their summer electricity bill," notes Smith. "Every increase of 2° Celsius on the thermostat can result in a reduction of up to 15% in air conditioning energy usage and substantial savings on your bill."

Here are some tips from Horizon Utilities to help consumers reduce their air conditioning use, save money and help the environment.

Tips for Lowering Air Conditioning Use

- Only use air conditioning when necessary to remain comfortable.
- Keep air conditioning thermostats set at 25° Celsius to provide the most comfort at the least cost.
- Use a programmable thermostat.
- Turn off air conditioning at night and open the windows.
- Use a ceiling or tabletop fan instead of or in conjunction with an air conditioner.
- Don't set your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you first turn on your air conditioner.
- Close drapes on the sunny side of your house.
- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Turn off the air conditioning when you will be away from home.
- Teach children to keep doors and windows closed when the air conditioning is on
- Turn off computers and other home office equipment
- Keep the damper closed in your fireplace
- Check and replace filters on your furnace and air conditioner regularly. A dirty filter can cause air conditioning units to work overtime

***peaksaver* Program Details**

Participants in Horizon Utilities' ***peaksaver*** program, receive a FREE Honeywell thermostat, valued at \$250, installed in their homes or businesses by a certified technician at no charge, and receive a \$25 credit on their hydro bill. The programmable thermostat also provides customers with the ability to control the temperature in their home remotely through the internet.

To be eligible to sign up for ***peaksaver***, Horizon Utilities residential customers must own their own home and have a newer central air conditioner. Commercial customers are eligible if their air conditioning units are approximately the same size as those used by residential customers. For more information on this program, please visit the Horizon Utilities website at www.horizonutilities.com or call **1-866-323-0206**.

About Horizon Utilities Corporation

Horizon Utilities Corporation is one of the largest municipally owned electricity distribution companies in Ontario, providing electricity and related utility services to 233,000 residential and commercial customers in Hamilton and St. Catharines. The company is owned by Horizon Holdings Inc. and operates out of facilities in Hamilton, St. Catharines, and Stoney Creek.

Horizon Utilities' employees are committed to delivering a safe and reliable supply of electricity, providing unparalleled customer value and helping to create a culture of energy conservation in Ontario.

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