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Heatwaves and Energy Supply Explained

With heatwave conditions forecast across most eastern mainland states and South Australia this week, the Australian Energy Council and Energy Networks Australia have released a fact sheet on potential impacts on the energy system.

The Australian Energy Council's General Manager Policy, Ben Skinner, said electricity demand has historically been highest on hot weekdays and when business and industry is fully operating.

"The biggest risk occurs with very high demand. Usually that is at the end of a run of two or more hot days. Buildings are already hot, there may be low output from wind generation and solar PV output declines late in the afternoon," Mr Skinner said.

"Losing power even for short periods during a heatwave can cause real discomfort. Electricity providers will be doing everything possible today to avoid any loss of power and have worked with AEMO to have plant available for the hotter periods."

Energy Networks Australia CEO Andrew Dillon encouraged people to find out which company [distributed electricity to their premises](#) so they can follow them on social media and bookmark their website.

"Only one network business supplies electricity to your house or business, so follow them to get timely information specific to your local area in the event of an outage," Mr Dillon said. "This will ensure you're up to date so you can plan ahead."

The Australian Energy Council said that individual power station generation units can and do have unplanned outages from time to time. This is normal not just for large plant here in Australia but also overseas. Power systems have back-up capacity, which is designed to manage a limited number of individual outages.

"There can also be localised issues with power supply on hot days, but these do not reflect systemic problems," Mr Skinner said.

The fact sheet is available [here](#).

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About the Australian Energy Council

The Council represents 23 major electricity and downstream natural gas businesses operating in competitive wholesale and retail energy markets. These businesses collectively generate the overwhelming majority of electricity in Australia and sell gas and electricity to over 10 million homes and businesses.

About Energy Networks Australia

Energy Networks Australia represents Australia's electricity transmission and distribution networks and gas distribution networks. Our members provide energy to almost every household and business in Australia.