Overview

We are required to have electricity available to meet customer needs, whenever they need it, even if they need it all at the same time. In other words, we must be ready to provide electricity whenever customers “demand” it. Customers that have high demands are charged a billing demand charge for this service.

This charge will be included as a “demand” charge on your bill and is measured in kilowatts (kw). The charge is for the highest 15-minute period during the month.

High demand is usually associated with equipment start-up, which requires higher energy use than routine operations; therefore, start-up times are usually associated with high demand.

For more information, please call your Rocky Mountain Power Business Solutions Team at 1-866-870-3419 or visit www.rockymountainpower.net/business.
Typically, a motor requires six times as much electricity during start-up as it does to continue running.

It usually takes a motor less than five seconds to start, accelerate and reach operating speed. By starting large motors as far apart as possible, you can spread demand over a wide period. Total energy consumption will be the same, but the peak demand could be lower.

The best practices for motor start-ups are as follows:
• Start large horsepower motors one at a time.
• Wait until the first motor has started, accelerated and reached running speed, then start another motor.

Motors should be sized properly, operated only when needed and should be turned off when they will not be used for extended periods.

Computerized load management controls can help stagger motor start-ups.

Customers with high demands are charged for this service if they have a low power factor.

You may see a power factor percentage on your bill. If your power factor percentage falls below 85% for Idaho customers and 90% for Utah customers, this will result in an increase to your monthly demand charges. Examples of equipment that may increase your demand are motors, fluorescent lights and induction furnaces. Because this equipment draws more electricity and has a greater impact on our electric system, it usually requires larger transformers, wiring and additional generation. You can reduce the demand charge by turning off unused motors and other equipment and by installing capacitors. Capacitors help to balance and reduce the impacts these types of equipment have on the electric system. Please feel free to contact our experts for assistance on how you can reduce this charge.