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# Heat wave gives Texas new July power use record

By Rye Druzin | July 16, 2018 | Updated: July 16, 2018 5:37pm

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Photo: Kin Man Hui /San Antonio Express-News

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A young boy runs through a fountain of water at Yanaguana Garden and Playground near the Tower of Americas on Tuesday, May 29, 2018. Hot weather across Texas, with temperatures in the high-90s and 100s, is pushing electricity use to near-record levels.

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Texas' power use broke a record for July Monday afternoon as the mercury soared into the high 90s and triple digits across most of the state.

Power use hit 70,587 megawatts Monday afternoon, just a few hundreds megawatts below the 71,110 megawatt record set in August 2016, according to data from the Electric Reliability Council of Texas or ERCOT, which oversees 90 percent of Texas' electricity load that powers 24 million customers.

A megawatt powers roughly 200 Texas homes during periods of high use like when the weather is hot or cold.

“As ERCOT predicted in the spring, we will likely break usage records as temperatures climb. So far, the system is performing as expected,” said ERCOT spokeswoman Theresa Gage.

Weather forecasts are calling for temperatures to rise into the 100s for most of the week across Texas, with little chance of rain. The National Weather Service warned Monday that temperatures for much of the state could range between 100 and 107 degrees starting Tuesday and lasting through the weekend.

The grid operator had warned of possible rolling blackouts this summer due to tightened electricity

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reserves after three large-scale coal fired power plants shut down at the beginning of 2018. The closures brought ERCOT's electricity reserve margin, the amount of extra power the utility has to call upon in times of high need, to lower levels not seen in years.



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This winter Texas set multiple new winter use records as a prolonged cold gripped the state with temperatures in the 20s.

On Jan. 17, Texans used nearly 66,000 megawatts of power between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m., blowing past a previous record set the night before.

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