



Media Contact:
Wayne Scarbrough
(423) 745-4501 ext. 212
wscarbrough@aub.org

News Release

For Immediate Release

August 19, 2005

AUB SETS ALL-TIME RECORDS FOR POWER PURCHASES; HIGH CUSTOMER USAGE WILL MEAN HIGH BILLS

ATHENS, Tenn. – The recent heat waves are driving up more than mercury in thermometers. High temperatures also are driving demand for electricity to all-time highs in the Tennessee Valley in general and in our community specifically.

“Our customers should plan for higher than normal electric bills in August and probably in September as well,” said AUB spokesman Wayne Scarbrough. “Not because rates have gone up—they haven’t—but because everyone is using more electricity to cool their home.”

AUB’s purchases of electricity from TVA are a good indicator of local usage by homeowners and businesses, Scarbrough said.

In electricity terms, demand is the maximum amount of electrical power called for during a 30-minute interval in a billing period. Scarbrough said that AUB set new peaks in demand and in kilowatt hours purchased from TVA this month.

The utility’s demand this past month peaked at 120.5 megawatts, the highest ever, Scarbrough said. “For comparison, our demand in April 2005 was just over 94 megawatts. The increase—almost 28 percent—is an indicator that our customers are also demanding more power and are using more kilowatt hours on a daily basis,” he said.

From June 18 to July 17, AUB purchased 58.4 million kilowatt hours from TVA at a cost of \$2.86 million. From July 18 to August 17 the utility bought 67.5 million kilowatt hours, an increase of more than 15 percent.

“We won’t know the final numbers until later in the month, but it’s safe to assume our power bill will translate close to the same increase. We expect our power bill to be well over \$3 million for the month,” Scarbrough said.

This, he said, can be seen as a direct correlation to energy costs for AUB customers. The average residential consumer uses 10- to 15-percent more electricity in August than in April. The average residential bill for electricity in April was \$83.00 on usage of 1,171 kilowatt hours, according to AUB.

“This year, the April to August difference will probably be greater because of the hot weather and higher usage per customer,” Scarbrough said. “We project that the average residential customer in August will use around 1,500 kilowatt hours, which would translate into an electric bill of around \$102.00.”

Scarborough said that customers can reduce their summer bill primarily by curbing usage. Some ways to achieve this include:

- Set thermostats a couple of degrees higher; a one-degree difference can save five percent in cooling costs;
- Use ceiling fans to help circulate cooled air;
- Limit opening and closing doors to the outside and keep primary doors closed when possible; screen doors do little to keep cool air in and hot air out;
- Keep curtains and blinds shut during the heat of the day;
- Insulate attic door openings;
- Use compact fluorescent bulbs; they put off very little heat, are much more efficient than normal bulbs, and last up to seven times longer.

These and other energy-saving tips can be found at AUB's website, **www.aub.org**.

-XXX-