SEDAC NEWS

SEDAC SPRING CLASSES SCHEDULED


Beyond Code: Energy Efficient Commercial Buildings, March 2 and May 4, 2007, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm: 3 HSW LUs in the AIA/CES program, $40, Multi-University Center, 1010 Jorie Blvd., Oak Brook, IL 60523. Call 888-633-3603 to register.

Guidance and techniques for reducing energy usage in commercial buildings (both new designs and retrofits). Integrated design, modeling, and methods will be covered. Code implications will also be discussed.

Efficiency Benefits of the EPACT 2005, March 2 and May 4, 2007, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm: 2 HSW LUs in the AIA/CES program, $30, Multi-University Center, 1010 Jorie Blvd, Oak Brook, IL 60523. Call 888-633-3603 to register.


EIA SEES NO LONG-TERM DROP IN ENERGY PRICES

Despite recent sags in the price of oil, gasoline, and natural gas, DOE's Energy Information Administration (EIA) is forecasting no long-term decrease in energy prices. The EIA's latest Short-Term Energy Outlook, released last month, notes that oil prices hovered around $60 per barrel during the fourth quarter of 2006, but still projects average prices above $64 per barrel for this year and next. With global oil demand expected to rise by 1.5 million barrels per day in 2007, demand will keep pressure on oil prices, but the EIA still projects an increase in spare production capacity among the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The EIA also warns of potential short-term volatility in oil prices.

Following the trends in oil prices, the average price for regular unleaded gasoline is currently averaging near $2.30 per gallon, but with growing demand, EIA expects prices to steadily increase over the next few months, then hover around $2.40 to $2.70 per gallon. For natural gas, persistent warm weather in much of the United States has reduced the demand for the fuel, preventing a rise in prices. The spot price for natural gas averaged $6.97 per thousand cubic feet (mcf) in December, but the EIA expects natural gas prices to average $7.06 per mcf in 2007 and $7.72 per mcf in 2008. Retail prices are about 40% higher. See the EIA's Short-Term Energy Outlook - http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/steo/pub/contents.html.

The EIA expects imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to play an increasing role in the next two years, after slumping in 2005 and 2006 due to market constraints. LNG imports in 2007 should reach 770 billion cubic feet (bcf), well above the high-water mark of 652 bcf set in 2004, and should further increase to 1,080 bcf in 2008, according to EIA. See the EIA's special report on LNG imports.
NOT ALL CFLs ARE CREATED EQUAL

Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) are a “bread and butter” energy efficient replacement for incandescent lamps. CFLs use about 75% less energy than incandescents and last more than 10 times as long, making their higher initial cost worthwhile. However, the electronic nature of CFLs can have an impact on power quality.

Devices with low power factors (pf) require more current for the same amount of usable power, causing greater losses on electrical lines. While most customers are not billed for their power factor, it does have an effect on a utility’s power generation and capacity. Look for CFLs with high power factors of 0.9 or greater.

Harmonic distortion also affects power quality by distorting the shapes of current and voltage supply. Significant amounts of harmonic distortion can cause a wide array of problems, including over-heating capacitors, motors, and transformers, blown fuses, and the malfunction of computers and other electronic devices. Choose CFLs with a total harmonic distortion (THD) of less than 20%.

When choosing lamps, remember the old adage, “you get what you pay for.” Follow the same guidelines for linear fluorescent lamp and ballast systems.

WEBINAR:
Sustainable Energy Management by Midwest Buildings Technology Applications Center.
Tuesday, March 6, 2007
9:00AM—11:00AM (CST)
Cost: Free
Register at http://www.ecw.org/mwbUILDINGS/webinars.php

Energy Service Providers
Pre-Qualified Service Provider List
www.SEDAC.org

Winterizing Tips
www.keepwarm.illinois.gov
www.energysavers.gov
www.energystar.gov
www.SEDAC.org
You can find a Do-it-yourself Home Energy Audit at http://hes.lbl.gov

INCREASED ELECTRICITY RATES FOR 2007

Because Illinois businesses can choose to buy their electricity from a utility or from a retail supplier, it is difficult to make generalizations about what people will be paying in 2007, but prices have certainly gone up.

Changes have also been made to the structure of the rates. Previously, bills were divided into demand and tiered energy costs. New electric bills will be divided into distribution, transmission, and flat energy generation costs.

For those who continue to purchase power through Ameren or ComEd, new rates have been posted to their company websites.

Ameren: https://www2.ameren.com/business/Rates/ratesSvcMap.aspx