

Monthly Flash Estimates of Electric Power Data

Data for:
March 2006

Section 1. Commentary

The weather through March 2006 continued to be warmer than in 2005. Year-to-date heating degree days were down almost 9 percent through March. For March alone heating degree days were down 7.8 percent from last year and were 2.2 percent lower than normal. Because of the warmer weather, year-to-date net generation through March was 1.3 percent less than in 2005, and generation in March 2006 was 0.3 percent less than last year. Year-to-date retail sales of electricity were down 0.4 percent through March. The average retail price of electricity was up almost 12 percent, largely due to higher fuel prices.

Reflecting the decline in total generation, year-to-date coal generation was down 2 percent. Natural gas and petroleum liquid fueled generation, both of which are largely used to meet peak demands, also declined but to very different degrees. Natural gas-fired generation, benefiting from a moderation in gas prices in 2006, actually increased by 3.8 percent comparing March 2005 to March 2006 and dropped a modest 4.7 percent year-to-date. In contrast, as a consequence of high oil prices, petroleum liquid-fired generation declined 56.4 percent year-to-date and dropped by 63.6 percent comparing March 2005 to March 2006. Petroleum liquid generation in March 2006 of 2,360 thousand megawatthours is the lowest in EIA monthly records dating back to January 1973.

Consistent with the decline in generation, consumption of coal, natural gas and petroleum liquids also declined. Year-to-date, coal burn was down 2 percent, natural gas was down 5.5 percent, and petroleum liquids consumption dropped 54.9 percent. Reduced consumption of coal and petroleum liquids contributed to stockpile builds. Electric power sector coal inventories grew 6.1 percent from February 2006 and were 5.6 percent ahead of March 2005 (approaching 2004 levels). However subbituminous coal stocks continue to lag and were 6.4 percent lower than March 2005. In contrast, bituminous stocks were almost 20 percent above 2005 levels. Petroleum liquids inventories were 18 percent higher than in March 2005 due to the drop in oil-fired generation.

Unlike the major fossil fuels, nuclear and hydroelectric generation have increased in 2006. Nuclear generation, which continues to experience fewer days lost to planned and forced maintenance than in 2005, was 3.1 percent higher through March. Hydroelectric generation was 11.7 percent higher year-to-date. Due to heavy precipitation, water supplies have been at or above normal in the northwestern states, the largest hydroelectric production region. Current forecasts by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (see: http://www.nwrfc.noaa.gov/water_supply/ws_fcst.cgi) call for Pacific Northwest water supplies to continue above normal through the summer, indicating that 2006 will be a strong year for hydroelectric power.

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Section 2. Key Indicators of Generation, Consumption & Stocks

Data for:
March 2006

Table 2.1 Key Generation Indicators

	Total Generation	Nuclear Generation	Hydroelectric Generation
Total Change From:			
February 2006	3.7%	1.8%	-0.9%
March 2005	-0.3%	3.5%	7.0%
Year to Date	-1.3%	3.1%	11.7%
Latest 12 Month Period*	1.7%	0.5%	1.4%

Table 2.2 Key Consumption and Stocks Indicators

	Natural Gas Consumption	Coal Consumption	Coal Stocks
Total Change From:			
February 2006	18.9%	1.6%	6.1%
March 2005	3.5%	-1.6%	5.6%
Year to Date	-5.5%	-2.0%	n/a
Latest 12 Month Period*	5.0%	1.5%	n/a

* Change in total consumption or generation for the latest 12 month period (April 2005 to March 2006) compared to the prior 12 month period (April 2004 to March 2005).

Section 3. Month-to-Month Comparisons: Generation, Consumption and Stocks (Total)

Data for:
March 2006

Net Generation (Total, All Sectors)

Table 3.1 Total Net Generation (All Sectors)

Net Generation (thousand megawatthours)	Mar-06	Mar-05	% Change	Feb-06	% Change
Coal	160,376	163,955	-2.2%	158,251	1.3%
Petroleum Liquids	2,360	6,485	-63.6%	3,214	-26.6%
Natural Gas	53,556	51,572	3.8%	45,753	17.1%
Nuclear	63,721	61,539	3.5%	62,616	1.8%
Hydroelectric Conventional	24,215	22,629	7.0%	24,432	-0.9%
All Other	11,459	10,599	8.1%	10,189	12.5%
Total (All Energy Sources)	315,685	316,780	-0.3%	304,456	3.7%

Fossil Fuel Consumption for Electric Generation (Total, All Sectors)

Table 3.2 Total Consumption of Fossil Fuels for Electric Generation (All Sectors)

Consumption of Fossil Fuels	Mar-06	Mar-05	% Change	Feb-06	% Change
Coal (Thousand Short Tons)	83,485	84,856	-1.6%	82,196	1.6%
Petroleum Liquids (Thousand Barrels)	4,206	10,953	-61.6%	5,887	-28.6%
Natural Gas (Million Cubic Feet)	454,191	438,722	3.5%	381,841	18.9%

Fossil Fuel Stocks (Electric Power Sector)

Table 3.3 Total Fossil Fuel Stocks (Electric Power Sector)

Fossil Fuel Stocks	Mar-06	Mar-05	% Change	Feb-06	% Change
Coal (Thousand Short Tons)	111,376	105,458	5.6%	104,979	6.1%
Petroleum Liquids (Thousand Barrels)	53,437	45,274	18.0%	52,878	1.1%

Notes:

- **Coal consumption and generation** includes subbituminous coal, bituminous coal, anthracite, lignite, waste coal and coal synfuel.
- **Coal stocks** include the coal categories listed immediately above except for waste coal. The bituminous category includes anthracite and coal synfuel.
- **Petroleum Liquids consumption and generation** includes distillate oil, residual oil, jet fuel, kerosene and waste oil.
- **Petroleum Liquids stocks** includes the oil categories listed immediately above, except waste oil is excluded from data collected for January 2004 and subsequently. Data prior to 2004 contains small quantities of waste oil.
- **The "All Other" generation category** includes biomass, solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric pumped storage, petroleum coke, other gases, and other miscellaneous energy sources.

Section 4. Net Generation Trends

Data for:
March 2006

Table 4.1 Trends in Total Generation by Fuel (All Sectors)
Millions of Kilowatthours

Year-to-Date Comparison

	Starting Month	Ending Month	Coal	Petroleum Liquids	Natural Gas	Nuclear	Hydroelectric Conventional	All Other	Total
Current Period	January 2006	March 2006	487,625	9,755	141,045	198,248	75,732	32,981	945,386
Prior Period	January 2005	March 2005	497,354	22,374	147,949	192,314	67,776	30,181	957,948
Percent Change			-2.0%	-56.4%	-4.7%	3.1%	11.7%	9.3%	-1.3%

Comparison to Prior Twelve-Month Period

	Starting Month	Ending Month	Coal	Petroleum Liquids	Natural Gas	Nuclear	Hydroelectric Conventional	All Other	Total
Current Period	April 2005	March 2006	2,004,443	87,663	744,645	786,399	273,034	129,242	4,025,426
Prior Period	April 2004	March 2005	1,979,435	93,162	708,965	782,649	269,382	125,273	3,958,866
Percent Change			1.3%	-5.9%	5.0%	0.5%	1.4%	3.2%	1.7%

Figure 4.1 Trends in Total Net Generation (All Sectors): 2004, 2005, and 2006

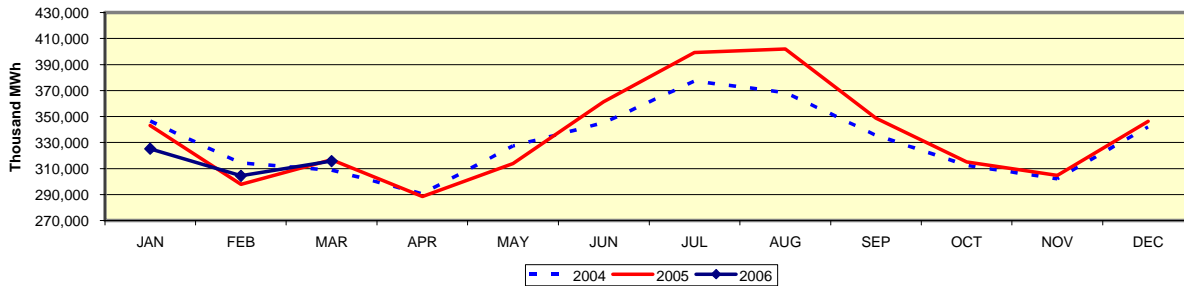


Figure 4.2 Fossil Fuel Generation Trends (Values as Indices, Jan. 2002 = 1.0)

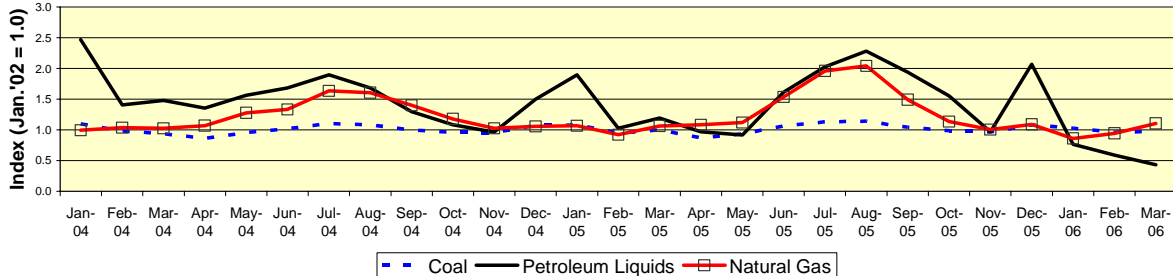
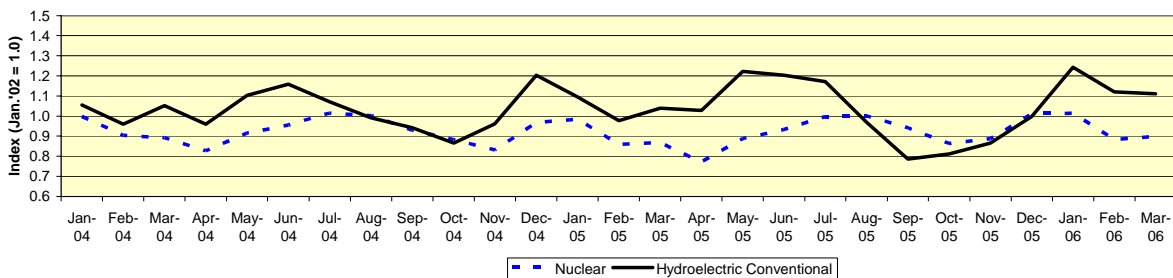


Figure 4.3 Nuclear and Hydroelectric Generation Trends (Values as Indices, Jan. 2002 = 1.0)



Section 5. Fossil Fuel Consumption Trends

Data for:
March 2006

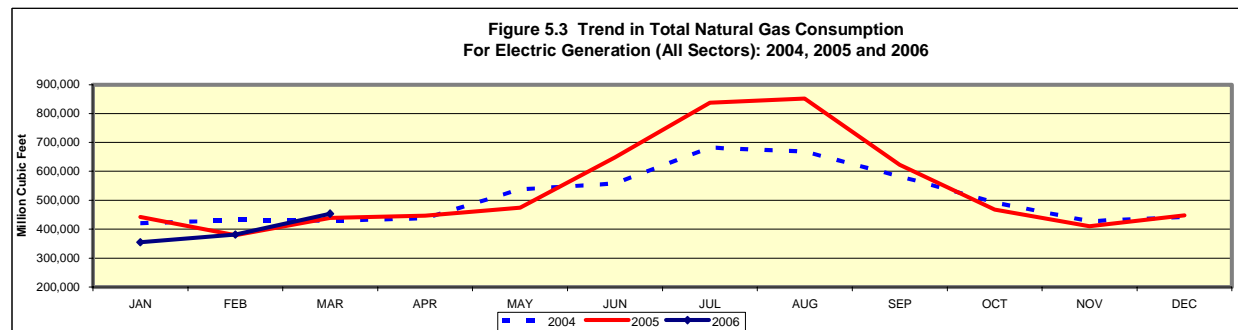
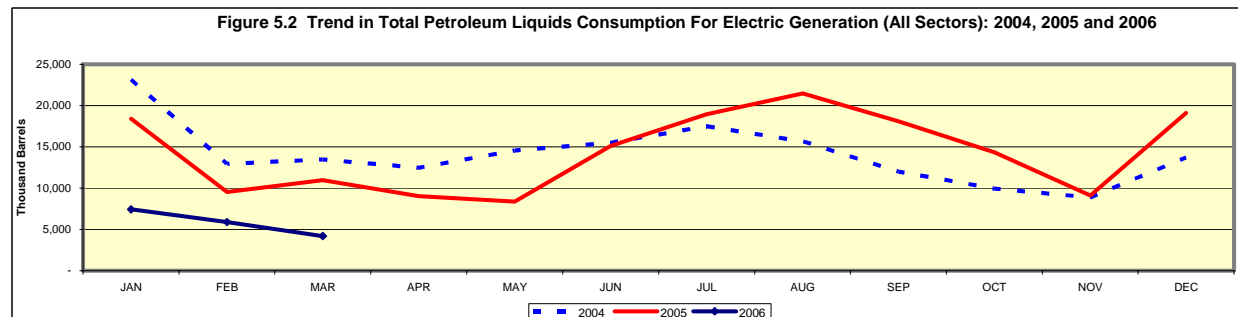
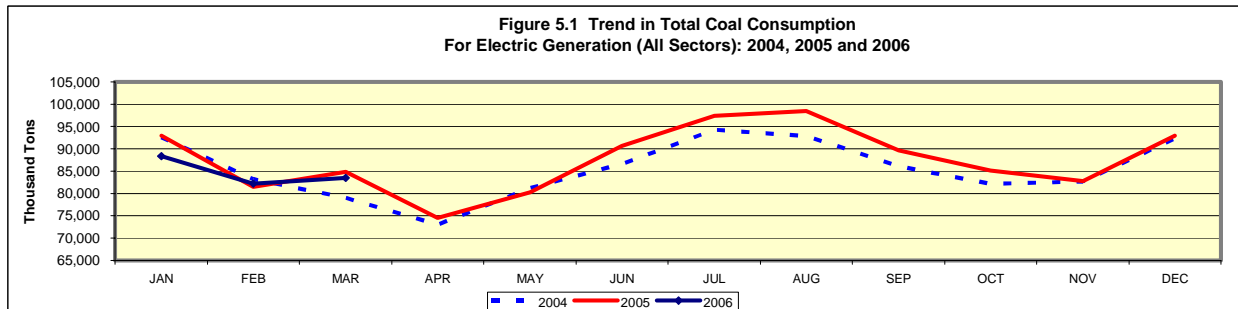
Table 5.1 Trends in Fossil Fuel Consumption For Electric Generation, Total (All Sectors)

Year-to-Date Comparison

	Starting Month	Ending Month	Coal (Thousand Tons)	Petroleum Liquids (Thousand Barrels)	Natural Gas (Million Cubic Feet)
Current Period	January 2006	March 2006	254,063	17,514	1,191,173
Prior Period	January 2005	March 2005	259,286	38,862	1,260,212
Percent Change			-2.0%	-54.9%	-5.5%

Comparison to Prior 12 Month Period

	Starting Month	Ending Month	Coal (Thousand Tons)	Petroleum Liquids (Thousand Barrels)	Natural Gas (Million Cubic Feet)
Current Period	April 2005	March 2006	1,045,954	151,059	6,396,932
Prior Period	April 2004	March 2005	1,030,488	159,090	6,089,876
Percent Change			1.5%	-5.0%	5.0%

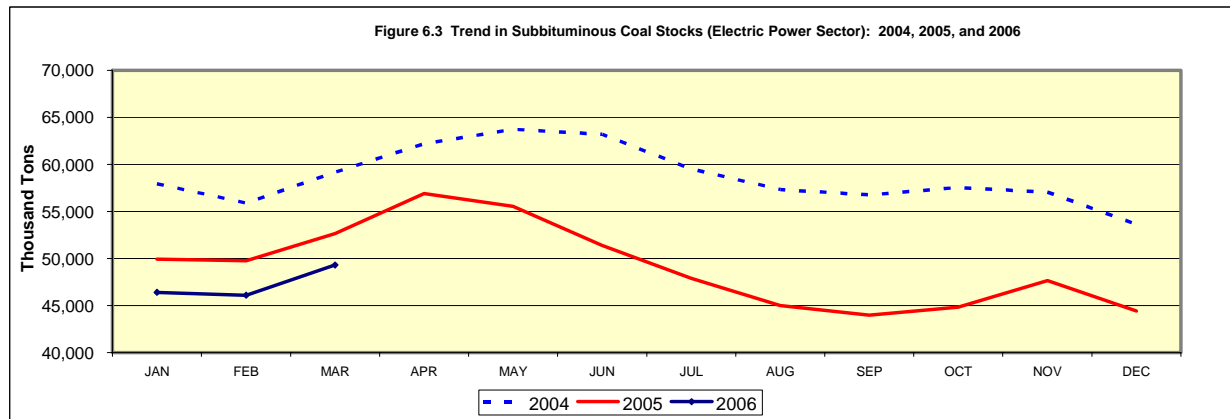
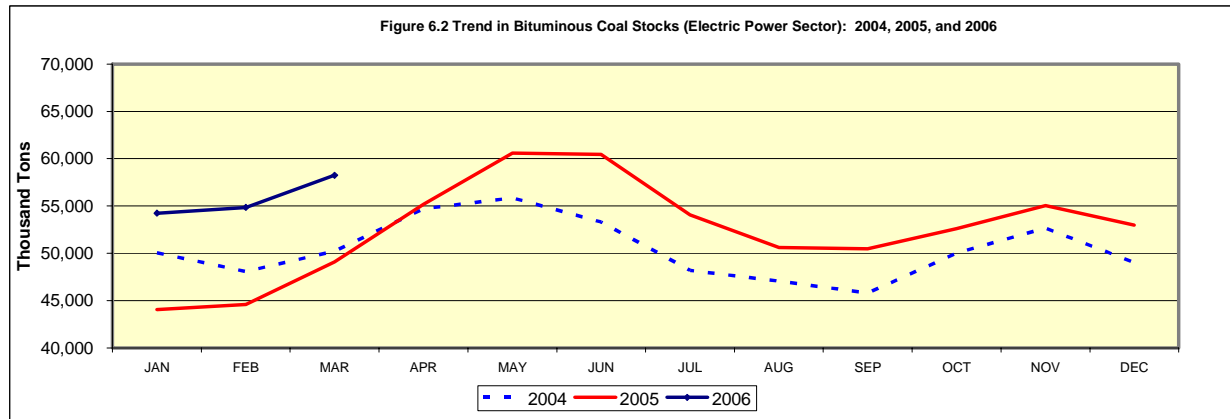
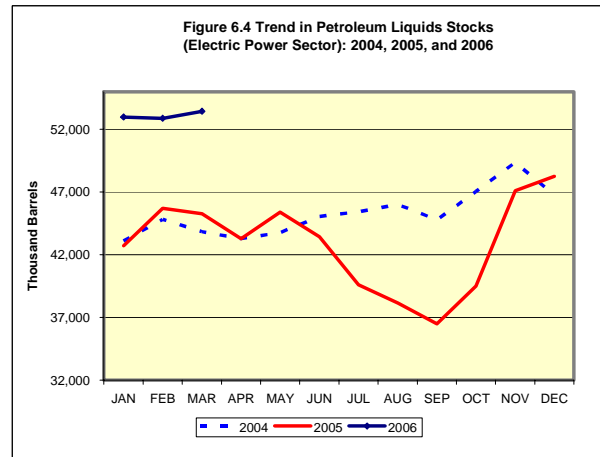
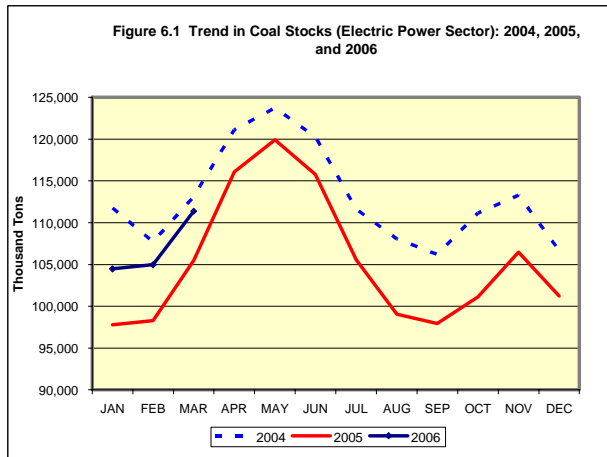


Section 6. Fossil Fuel Stock Trends

Data for:
March 2006

Table 6.1 Trends in Total Fossil Fuel Stocks (Electric Power Sector)

Fossil Fuel Stocks	Mar-06	Mar-05	% Change	Feb-06	% Change
Coal, Total (Thousand Short Tons)	111,376	105,458	5.6%	104,979	6.1%
Bituminous (includes anthracite and coal symfuel)	58,236	49,096	18.6%	54,848	6.2%
Subbituminous	49,300	52,645	-6.4%	46,094	7.0%
Lignite	3,840	3,717	3.3%	4,036	-4.9%
Petroleum Liquids (Thousand Barrels)	53,437	45,274	18.0%	52,878	1.1%



Section 7. Month-to-Month Comparisons: Electric Power Retail Sales and Average Prices

Data for:
March 2006

Retail Sales

Table 7.1 Retail Sales (Million kWh)

Ultimate Customer	Mar-06	Mar-05	% Change	Feb-06	% Change
Residential	105,161	104,591	0.5%	104,727	0.4%
Commercial	100,363	98,118	2.3%	95,129	5.5%
Industrial	82,752	83,251	-0.6%	79,850	3.6%
Transportation	673	683	-1.5%	687	-2.0%
All Sectors	288,949	286,643	0.8%	280,393	3.1%

Average Retail Price

Table 7.2 Average Retail Price (Cents/kWh) -- U.S. Total

Ultimate Customer	Mar-06	Mar-05	% Change	Feb-06	% Change
Residential	9.86	8.86	11.3%	9.81	0.5%
Commercial	9.01	8.21	9.7%	9.09	-0.9%
Industrial	5.76	5.15	11.8%	5.81	-0.9%
Transportation	7.62	7.11	7.2%	7.41	2.8%
All Sectors	8.39	7.56	11.0%	8.42	-0.4%

Table 7.3 Average Retail Price (Cents/kWh) by Census Division

Census Division	Residential			All Sectors		
	Mar-06	Mar-05	% Change	Mar-06	Mar-05	% Change
New England	16.23	13.05	24.4%	14.46	11.45	26.3%
Mid Atlantic	12.37	11.47	7.8%	10.54	9.87	6.8%
East North Central	8.78	8.06	8.9%	7.21	6.62	8.9%
West North Central	7.49	7.26	3.2%	6.14	5.94	3.4%
South Atlantic	9.25	8.45	9.5%	8.02	7.25	10.6%
East South Central	7.71	7.06	9.2%	6.32	5.74	10.1%
West South Central	10.68	9.10	17.4%	8.90	7.55	17.9%
Mountain	8.50	8.16	4.2%	7.14	6.83	4.5%
Pacific Contiguous	10.75	9.16	17.4%	9.71	8.70	11.6%
Pacific Noncontiguous	19.16	16.03	19.5%	17.20	14.27	20.5%
U.S. Total	9.86	8.86	11.3%	8.39	7.56	11.0%

Section 8. Retail Sales Trends

Data for:
March 2006

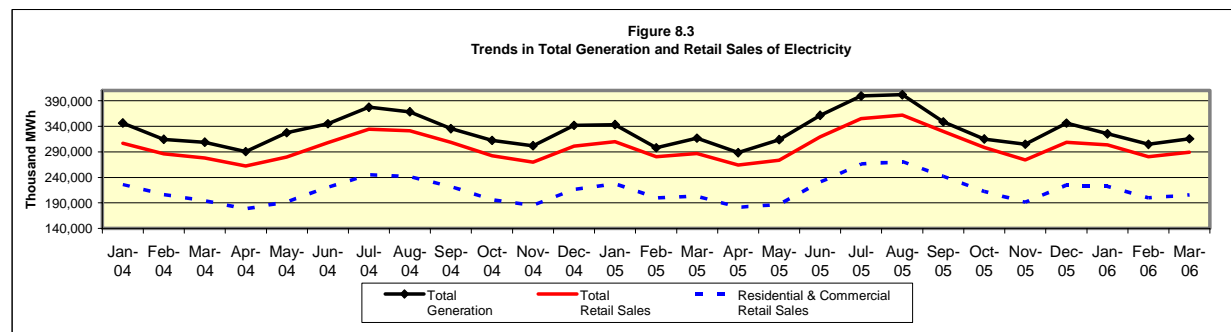
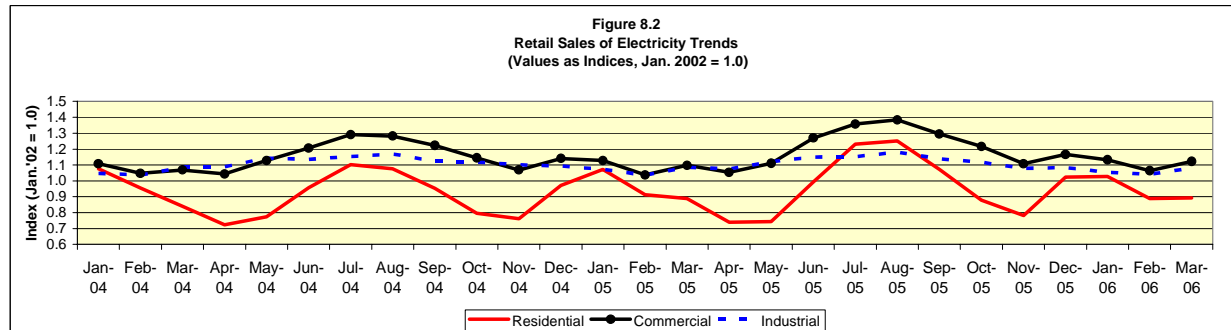
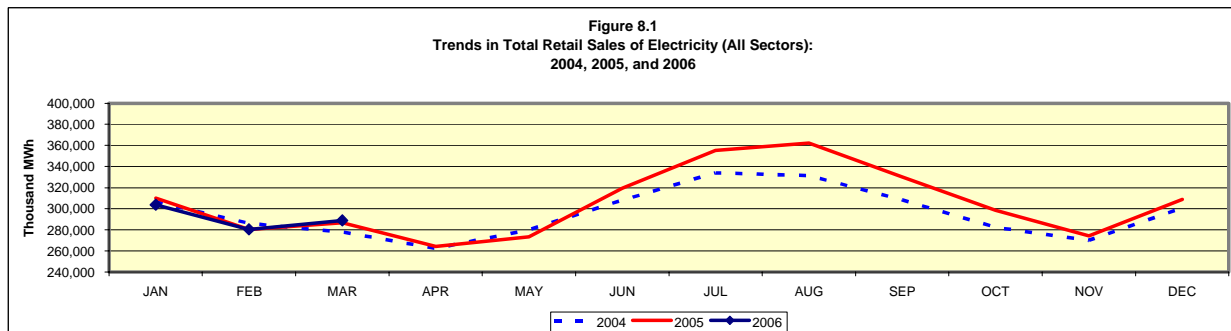
Table 8.1 Trends in Total Retail Sales of Electricity (All Sectors)
Millions of Kilowatthours

Year-to-Date Comparison

	Starting Month	Ending Month	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Transportation	Total (All Sectors)
Current Period	January 2006	March 2006	330,866	296,779	243,338	2,086	873,069
Prior Period	January 2005	March 2005	338,310	291,728	244,787	2,158	876,983
Percent Change			-2.2%	1.7%	-0.6%	-3.3%	-0.4%

Comparison to Prior Twelve-Month Period

	Starting Month	Ending Month	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Transportation	Total (All Sectors)
Current Period	April 2005	March 2006	1,357,359	1,276,313	1,017,026	8,230	3,658,927
Prior Period	April 2004	March 2005	1,293,693	1,232,659	1,020,625	7,439	3,554,416
Percent Change			4.9%	3.5%	-0.4%	10.6%	2.9%



Section 9. Average Retail Price Trends

Data for:
March 2006

**Table 9.1 Trends in Average Retail Price of Electricity (All Sectors)
Cents Per Kilowatthours**

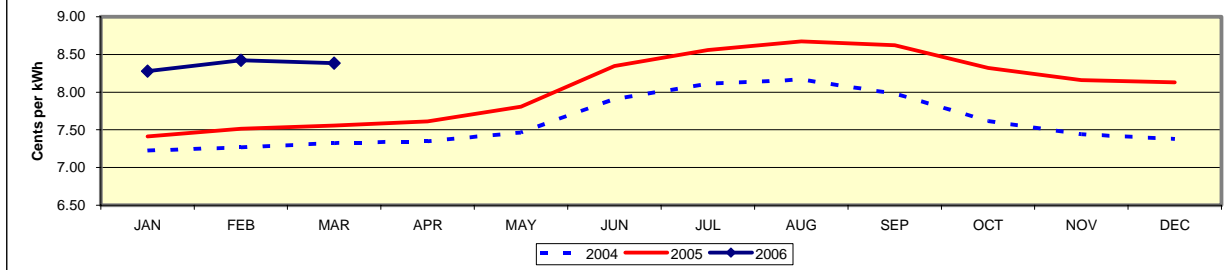
Year-to-Date Comparison

	Starting Month	Ending Month	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Transportation	Total (All Sectors)
Current Period	January 2006	March 2006	9.73	8.97	5.76	7.39	8.36
Prior Period	January 2005	March 2005	8.68	8.13	5.10	7.01	7.49
Percent Change			12.1%	10.3%	12.9%	5.4%	11.6%

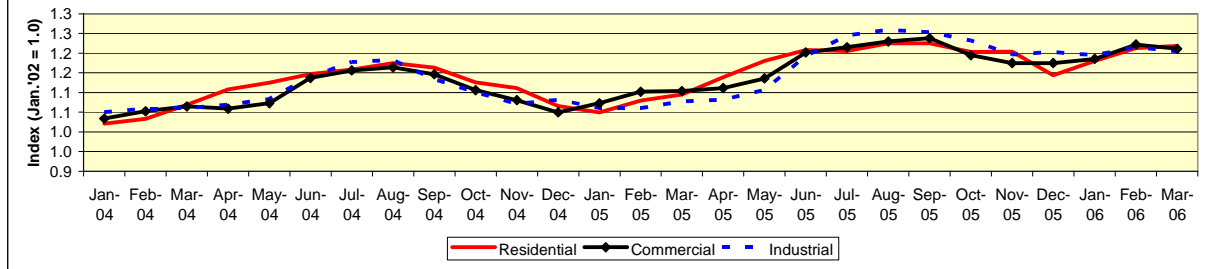
Comparison to Prior 12 Month Period

	Starting Month	Ending Month	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Transportation	Total (All Sectors)
Current Period	April 2005	March 2006	9.69	8.88	5.73	7.51	8.30
Prior Period	April 2004	March 2005	9.04	8.23	5.28	7.17	7.68
Percent Change			7.2%	7.9%	8.5%	4.7%	8.1%

**Figure 9.1 Trends in Average Retail Price of Electricity (All Sectors):
2004, 2005, and 2006**



**Figure 9.2 Average Retail Price of Electricity Trends by Ultimate Customer
(Values as Indices, Jan. 2002 = 1.0)**



Section 10. Heating and Cooling Degree Days

Data for:
March 2006

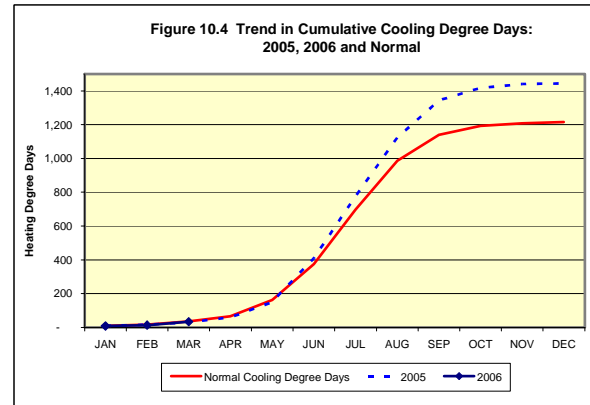
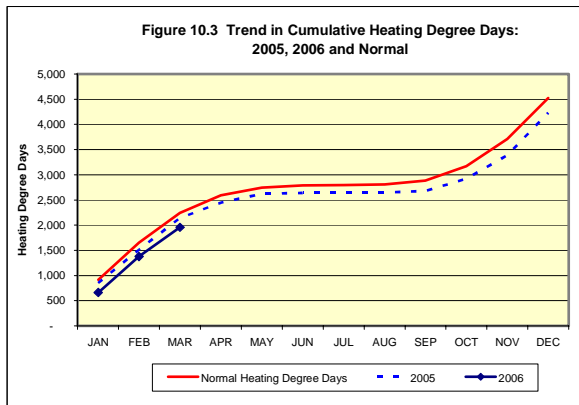
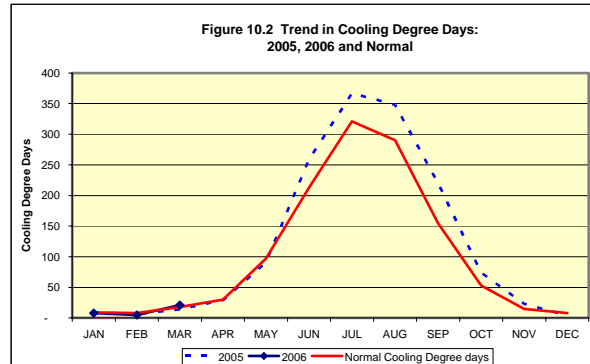
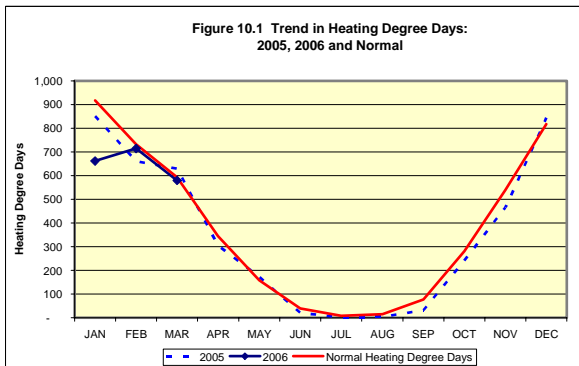
Table 10.1 Degree Days

	Month	Heating Degree Days			Cooling Degree Days		
		Heating Degree Days	Normal Heating Degree Days	Deviation From the Normal	Cooling Degree Days	Normal Cooling Degree Days	Deviation From the Normal
Current Period	March 2006	580	593	-13	21	18	3
Previous Period	March 2005	629	593	36	14	18	-4
Percent Change		-7.8%			50.0%		

Table 10.2 Trends in Heating and Cooling Degree Days

Year-to-Date Comparison				
	Starting Month	Ending Month	Heating Degree Days	Cooling Degree Days
Current Period	January 2006	March 2006	1,956	34
Prior Period	January 2005	March 2005	2,141	30
Percent Change			-8.6%	13.3%

Comparison to Prior 12 Month Period				
	Starting Month	Ending Month	Heating Degree Days	Cooling Degree Days
Current Period	April 2005	March 2006	4,044	1,449
Prior Period	April 2004	March 2005	4,152	1,253
Percent Change			-2.6%	15.6%



General: The *Monthly Flash Estimates of Electric Power Data* ("Flash Estimates") is prepared by the Electric Power Division, Office of Coal, Nuclear, Electric and Alternate Fuels, Energy Information Administration (EIA), U.S. Department of Energy. Data published in the *Flash Estimates* are compiled from the following sources: Form EIA-826, "Monthly Electric Utility Sales and Revenues with State Distributions Report," Form EIA-906, "Power Plant Report," and Form EIA-920, "Combined Heat and Power Plant Report."

The survey data is collected monthly from a statistically-derived sample of power plants and electricity retailers. The nominal sample sizes are: for the Form EIA-826, approximately 450 electric utilities and other energy service providers; for the Form EIA-920, approximately 300 combined heat and power (CHP) plants; and for the Form EIA-906, approximately 1,440 non-CHP plants. With the exception of stocks, a regression-based method is used to estimate totals from the sample. Essentially complete samples are collected for the *Electric Power Monthly*, which includes State-level values. The *Flash Estimates* is based on an incomplete sample and includes only national-level estimates. Stocks data for out-of-sample plants and any monthly non-respondents are estimated by bringing forward the last reported value for a plant.

For complete documentation on EIA monthly electric data collection and estimation, see the Technical Notes to the *Electric Power Monthly*, at: <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/epm/epm.pdf>. Values displayed in the *Flash Estimates* may differ from values published in the *Electric Power Monthly* due to independent rounding. This report represents the EIA's initial release for national level electricity data. Updated information will be released in the *Electric Power Monthly*.

Sector definitions: The Electric Power Sector comprises electricity-only and CHP plants within the North American Industrial Classification System 22 category whose primary business is to sell electricity, or electricity and heat, to the public (i.e., electric utility plants and Independent Power Producers (IPP), including IPP plants that operate as combined heat and power producers). The All Sectors totals include the Electric Power Sector and the Commercial and Industrial sectors (Commercial and Industrial power producers are primarily CHP plants).

Composition of fuel categories: See notes on page 3.

Degree Days: Notes: Degree-days are relative measurements of outdoor air temperature used as an index for heating and cooling energy requirements. Heating degree-days are the number of degrees that the daily average temperature falls below 65° F. Cooling degree-days are the number of degrees that the daily average temperature rises above 65° F. The daily average temperature is the mean of the maximum and minimum temperatures in a 24-hour period. For example, a weather station recording an average daily temperature of 40° F would report 25 heating degree-days for that day (and 0 cooling degree-days). If a weather station recorded an average daily temperature of 78° F, cooling degree-days for that station would be 13 (and 0 heating degree days).