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National Grid forecasts power surge ahead of Rugby World Cup

National Grid is forecasting that demand for electricity will soar across the UK when the 2015 Rugby World Cup kicks-off today (Friday 18th September).

18 Sep 2015

As England prepare to take on Fiji in the tournament opener at Twickenham tonight, energy analysts at National Grid expect demand to increase by 500 megawatts (MW) at half time – the equivalent of 200,000 kettles being turned on at once.

Known as a 'TV pick-up', this surge in demand occurs when people boil kettles, open fridge doors or turn the lights on at the same time, often when a television programme has ended or during an ad break.


Analysts have identified that games featuring each of the home nations, including England, Scotland and Wales, as well as Ireland, will create the biggest surge in demand throughout the tournament:

- **England vs. Wales** – Saturday 26th September (500MW)
- **South Africa vs. Scotland** - Saturday 3rd October (300MW)
- **Australia vs. England** – Saturday 3rd October (500MW)
- **France vs. Ireland** – Sunday 11th October (300MW)

The biggest peak ever recorded during a Rugby World Cup occurred when England beat Australia in the final in 2003, as electricity demand reached 2110MW at half-time – the equivalent of two million kettles being turned on.

Jack Barber, a senior energy forecaster at National Grid, said: "Our control engineers are hugely experienced in managing the electricity system and dealing with fast changes to demand around major televised events.

"With England, Scotland and Wales all competing in this world cup, we're forecasting regular demand effects during the group stages of the tournament. We anticipate these will get stronger if any of the home nations progress into the knock-out rounds."

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Notes for editors

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

National Grid undertakes no obligation to update any of the information contained in this release, which speaks only as at the date of this release, unless required by law or regulation.

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