

Mexico city power outages

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MEXICO CITY (AP) -- Mexico was hit by hours of rolling blackouts late Tuesday due to high temperatures and temporary drops in electrical power generation.

The government's National Center for Energy Control said the blackouts lasted a total of about five hours, though it was likely less for individual customers because it was a rolling blackout distributed around the country.

The larger blackout was partly caused by a spike in power demand in the early evening, when many Mexicans arrive home and turn on television sets, fans and air conditioners.

Mexico has broken several high temperature records this year, with about a third of the country expected to reach 113 degrees Fahrenheit (45 degrees Celsius) on Wednesday. Greater Mexico City, where about one-sixth of the population lives, reached a high of 92 degrees (33.4 Celsius) on Tuesday.

Power generation also dropped unexpectedly due to other reasons including lower output from hydroelectric dams, which have been affected by drought, and clouds affecting solar power.

The blackouts were an embarrassment for President Andr s Manuel L pez Obrador, who has made a priority of increasing the role of the state-owned power company, known as the CFE, and reducing opportunities for private power generators.

Many of the state-owned plants that L pez Obrador has given priority to are dirtier because they burn fuel produced at government-owned refineries. The president has sought to limit cleaner, private power generation using natural gas or renewables.

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As extremely hot weather affects much of the country, many Mexicans were left without electricity on Tuesday afternoon and night.

Power outages were reported in 21 states, while the National Energy Control Center (Cenace) declared a state of emergency in Mexico's electricity system on two occasions.

Cenace said in a statement on Tuesday night that Mexico's electricity generation capacity was affected from 4:05 p.m. Mexico City time when a power plant in Tamaulipas "went out of service."



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Several other power plants in various parts of the country subsequently went offline and solar and wind power generation dropped, Cenace said.

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