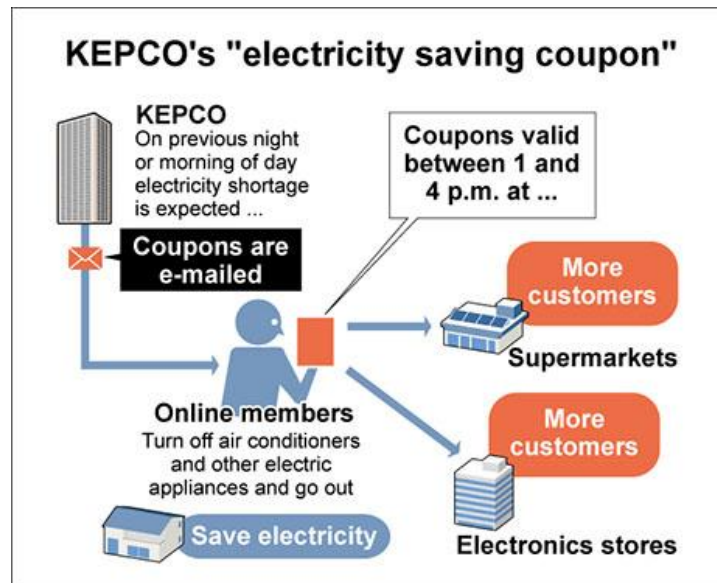


KEPCO trying to lure people from homes on hot days with online coupons

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OSAKA--Kansai Electric Power Co. has come up with a novel way to reduce daytime electricity consumption in households during the hottest days of summer.

In an effort to reduce demand during peak periods, it will try to encourage residents to leave their homes and go shopping by offering coupons online that provide discounts. (...)

On days that KEPCO expects electricity shortages, it will send the coupons via e-mail at 8 a.m., or 6 p.m. the previous day. The coupons will be valid between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. The aim is for people to be away from their homes during that period, when electricity usage tends to be at its highest, mostly due to air conditioning. (...)

The utility sought the cooperation of supermarket giant Aeon Co., and electronics retailers Edion Corp. and Joshin Denki Co., so that the coupons can be used at their 300 or so outlets.

"We can not only contribute to the conservation of electricity, but also encourage customers to visit our stores," a Joshin Denki official said.

After the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011, electric power companies began asking big-lot users and manufacturing plants to hold back on electricity use. The amount of electricity generated in Japan diminished as nuclear reactor operations were suspended following the Fukushima crisis.

Asking regular households to be more vigilant about their use of electricity reflects a growing trend for conservation of resources. (...)

256 words