



The Market Monitor

WATCHING THE MARKET : your fact source

WEEK OF March 7, 2004

All electricity prices are quoted in Canadian dollars per megawatt hour (MWh)

MARKET SURVEILLANCE ADMINISTRATOR

The Market Monitor is published on the Market Surveillance Administrator's web site (www.albertamsa.ca) every Tuesday reporting on key market indicators and weekly trends in Alberta's evolving electricity market.

Alberta's Market Surveillance Administrator (MSA) is in place to monitor Alberta's electricity market for fairness and balance in the public interest. Market Surveillance keeps a close watch on the overall performance of Alberta's electricity market - checking that it operates fairly, efficiently and in an openly competitive manner.

The Market Surveillance Administrator monitors market activity, investigates complaints and makes recommendations for changes, including changes to rules and procedures. The goal is to assess which aspects of the market are working well and determine where changes are needed - to address issues before they reach the formal complaint stage. That involves keeping an eye on the behaviour of all market participants to make sure rules are followed and actions are competitive and above board.

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

- The week of March 7 saw increased Pool price volatility as the standard deviation of Pool price moved above the four-week moving average value.
- Pool price reached a high of \$458.83 in hour ending (HE) 16 on March 09. The weekly high in the previous week was \$105.71.
- Pool price remained at or below \$100 approximately 96 percent of the time last week (See weekly price duration curve, page 2).
- The average Pool price for the week of March 7 decreased by \$1.26 to \$40.44 from last week's average Pool price of \$41.69
- The year-to-date (YTD) average Pool price was \$50.26 as of the end of March 13.
- On-peak prices averaged \$53.38 last week, increasing from the previous week's average of \$48.42. Average off-peak prices decreased to \$23.17 compared to \$32.72 for the prior week.
- Loads last week were 2.2 percent lower than the week before as the total volume of energy traded last week was 1,242,654 MWh compared to 1,271,035 MWh a week earlier.
- The maximum hourly demand last week was 8,095 in HE 20 on March 9 with a price of \$67.00. The previous week's highest hourly demand was 8,358 MW on March 2 at a price of \$85.66. The minimum hourly demand last week was 6,583 MW in HE 04 on March 12 at a price of \$9.87.

WESTERN MARKET SNAPSHOT

- Average on-peak prices for other market areas were mostly higher compared to the previous week. Electricity prices are quoted in \$CDN/MWh at an exchange rate of \$1.3344. Mid-Columbia (Mid-C) averaged \$56.77 compared to \$55.54 for the previous week. California/Oregon Border (COB) averaged \$58.71 compared to \$57.61 for the previous week, while Palo Verde (PV) averaged \$61.89 compared to \$60.54 for the week before. Mid-Continent Area Power Pool (MAPP North) averaged \$49.37 compared to \$50.78 for the previous week. At North Path 15 in California (NP 15) prices averaged \$60.94 compared to \$59.94 for the week before. (See weekly market hub graph page 5)

NATURAL GAS MARKET SNAPSHOT

- The Alberta natural gas closing price recorded on Friday, March 12 was \$6.04 per gigajoule (GJ), increasing from the previous Friday's closing price of \$5.98/GJ.
- Spark spreads were mostly negative last week. (See spark spreads chart, page 4).

CONTACT US

Alberta's Market Surveillance Team

Martin J. Merritt
President & Chief Executive Officer
403-233-4682
martin.merritt@albertamsa.ca

W.W. (Wayne) Silk
Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
403-543-0387
wayne.silk@albertamsa.ca

Douglas Wilson
Legal Counsel & Secretary
403-538-3445
douglas.wilson@albertamsa.ca

Mike Nozdryn-Plotnicki
Manager, Market Monitoring
403-705-8503
mike.nozdryn-plotnicki@albertamsa.ca

Robert Spragins
Manager, Investigations
403-705-3195
robert.spragins@albertamsa.ca

Bethan Kirkpatrick
Analyst
403-705-3191
bethan.kirkpatrick@albertamsa.ca

Chris Joy
Analyst
403-233-6418
chris.joy@albertamsa.ca

Doug Doll
Analyst
403-233-6497
doug.doll@albertamsa.ca

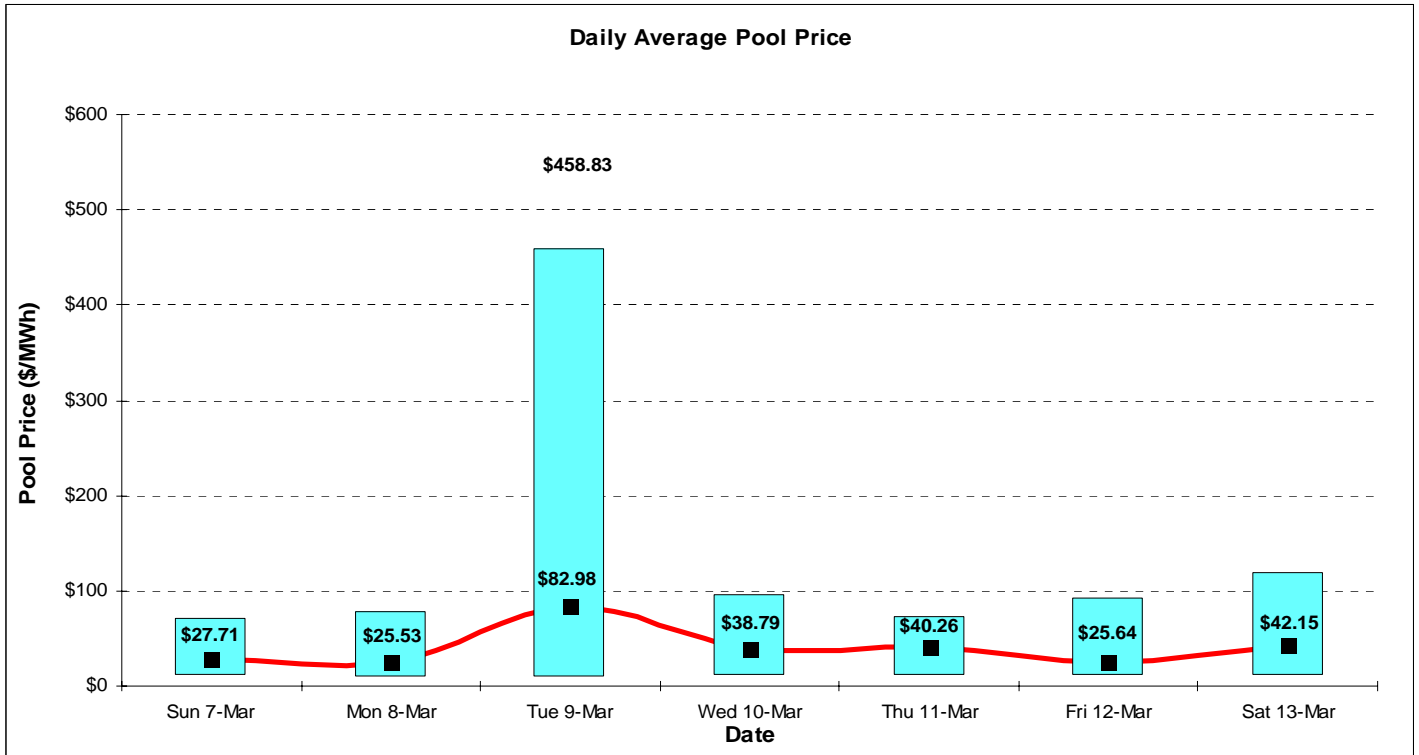
Mark McGillivray
Analyst
403-705-5317
mark.mcgillivray@albertamsa.ca

Natasha Solutina
Analyst
403-705-3182
natasha.solutina@albertamsa.ca

Wes Green
403-705-3199
wes.green@albertamsa.ca

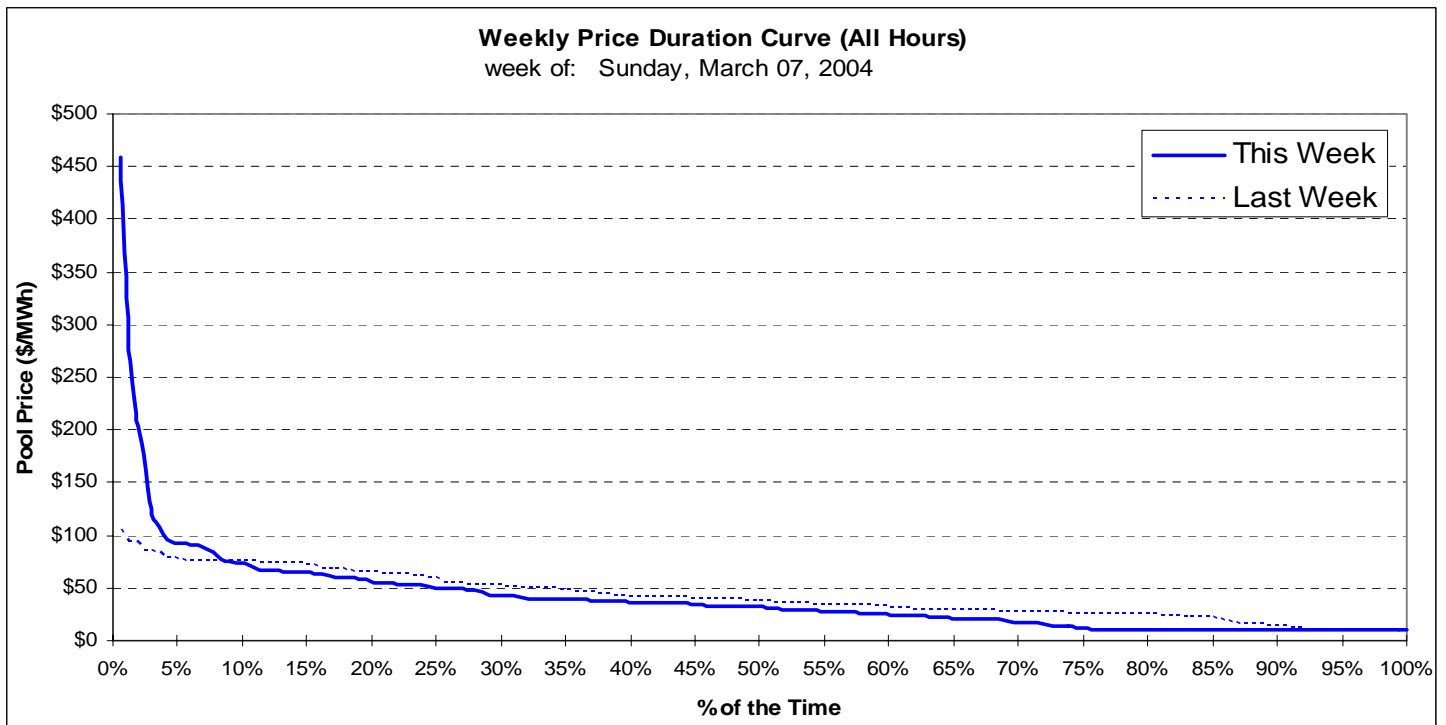
Donna Ehrhardt
Executive Assistant
403-705-3181
donna.ehrhardt@albertamsa.ca

KEY WEEKLY MARKET STATISTICS

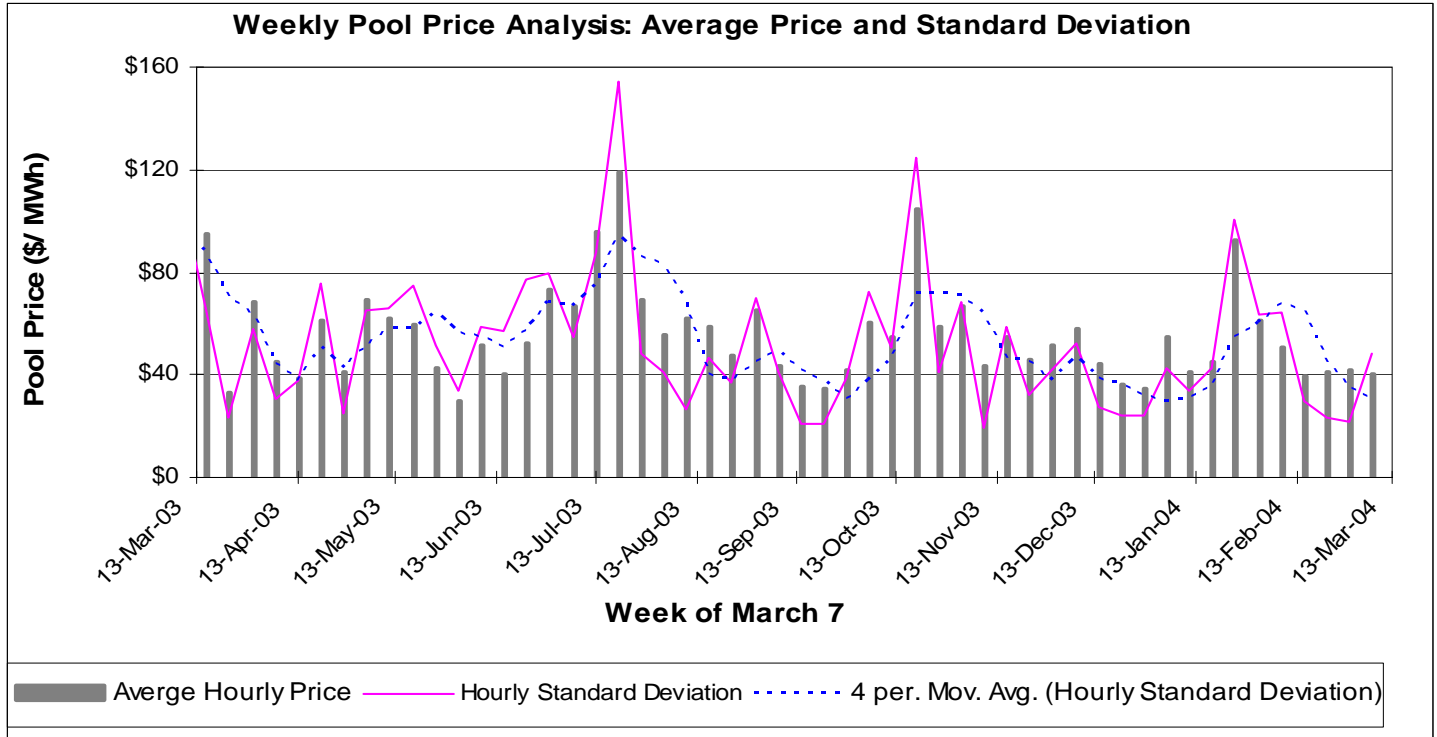


The solid bars illustrate the range from minimum to maximum price.

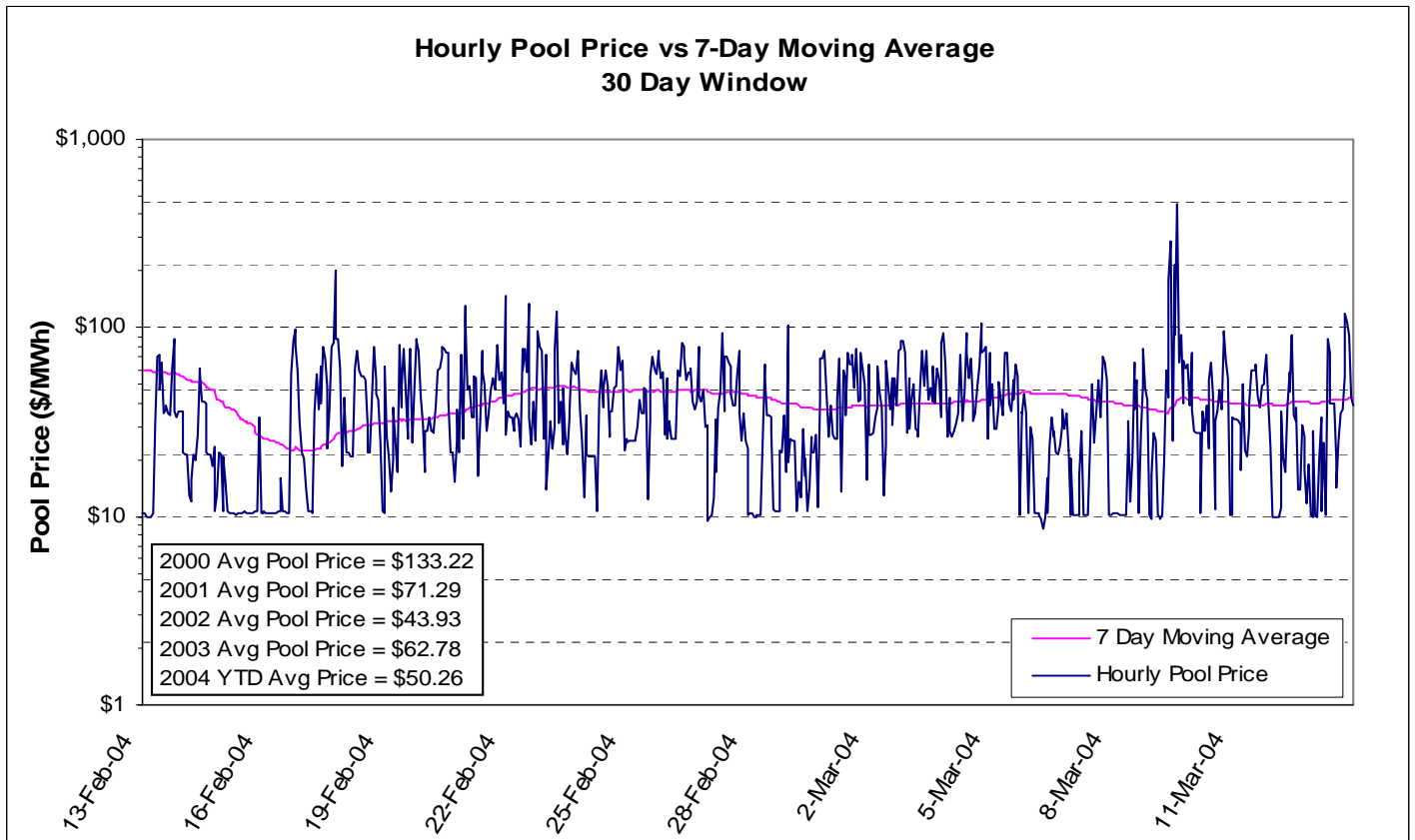
This weekly price duration curve illustrates the percentage of time that prices were at, or above, a given value. For a selected price (vertical axis), the curve yields the percentage of time that the price was equaled or exceeded (horizontal axis).



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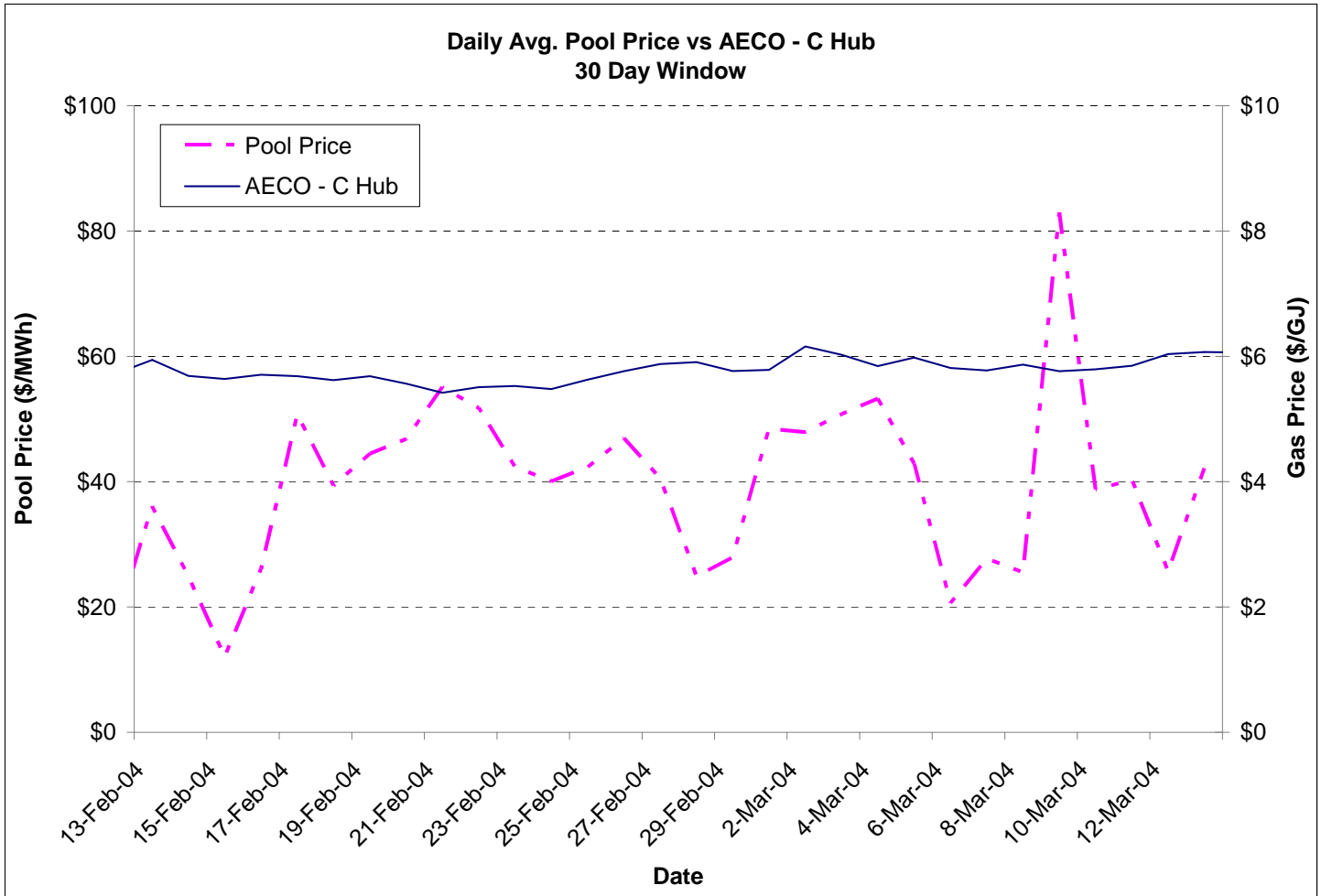


This chart illustrates the average weekly pool prices for the past year, as well as the standard deviation of the hourly pool prices in each week and the four-week moving average standard deviation of pool prices. The standard deviation of pool prices is a measure of the volatility and the four-week moving average is useful in identifying trends in this volatility.



This chart provides a rolling 30-day view of the hourly pool price together with the 7-day moving average. The moving average is useful in identifying trends over the period.

KEY WEEKLY MARKET STATISTICS

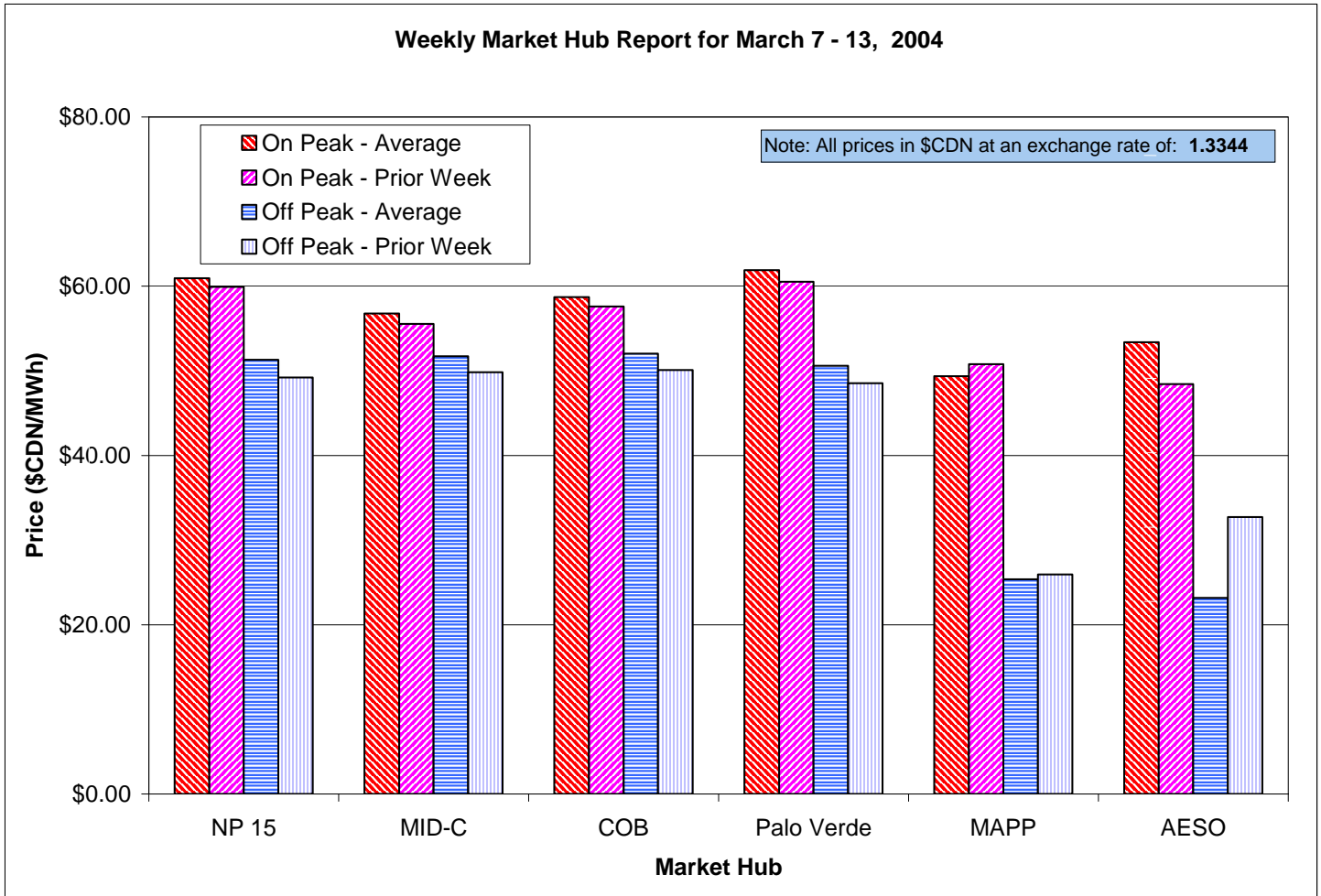


This chart provides a rolling 30-day view of average daily pool prices and intra-Alberta gas prices (AECO-C Hub). It illustrates the correlation between the pool price for electricity and the price of gas.

Daily Spark Spreads

Spark spreads (in \$/MWh) give an indication of the revenue available to cover costs (including O&M, capital costs, depreciation, etc...) after fuel costs have been paid. These spark spreads compare the revenues of two units with different thermal efficiencies: 7.5 GJ/MWh (representing a combined cycle gas turbine) and 10 GJ/MWh (representing a simple cycle gas turbine). For this analysis, Gas Price is the weighted average daily spot gas price at AECO-C (\$/GJ) and electricity price is the AESO daily average Pool price (\$/MWh). A positive spread indicates it is more economical to buy gas and generate power while a negative spread indicates it is more economical to buy power from the grid.

Date	Gas Price	Price	Heat Rate		Price	Heat Rate		Price	Heat Rate	
	\$/GJ	(all hrs) \$/MWh	7.5 GJ/MWh	10 GJ/MWh	(on peak) \$/MWh	7.5 GJ/MWh	10 GJ/MWh	(off peak) \$/MWh	7.5 GJ/MWh	10 GJ/MWh
7-Mar-04	5.77	27.71	(15.60)	(30.04)	N/A	N/A	N/A	27.71	(15.60)	(30.04)
8-Mar-04	5.87	25.53	(18.47)	(33.14)	33.22	(10.78)	(25.45)	10.16	(33.84)	(48.51)
9-Mar-04	5.76	82.98	39.74	25.33	112.99	69.75	55.34	22.96	(20.28)	(34.69)
10-Mar-04	5.79	38.79	(4.65)	(19.13)	45.42	1.98	(12.50)	25.52	(17.92)	(32.40)
11-Mar-04	5.85	40.26	(3.59)	(18.21)	45.39	1.54	(13.08)	29.98	(13.87)	(28.49)
12-Mar-04	6.04	25.64	(19.63)	(34.72)	31.12	(14.15)	(29.24)	14.68	(30.59)	(45.68)
13-Mar-04	6.07	42.15	(3.36)	(18.53)	52.15	6.64	(8.53)	22.13	(23.38)	(38.55)



This chart illustrates a comparison between the current and previous weekly average on-peak, and off-peak prices for the given hubs. Note all prices are quoted in Canadian dollars per megawatt hour (MWh).