NERC ALERTS: WHAT EACH LEVEL ASKS OF YOUR ENTITY.

NERC issues alerts under Section 810 of its Rules of Procedure at three levels. An Advisory is information. A Recommendation and an Essential Action each require an acknowledgment in the NERC Alert System within seven days and a report of actions taken by a date NERC sets; NERC reports the results to FERC. None is a Reliability Standard.

THE THREE LEVELS · RULES OF PROCEDURE SECTION 810

Advisory, Recommendation, Essential Action.

- **Level 1, Advisories:** "purely informational, intended to advise certain segments of the owners, operators and users of the Bulk Power System of findings and lessons learned." No response is required.
- **Level 2, Recommendations:** "specific actions that NERC is recommending be considered on a particular topic by certain segments of owners, operators, and users of the Bulk Power System according to each entity's facts and circumstances."
- **Level 3, Essential Actions:** "specific actions that NERC has determined are essential for certain segments of owners, operators, or users of the Bulk Power System to take to ensure the reliability of the Bulk Power System. Such Essential Actions require NERC Board approval before issuance."
- **For Levels 2 and 3**, recipients "are to evaluate and take appropriate action" and "shall also provide reports of actions taken and timely updates on progress" by the reporting dates NERC sets (Section 810(4)).
- NERC tells FERC at least five business days before issuing an alert, and reports to FERC within 30 days after the reporting date, with "appropriate protection for Confidential Information or Critical Energy Infrastructure Information" (Section 810(5)).

WHAT AN ALERT IS NOT · AND WHAT IT STILL REQUIRES

Not a standard, not a penalty, not an excuse.

- The alert says so itself. A Level 3 alert "is not the same as a Reliability Standard, and it does not create a mandatory obligation to take the Essential Actions. Your organization will not be subject to penalties for failure to implement the Essential Actions."
- But it "does not alter the requirements of any approved Reliability Standard or excuse the failure to follow the practices discussed in the Essential Action if such failure constitutes a violation of a Reliability Standard." The Level 3 alert ties its actions to FAC-001, FAC-002 and TPL-001.
- **The acknowledgment and the report are the obligations.** "NERC registered entities shall (1) acknowledge receipt of these Essential Actions within the NERC Alert System, and (2) report to NERC on the status of their activities in relation to these Essential Actions."
- **A valid response has three steps** in the Alert System: "Acknowledgement of the Alert", "Submission of Response", "Approval of Response", all by authorized users. Answers go per registered function; "not applicable to my entity's functional group(s)" is an allowed answer.
- Submitted data is protected under Section 1500 of the Rules of Procedure; for U.S. entities NERC reports to FERC in aggregate, anonymized.

THE TWO LIVE EXAMPLES · WHAT TO DO

Route by function, calendar two dates, keep the record.

- **Level 2, September 9, 2025:** "Large Load Interconnection, Study, Commissioning, and Operations", to TO, RP, TOP, TP, BA, PC, DP and RC. Acknowledge by September 16, 2025; report by January 28, 2026. Five recommendations: facility design requirements, a study process, commissioning, operating protocols, and large loads in demand forecasts.
- **Level 3, May 4, 2026:** "Computational Load Modeling, Studies, Instrumentation, Commissioning, Operations, Protection, and Control", to TP, PC, TO, BA, RC and TOP. Acknowledge by May 11; report by August 3, 2026. Seven Essential Actions: a modeling data list (the PERC1 model at minimum), studies, a wider definition of qualified change, commissioning, no non-consequential loss of firm load, dynamic fault recording, communications.
- **When one arrives:** match its distribution list to your registered functions and name an owner for each; calendar both dates; answer each action with its status choice; have an authorized user approve the response before the deadline.
- **Keep the response and its evidence** with your compliance records. NERC's aggregated Level 2 report previews what comes next; the large-load one preceded the Level 3 alert and the standards now in drafting.
- **Generator owners and large loads:** the computational-load actions reach you through your Transmission Owner and Planner, as model data requests, commissioning tests and protection reviews. Have the data ready before they ask.

Sep 9, 2025
Level 2 large-load Recommendation issued; acknowledge by Sep 16.

Jan 28, 2026
Level 2 reports due.

Mar 2026
NERC publishes the aggregated Level 2 report.

May 4, 2026
Level 3 computational-load Essential Action issued; acknowledge by May 11.

Aug 3, 2026
Level 3 reports due.

Within 30 days after
NERC reports actions taken to FERC (Section 810(5)).

Sources (quotations verbatim): NERC Rules of Procedure, Section 810, Information Exchange and Issuance of NERC Advisories, Recommendations and Essential Actions (Rules effective November 28, 2023, with appendices as of May 20, 2025) · NERC Level 2 Alert, Industry Recommendation: Large Load Interconnection, Study, Commissioning, and Operations (September 9, 2025, public edition) · Aggregated Report on the Level 2 Recommendation (March 17, 2026) · NERC Level 3 Alert, Essential Action to Industry: Computational Load Modeling, Studies, Instrumentation, Commissioning, Operations, Protection, and Control (May 4, 2026, public edition). Status as of October 11, 2026. Educational material, not compliance advice.

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