

Large-Load Power Access in BC and Alberta

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Allocation isn't energization. In both provinces, the first gate for a large load is getting allocated capacity, not buying energy. Clearing that gate starts a second clock: studies, equipment and construction before power flows.

Right now both gates are in flux. BC's 2026 Call for Demand results are waiting on the government transition after the October 24 election. Alberta's bring-your-own-generation process is not yet final.

Two routes to power

Two routes to power, and both are in flux right now

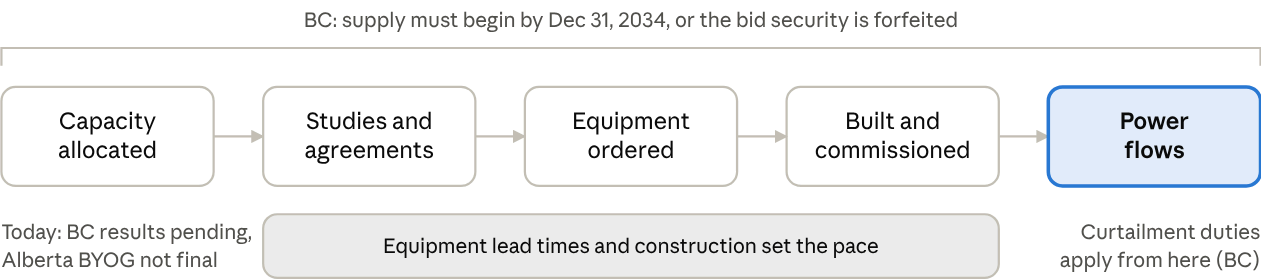
British Columbia · BC Hydro	Alberta · AESO
Route Competitive call: 2026 Call for Demand 300 MW for AI data centres, 10–145 MW each	Route Interim cap, then bring your own generation Interim 1,200 MW fully allocated to 2 projects
What you commit Tariff premium of at least 10% Curtailment on 24 h notice, no compensation At least 36 events and 144 hours a year Bid security of \$25,000 per MW	What you commit Own generation or a signed offtake Environmental, regulatory, transmission permits secured before production starts (Bill 8)
Scored on (Stage 2 points) Cost-benefit 30 · Data sovereignty 30 Community 20 · Environment 10 · First Nations 10	Demand in the queue Data centres requesting about 19.6 GW (Oct 2026) vs. a record provincial peak of 12,785 MW
Status now 15 applications, about 800 MW requested Results wait on the post-election transition	Status now BYOG process not final; intake due this fall Waits on a data centre regulation under Bill 8

BC vs Alberta · route, commitments, status

BC asks developers to accept grid terms, including uncompensated curtailment. Alberta asks them to bring their own supply. Neither route has a settled answer this fall.

Allocation isn't energization

Allocation starts a second clock before power flows



allocation to energization · 5 stages

An allocation letter is the start, not the finish. The schedule after it is set by studies, long-lead equipment and construction, and BC’s terms put a hard date on it.

Where execution risk sits

Assessment, not a forecast. “Higher” means more ways for the schedule to slip.

Risk	BC	Alberta	Why
Rule certainty today	Medium	Higher	BC’s process exists but results wait on a new government. Alberta’s BYOG process and regulation are not final.
Contracts that must hold	Lower	Higher	BC is grid supply under a tariff. Alberta adds generation or offtake, plus permits.
Operating constraint	Higher	Depends on design	BC requires uncompensated curtailment, at least 144 hours a year. In Alberta, availability depends on the project’s own generation.

Signals to watch

- **BC:** whether the new government releases Call for Demand results as designed, or reopens the process.

- **Alberta:** publication of the data centre regulation under Bill 8, then the AESO's final BYOG process and intake date.
- **Both:** who absorbs curtailment in tenant contracts: backup, storage, contract terms or price.
- **Supply chain:** whether developers reserve equipment capacity before they hold an allocation.

Sources

- [BC Hydro 2026 Call for Demand, Request for Applications](#)
- [BC Hydro: Emerging industries connections \(status page\)](#)
- [AESO Engage: Phase 2A Large Load Integration](#)
- [Connect CRE: Alberta government to offer incentives for self-powered data centres](#)
- [2026 British Columbia general election](#)
- [Get Energy: Alberta Energy Market Report, October 12-18, 2026](#)