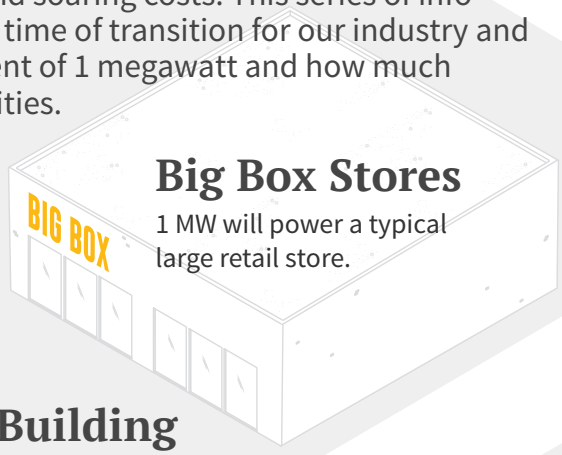
What Is 1 MW?

First in a series

Exploding demand for electricity, lingering supply chain challenges and short-sighted public policy aimed at rapidly eliminating fossil fuels from power generation have forced large portions of the United States to confront unprecedented power shortages and soaring costs. This series of infographics will look at the most critical elements at play in this time of transition for our industry and our society. This month, we examine the familiar measurement of 1 megawatt and how much power is needed to supply common facilities in our communities.



Big Box Stores

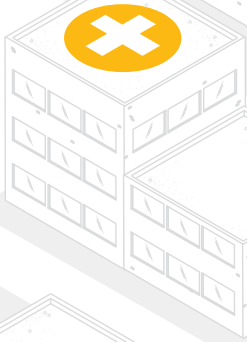
1 MW will power a typical large retail store.

Factory

Facilities with heavy machinery can draw 1 MW of power.

Office Building

1 MW can power several medium-sized office buildings.



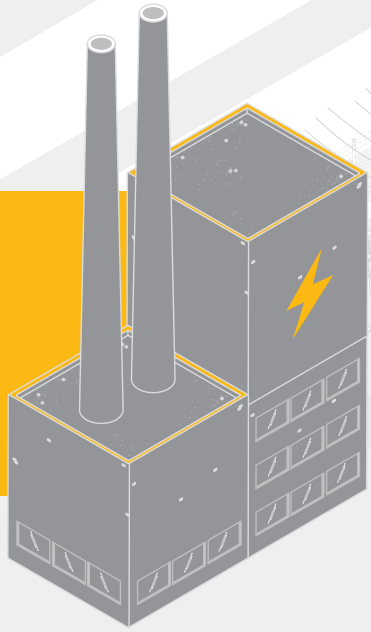
Hospital

1 MW will power a small hospital.

Power Plant

Typical outputs:
Coal: 500 MW to 1 GW
Gas: 50 MW to 1 GW
Nuclear: 500 MW to 1.5 GW

1 MW is 1 million watts of power.

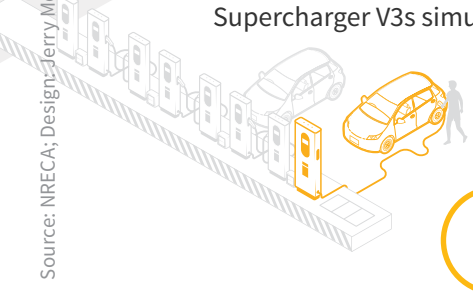


School

0.5 MW will power a medium-sized public school.

EV Charging

1 MW can power four Tesla Supercharger V3s simultaneously.



Residential

1 MW can power 750 to 1,000 homes.

By comparison, a large data center can have power demands of well over 100 MW.

Source: NRECA; Design: Jerry Mosemak