

Managing the Rising Cost of Electricity

Managing the cost of electricity has become a reality in South Africa. Apart from self-generation systems which are often reactive and expensive solutions, here are six ways you can save on energy at home and contribute to national grid stability:

1. Take an energy audit: An energy audit will help you find smart ways to reduce your home and business energy bills, and in the process, lower your carbon footprint. If you don't want to do it yourself engage a power company which will give a detailed analysis of your existing installations, where you use the most energy and come-up with specific methods or appliances for improved power efficiency.
2. Switching to energy efficient lights result in a long-term decrease of energy costs as these are more efficient and last much longer.
3. Using timers for geysers, pool pumps and security lights reduces your electricity usage, and ensure these items function only when needed. This should also in the long run reduce the wear and tear of these items and result in a longer life span.
4. Turn off and unplug equipment not in use. Remember that turning appliances off but leaving them plugged in to an energy source contributes to "phantom load" and consumes a lot of energy that could otherwise be saved and put to better use. Smart plugs are an effective way to help you maintain your power consumption and keep your home energy efficient with little input. Smart plugs can be set to switch off your appliances such as TVs entirely as opposed to putting them onto stand-by mode.
5. A significant amount of energy can be saved by replacing your regular home switches with occupancy and vacancy sensors which automatically turn off and on when the presence of a person is detected.
6. Updates in technology aren't only limited to your smart phone, but newer large appliances such as fridges and freezers are more energy efficient than their older counter parts.

Following these simple steps will go a long way in improving energy efficiency and support the government efforts to reduce energy costs and wastage, while conserving available energy for utilisation in homes and other buildings.