

Eskom warns against dangers of illegal connections

Illegal connections are the leading cause of unplanned power outages, says Eskom.



“Our major concern in the case of illegal connections is that danger is posed not only to the people who engage in illegal connections, but also to the rest of their community, particularly children and animals that form part of the environment,” says the power utility’s divisional executive for security, Tebogo Rakau.

“The network overloads and trips because it is carrying more users than what it was designed for. Furthermore, customers who are not paying for electricity tend to be wasteful in the way they use it.”

The power utility said it installs circuit breakers that switch off when the load reaches dangerous levels, which prevents the transformers from exploding.

Rakau says residents sometimes bypass these safety features and the transformers eventually explode.

“Not only is this dangerous, but these transformers can take hours or even days to repair. Unfortunately, this affects and inconveniences legal and paying customers as well. It is, therefore, to everyone’s benefit that we stand together as Eskom, businesses, government and the community at large to fight and win the battle against infrastructure and electricity theft.

“One person losing their life or getting injured because of the unsafe and illegal use of electricity is simply one too many, especially because these are avoidable incidents.”

Rakau says curbing illegal electricity connections, infrastructure theft and vandalism will ensure the safety of communities while also improving the performance of the electricity network, ensuring uninterrupted electricity supply for the benefit of individuals, businesses and the country at large.

Public safety programmes

The power utility said it promotes the safe, legal and smart use of electricity through the Energy Losses Management Programme, infrastructure crime interventions and its public safety programme.

These programmes are aimed at educating the public about the consequences associated with various forms of infrastructure and electricity theft, including illegal connections, which often lead to electrocutions and fires, economic downturn, power outages, job losses and a higher cost of living.

“Eskom encourages all community members to report any unsafe and illegal power conditions or connections they come across by calling 08600 ESKOM (37566). These include exposed electrical wiring, low-hanging cables, illegal connections, vandalised electrical equipment such as substations and exposed electrical cables due to theft or vandalism.”

The public can also report electricity and infrastructure theft anonymously to Crime Line on 32211 (at R1 per SMS) or call 0800 11 2722. The identity of those who report theft incidents remains completely protected all times.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>