

## Consumers urged to support paraffin campaign

The Paraffin Safety Association is urging all household energy consumers to support its consumer rights campaign which calls for government to formulate and implement the Low Income Household Energy Safety Policy.

By [Nthambeleni Gabara](#) 13 Mar 2008

The Paraffin Consumer Rights Campaign will kick off on World Consumer Rights Day on 15 March 2008 and will continue until the National Paraffin Safety Day on 1 June.

This year's conference theme is "Consumer Rights and the Fight against Poverty".

"We are expecting all household energy consumers to support the campaign because it directly affects them," the association said.

### Household Energy Safety Policy

The association's communications coordinator Phumzile Nteyi said the main thrust of the campaign is to request government to formulate and implement the Low Income Household Energy Safety Policy.

This is a document outlining a course of action to ensure paraffin consumer rights are highlighted and was drafted by paraffin users during various summits held nationwide in May and June respectively last year.

"Consumers must be able to use any form of energy safely to meet their needs," she said.

Paraffin Safety Association Managing Director Patrick Kulati said there was simply not enough electricity or Liquefied Petroleum Gas to go around.

"Every available energy source will have to harness in a system of consumption that ensures consumer and human rights," he said.

According to Kulati it was not only the poor who would be urged to make do with paraffin.

"Those who have always had electricity in the recent years of rollout find they are now in the same boat as consumers who rely on open flame technology," he said.

Kulati said that their declaration outlines problems, but goes on to call specific action from all sectors of society including households.

He added that the action has to be orchestrated by the Department of Minerals and Energy.

### Campaign overview

The campaign will also cover various aspects of the declaration and the current issue of household energy safety.

These will include: government's response to the declaration; consumers right to safety; appropriate

packaging and labeling for paraffin.

Paraffin can also play a role in electricity demand side management strategy, energy surveillance and the evidence-based approach behind the declaration and paraffin safety messages.

The department recently introduced its strategy to ensure that an appropriate energy carrier is used for the application.

The strategy fuel switching, the substitution of electricity as a domestic energy source with Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LP Gas) assists in lowering the burden of electricity generation.

The department also unveiled cost-saving ways to enjoy a comfortable indoor climate all year, as part of the energy security master plan.

Minister Buyelwa Sonjica has already indicated that the current electricity emergency cannot be solved by government alone, that it needs collective efforts.

On its Demand Side Management, the department indicated that consumer behavioral change programme need immediate implementation, but the impact will only be observed in a medium term.

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