



LOAD-SHEDDING FAQs

1. **WHY DO WE HAVE LOAD-SHEDDING?**

The likelihood of load-shedding increases when there is a lot of demand on the power system. It is impossible to accurately predict when we will have to reduce the load on our power supply, but we can all help to lessen the chances of load-shedding.

The municipality implements load-shedding in accordance with the load-shedding schedule, this schedule covers the areas where the municipality supplies electricity. Eskom supplied area's may have a different schedule.



IMAGE BY FREEPIK

Load-shedding is implemented in stages and depends on the extent of the shortage of electricity generation. Stage 1 is the least serious, while stage 8 is the most serious.

The scheduled electricity outages generally last for about 2,5 hours with one area affected at a time during stage 1, and eight areas affected at a time during stage 8. Between stages 5 and 8 outages of four hours at a time can occur.

The municipality only implements load-shedding when we are instructed to do so by Eskom's National Control Centre. The decision to implement load-shedding is therefore beyond our control and often at short notice.

2. **WHO DECIDES THE TIME SCHEDULE FOR AREAS AND WHAT INFLUENCES THE DECISION?**

Eskom instructs the municipality to shed load.

3. **WHY ARE SOME AREAS SHED FOR LONGER WHEN WE SWITCH BETWEEN THE HIGHER STAGES?**

The municipality only implements load-shedding when instructed to do so by Eskom's National Control Centre.

The higher the stages, the more areas are affected simultaneously and the more frequently the outages of two and a half hours will occur. Between stages 5 and 8 outages of four hours at a time can occur.

The decision to implement load-shedding is therefore beyond the control of the municipality and often at short notice.



4. WHY ARE CERTAIN AREAS AFFECTED MORE THAN OTHERS? WHO DECIDES ON WHICH AREAS ARE LOAD SHED AND WHY?

Eskom instructs the municipality to shed load.

The schedule is designed in a way that the burden of load-shedding is carried as equally as possible across the municipal area.

5. WHAT CAN RESIDENTS DO TO LIMIT THE NEED FOR LOAD-SHEDDING?

Help limit the chances of load-shedding, by reducing your electricity usage at home and at the office and encouraging your friends and family to do the same.

You can start by doing the following:

- Switch off those appliances that you don't need – this is the golden rule when it comes to saving electricity.
- Delay switching on lights and appliances until after the peak periods (between 17:00 and 21:00) whenever possible.
- Switch off your pool pump, geyser and other large electrical equipment, and never run both at the same time.
- Adjust air-conditioners to 23 degrees Celsius if you need to use it.
- Retrofit your homes and businesses with energy efficient lighting.
- Visit the Saving Electricity website for more tips on saving electricity.

6. HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR LOAD-SHEDDING?

Information about when load-shedding will occur can be found on our online platforms, as well as via the Eskom website.

You should check these online platforms regularly so you are aware of the state of the power system and whether Eskom is likely to implement load-shedding. Use this information to plan in the event of load-shedding taking place in your area.

YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT:

- **Communication:** Ensure that your cell phone, laptop, tablet and radio are always fully charged when power is available. This will allow you to be able to communicate to friends and family during load-shedding.
- **Transport:** Make sure that your vehicle always has fuel in the tank as some petrol stations are unable to pump fuel during power outages.
- **Cash:** Keep some cash on you as some ATMs cannot operate without electricity.
- **Security and safety:** Backup batteries for electrically operated gates, garage doors and security systems should be in a good working condition and be able to last through periods of load-shedding. Store temporary lighting such as battery-powered torches, gas lamps and candles in places where they will be easy to find in the dark.
- **Eating:** If you do not have a gas stove, prepare meals before the power is scheduled to be switched off. Boil water in your kettle and keep it in Thermos flasks for hot drinks. You can also use an insulating cover on teapots and pots



and pans to keep drinks and meals warm.

YOU SHOULD ALSO:

- Buy a small stand-by bottled LP gas heating ring for essential cooking and to boil water for hot beverages.
- Keep adequate stock of essential food items – especially non-perishable tinned food that does not need refrigeration.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. A power outage that lasts for four hours or less should not cause food to spoil. A freezer should keep frozen food safe for at least a day.
- Most medication requiring refrigeration can be kept in a closed fridge for several hours without spoiling but you should check with your doctor or pharmacist if in doubt.
- Fill plastic containers with water and store them in a deep freeze or the freezer compartment of your fridge. Leave some space inside each container for the frozen water to expand and use the frozen bottled water to keep food cold.

If it is essential that you have power, consider investing in a petrol, diesel or gas-powered generator, a Photovoltaic Generator with batteries, or a UPS system designed to power the pieces of equipment and appliances that you consider essential.

7. CAN LOAD-SHEDDING DAMAGE MY APPLIANCES AND, IF SO, WHAT SHOULD I DO TO PREVENT THIS?

Electronically controlled appliances such as computers, television sets, VCRs and DVD players can be damaged after the power comes back on. This is because the power may come back on with a momentary surge.

It is safer to switch off and disconnect any electrical appliances that you have been using before load-shedding takes place. This

includes all but one light, which should be turned off at the switch. The light that is left switched on will help you to see when the power returns. You can mark the on/off switches on this light with a piece of masking tape if necessary.

You will also need to reset the time-control clocks on cooking ovens, pool pumps, geysers and other automatically controlled appliances, unless these are battery operated.



IMAGE BY FREEPIK



8. WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE IN CASE LOAD-SHEDDING HAPPENS WHILE I AM NOT AT HOME?

Before leaving home, switch off and disconnect all non-essential appliances such as computers, coffee machines, television sets and entertainment consoles. You should also switch off your geyser so that you do not heat water unnecessarily. (Remember to switch it on as soon as you return or install a geyser timer or ask a neighbour to switch it on for you a few hours before you return, so you have warm water when you are back home).

YOU SHOULD ALSO:

- Use a timer for any lights that you want to leave on for security purposes, so they are not left on all day and night;
- Replace conventional outdoor lights with motion sensor lamps. These use less electricity because they only activate when the sensor is triggered;
- Switch to solar-powered garden lights that use free energy from the sun;
- Make sure that the backup batteries in your electrically operated gates, garage doors, alarms and electric fences are in good, working condition;
- Fix leaky taps. Water that drips down the drain is wasted and if it is warm water, it also wastes electricity;
- Set your pool pump to operate for a maximum of four hours a day, outside of peak times (17:00-21:00). This is enough to keep the pool clean when not in use;
- Leave a key with trusted neighbours, friends or family and ask them to check your property regularly. Make sure that the main switch or earth leakage has not tripped (i.e. all essential appliances such as security systems, fridges and freezers are still functioning).

9. WHY IS MY POWER STILL OFF EVEN THOUGH, ACCORDING TO THE LOAD-SHEDDING SCHEDULE, IT SHOULD HAVE COME BACK ON?

When power is restored, nuisance tripping can occur. This is when the power fails to come back on and it often goes unreported because residents assume that the outage is due to load-shedding.

You can mitigate against the risk of nuisance tripping by switching off appliances (including geysers, air conditioners and pool pumps) prior to load-shedding and leaving one light on, to indicate the return of the supply.

General faults can be confused with load-shedding, which sometimes leads to a delay in reaction time.

10. I LIVE IN A VERY DANGEROUS AREA. WILL THE MUNICIPALITY CONSIDER KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON FOR SAFETY REASONS?

The load-shedding schedule has been determined in a manner that attempts to be fair to all areas of the municipality and designed to mitigate negative effects.



THIS REGULATION SETS OUT THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LOAD-SHEDDING:

- the safety of people;
- the safety of the environment;
- the potential damage to plants associated with a critical national product (wastewater treatment works);
- technical constraints on executing load-shedding.

Based on these criteria and where possible, the municipality does exclude major hospitals, major central business districts and areas where there are major crowds gathered for specific events.

11. WHAT ARE THE RISKS INVOLVED IN LOAD-SHEDDING?

The municipality has identified certain risks, including:

- The direct stress on infrastructure including substations;
- Water pumps not being able to provide pressure to certain areas, and/or not filling reservoirs adequately. This risks the availability of water and results in additional costs of building larger pumps and larger reservoirs;
- Sewer pumps unable to operate, causing an overflow into our streets and rivers. This would cause health risks and clean-up costs, and/or the need to provide standby generators;
- Traffic lights that do not work can cause traffic disruptions and have a direct economic impact. There may be a need to provide uninterrupted power supplies at each intersection.

12. COULD LOAD-SHEDDING AFFECT WATER SUPPLY?

The disruption of the electrical supply due to load-shedding results in the shut down of some water pump stations. This can affect the drinking water supply to a number of the areas.

It can also cause some sewage pump stations to shut down, occasionally resulting in sewage spills.

Most domestic water usage ends up in our sewerage system. It is therefore imperative that, during the periods of load-shedding, you minimise your water use. This will reduce the strain on the reservoirs and assist the municipality in managing the situation.

