

Your ref:	Our file ref:	16/5/8/1
Contact:	Adri Smit: Chief Technical Officer:	In response to DMS No: Original
	Customer Management: ESS	Date: 2015.02.16

LOAD SHEDDING EXPLAINED: A MUNICIPAL PERSPECTIVE

The 2008 rolling load shedding incidents were dug out of our memories with the implementation of the current load shedding from Eskom.

However this time there is a difference.

Rolling load shedding vs Emergency load shedding:

In 2008 the load shedding schedules were rolling load shedding schedules and it meant that load shedding was to start at a certain time in the morning and continue through the entire day until a certain time in the evening when load shedding was supposed to stop. This was so easy. The schedules were drawn and could easily be followed as load shedding would just take place continuously from block to block day after day. You could plan your day and week around the schedule.

In 2015 this is not the case. The current load shedding which is requested by Eskom is done under emergency conditions. This means that Eskom only requests Municipalities to load shed when they find that the network can no longer meet the demand. Unfortunately this now means that we can no longer plan our lives around load shedding as it sadly catches us unaware.

The load shedding schedule and emergency load shedding:

Because emergency load shedding is not planned attempts are made to still use the load shedding schedule. This means that should Eskom requests load shedding to start @ 10:00 those blocks which were scheduled to be load shed at approximately 09:30 will be load shed from 10:00 until 12:00 and from there on the normal schedule will apply.

Why we cannot implement rolling load shedding:

Load shedding as it is happening in 2015 totally depends on the availability of capacity on the Eskom network. There are days when the demand is lower and load shedding does not occur. Thus it is not at all necessary to inconvenience customers by switching the electricity off.

The design of the schedule:

When Eskom requests the Municipality to load shed there is a certain requirement that needs to be met in terms of the capacity that the Municipality must make available to Eskom every time a block is load shed. This means that the load shedding schedule is designed to ensure that the Eskom requirements are met in order to avoid being issued a Certificate of Non-Compliance.

Sadly load shedding has an effect on the infrastructure. Where there is a fault on a cable it will at times present itself when the electricity is restored and will result in that specific area / street being without electricity for longer as the matter first needs to receive attention before the electricity can be restored. These areas may then end up having to be re-directed to another substation which results in those areas being load shed with another block until such time as the cable fault has been repaired or the cable is replaced.

Customer communication:

Emergency load shedding makes it extremely difficult to communicate to customers effectively. There are times when Eskom literally advises 15 minutes before load shedding is to be implemented that this is the case. The current sms system finds itself not fast enough to send messages to the approximately 40 000 customers on the database. Over weekends the Electricity Supply Services Section makes use of the sms system from Financial Services in order to communicate. These systems can only communicate to persons who are registered on the database.

The Municipality will be investigating the possibility of a self-funding sms system which can be used to send all service related messages to the registered customers. All Municipal customers will be advised in due course.

The current load shedding schedule can be viewed on the City of uMhlathuze's website @ www.umhlathuze.co.za (best viewed in Google Chrome to access the correct information).

Customers who experience electricity related problems after the electricity has been restored should please contact the Call Centre @ 0800 222 827.

Regards

Bheka Kanyile
Acting Head: Electricity Supply Services
Department Infrastructure and Technical Services



ALL CORRESPONDENCE MUST BE ADDRESSED TO THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER