



a world class African city



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## CITY POWER CLAMPS DOWN ON SMART METER TAMPERING

**28 March 2024**

City Power condemns in the strongest possible terms, the tampering and bypassing of the newly installed smart meters, and warns customers that it will not hesitate to cut-off supply and impose harsh penalties for the transgressions.

After having embarked on a programme of replacing obsolete, faulty and bypassed meters at no cost ahead of the token identifiers (TID) rollover project, the entity has noticed a disturbing pattern of meter altering, undoing months of progress.

Last year, City Power undertook the process of installing smart meters across all Service Delivery Centres (SDC), and most notably in areas that previously relied on illegal connections such as Alexandra, Mayibuye, Naturena and others.

In response to a growing trend of fiddling and vandalising newly installed electricity hardware, the entity has launched an investigation to look into the involvement of contractors and other internal staff in this criminal conduct, and to also identify customers who have tampered with the meters.

On Tuesday, 26 March 2024, City Power disconnected 88 newly metered customers in Mayibuye and criminal complaints were registered with the South African Police Services (SAPS) in connection with meter tampering.

This is part of our ongoing efforts in rooting out meter bypassing and other forms of theft of electricity.

Despite having spent millions of rands maintaining and replacing electricity infrastructure in the area over the years – only one business was paying for electricity consumption in Mayibuye.

From November 2023, City Power began setting up the infrastructure and installing smart meters to ensure that each customer that consumes electricity pays for that service so that we can reinvest in the infrastructure to lessen power supply disruptions.

After receiving the greenlight from the community, following months of engagements, the entity successfully rolled out the project.

The project, whose aim was to address recurring outages caused by the network overload among other factors, was widely welcomed, with residents committing to pay for their electricity.

It came as a shock when the team soon discovered a massive drop in revenue collection rate, pointing to possible signs of meter tampering and bypassing.

From the city's records, in the first month after the installation of the smart meters, the utility collected over 2-million in revenue. However, the following month that figure dropped and now is sitting at about R800 000. When City Power noticed this glaring discrepancy, an audit was undertaken to identify those who are stealing electricity by means of tampering.

**Non-Executive Directors:** B Ramokhele (Chairperson of the Board), M Kekana, N Kgope, N Ntuli, M Mashabela, S Nduna, P Ragimana, N Ramotebele, L Ratsiku, M Seopela, T Sibeko

**Executive Director:** T Mashava (Chief Executive Officer) - Company Secretary: M Smith  
**Registration number:** 2000/030051/30 - **VAT number:** 4710191182

Over 700 households were found to have tampered with the meters and the process of cutting them off commenced earlier this week. The disconnection of those customers will continue until everyone is properly metered and paying for the electricity they consume.

"This conduct which borders on criminal behavior will not be tolerated. We are beefing up our security team to continue carrying out mass disconnections in Mayibuye and other areas where we've recently invested millions in installing smart meters, to demonstrate the entity's strong disapproval towards tampering with infrastructure," said City Power CEO Tshifularo Mashava.

"The installation of smart meters is part of the bigger project by the City of Johannesburg to ensure that every residential household is fitted with a smart meter. This will help in addressing the issue of loadshedding, through better management of electricity consumption. It is also essential for the upcoming TID roll-over from 24 November 2024." Mashava added.

Those found to have tampered with newly installed meters will be disconnected and will have to pay a reconnection fee. It's important for customers to note that without these smart meters, they will not be eligible to load electricity units from November this year.

Meanwhile, the entity's security management team is following up on several leads in connection with internal collaborators and soon heads will roll.

"City Power will not hesitate in taking to task those who are implicated in any form of criminality, as we have demonstrated in the recent past." Mashava said.

Several contractors and employees were arrested in the past few weeks and months for their involvement in theft and vandalism.

The same no-nonsense approach will be applied against those who are aiding customers to tamper with our meters.

Smart meters are user-friendly and a transparent way of managing energy consumption, enabling customers to remotely send their meter readings through eJoburg without having a City Power contractor come to their properties to take meter readings. This empowers customers to manage their consumption and provides options to reduce electricity costs.

**ENDS**

**Issued by City Power  
Spokesperson, Isaac Mangena**

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