

MEDIA STATEMENT

CITY POWER TARGETS FIVE INNER CITY BAD BUILDINGS OWING ALMOST R5 MILLION



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City Power is concerned about the electricity theft associated with mushrooming hijacked buildings across the City, with the Inner City leading.

The entity conducted a targeted electricity enforcement operation this morning in parts of the Inner City, including Doornfontein and the surrounding areas. The operation focused on five suspected hijacked bad buildings with a combined outstanding electricity debt of close to R5 million. The operation forms part of the entity's ongoing programme to improve revenue collection, address long-standing debt, remove illegal electricity connections and protect the electricity network from damage, overloading and unsafe use.

The five properties targeted in today's operation collectively owe R4,956,154.00, with the single highest debt sitting at R2,367,139.88.

City Power has disconnected the properties for non-payment as part of its efforts to ensure that electricity consumed through its network is properly accounted for and paid for. The operation is also aimed at identifying and removing illegal electricity connections, meter bypasses, meter tampering and other forms of unmetered consumption that can compromise the safety and integrity of the electricity network.

The intervention comes amid growing concern over electricity-related risks in suspected hijacked and problematic buildings. City Power currently tracks more than 108 buildings where concerns have been identified relating to illegal electricity connections, electricity theft, unsafe electrical installations, non-payment and other electricity-related risks. The consolidated outstanding debt associated with these 108 buildings is approximately R115 million.

City Power emphasises that the intervention goes beyond revenue recovery. Illegal electricity connections can bypass critical technical, safety and metering controls and may result in overloaded infrastructure, equipment failures, fires and electrocution. In buildings where electricity is being accessed through unlawful or unsafe arrangements, the risks extend to residents, property and the wider electricity network.

The Usindiso tragedy in the Inner City reinforced the need for decisive intervention where illegal electricity connections and unsafe electrical conditions are identified. City Power's responsibility is to ensure that electricity is supplied safely and lawfully, to regulate electricity connections and to disconnect illegal connections. The entity does not have the statutory authority to evict occupants, secure hijacked buildings or perform policing functions. These matters are dealt with through a coordinated intervention by the relevant City departments and law-enforcement agencies.

City Power has therefore strengthened its monitoring, auditing and enforcement programme following the lessons arising from the Usindiso tragedy. This includes the creating of a dedicated internal Unit which conducts audits of bad buildings, more frequent monitoring and inspections of problematic buildings, property-level assessments, targeted disconnections and stronger coordination with SAPS, JMPD and other relevant entities where operations present heightened security risks.

The scale of the revenue challenge further underscores the importance of these operations. As at June 2026, City Power's total outstanding debt stood at approximately R13.3 billion across residential customers, businesses and Large Power Users. Within the Inner City Service Delivery Centre alone, outstanding debt was approximately R3.67 billion.

City Power's electricity losses are currently estimated at approximately 26.8 percent, with non-technical losses accounting for approximately 15.8 to 17.8 percent. These non-technical losses, which include electricity theft, illegal connections, meter tampering and unmetered consumption, are estimated at approximately R4.5 billion.

City Power's revenue collection operations are therefore aimed at ensuring that customers settle their outstanding accounts, enabling the entity to recover revenue required to support electricity infrastructure investment, maintenance and the continued provision of reliable electricity.

The entity's ultimate objective is to move away from a cycle of illegal connections and repeated disconnections towards a safer, sustainable and lawful electricity environment. This requires customers and property owners to comply with electricity regulations, settle their accounts, use electricity through lawful metering arrangements and refrain from interfering with the electricity network.

City Power will continue conducting targeted, property-by-property audits and enforcement operations across the Inner City and other areas where electricity theft, illegal connections, unsafe installations and non-payment have been identified. Where conventional grid supply is not immediately feasible, the entity is also exploring alternative electrification solutions that can provide safe and legal access to electricity.

City Power calls on property owners, occupants and customers to cooperate with its teams and to report illegal electricity connections and electricity theft through the appropriate channels. Protecting the electricity network requires collective responsibility, lawful electricity use and sustained cooperation between City Power, customers, property owners, law-enforcement agencies and other relevant authorities.

ENDS

ISSUED BY CITY POWER

Isaac Mangena, General Manager

Department of Public Relations and Communication