

ELECTRICITY CRISIS

PROVINCIAL POWER-DOWN

Gauteng aims for greater predictability and incentives in rationing schemes

Guy Copans | Staff Writer

Gauteng Local Government MEC **Qedani Dorothy Mahlangu** says that the provincial government is trying to respond to the electricity crisis gripping Gauteng by ensuring that stakeholders, including municipalities, civil society and citizens, in general, change their mindset and behaviour by conserving energy as efficiently as possible.

Mahlangu describes the electricity crisis as “unfortunate”, and says that, rather than solely focusing on blaming Eskom, everyone should take personal responsibility for overcoming the crisis, with Gauteng’s different entities, institutions and individuals all playing their part in

saving 10% of electricity.

Mahlangu says that local government is doing all it can to ensure the energy-saving strategy is properly implemented.

“We are mobilising resources with the Central Energy Fund and the Department of Minerals and Energy, and all stakeholders, so that this plan, which has been agreed to and adopted by all municipalities, will be rolled out without any compromise,” she notes.

City of Johannesburg executive mayor **Amos Maseondo** shares the same sentiment.

“There is a commitment among all of us to search for solutions and implement programmes that seek to



To watch a video of Gauteng Local Government MEC Qedani Mahlangu (fifth from left) discussing the provincial government’s strategy for dealing with the electricity crisis, log on to www.engineeringnews.co.za and click on ‘Video Clips’.

ensure that we continue to conserve energy, and ensure sustainability, in the future,” says Maseondo.

He adds that some positives could even emerge from the current situation.

“We see this crisis as an opportunity to reach out to all the residents in our municipalities, educate our people, and make them partners in all our efforts to find a lasting solution.”

While load-shedding is set to continue, Mahlangu pledges that it will be more structured and predictable in the near future.

“What we need to finalise between Eskom and the municipalities is a predictability of when load-shedding occurs.

“There must be a systematic process of load-shedding that is agreed

to, which will allow people to plan their lives better around the load-shedding schedule,” she says.

Certain critical facilities, including hospitals and prisons, and major infrastructure projects like the Gautrain, will be exempt from load-shedding, she adds.

She assures those that do not have electricity, who largely live in informal settlements, that the provincial government is still committed to meeting the 2012 goal of supplying electricity to all who live in Gauteng.

Mahlangu notes that South Africa is not the only country to implement energy-saving methods, citing Italy’s example of consumers switching off their geysers in the morning before departing for work.

Mahlangu says that the Gauteng provincial government is fully committed to ensuring that there is a 10% reduction in the use of electricity.

She notes that municipalities have already undertaken several initiatives, including converting traffic lights to light emitting diode – which has longer life and consumes less power – battery-powered street lights, and solar lights.

The municipalities are also trying

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