

Energy efficiency drive launched

SASOLBURG. - The National Energy Efficiency Agency (NEEA) is poised to become the leading voice on energy efficiency issues in South Africa, with the launch of a winter-long awareness campaign.

In conjunction with its key partners, the Department of Minerals and Energy, the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) and Eskom, it is hoped the NEEA will deliver significant energy savings and help avoid power cuts.

Currently, during peak demand the Power Alert running on TV is proving a success, reflecting a public willingness to save power.

The NEEA's acting general operations manager Barry Bredenkamp, explained: "When the alert turns red, people are responding by turning off non-essential appliances, causing a significant dip in demand.

"This is very encouraging, as it shows South Africans are willing to do their part to save energy. I believe an excellent opportunity exists to change people's attitude to energy consumption," he said.

To capitalise on public awareness and interest, a national television advertising campaign began on June 1 to create an educated public. It will run until the end of August. The main aims of the NEEA campaign are to work with commercial partners to promote practical energy efficiency measures among their employees and to the broader public.

Current partners are Nedbank, Clicks, Pick 'n Pay and Finish. They work to improve consumers' efficient use of energy, whether they are commercial or private, and to improve their abilities to save energy through upgrading old technology.

They also work to stimulate public and stakeholder interest and debate in energy issues and, to prevent 'energy efficiency' from becoming an exclusive byword for electricity efficiency, the NEEA also concerns itself with the efficient use of gas, liquid fuels, renewable energy and all energy-intensive processes. Bredenkamp cautioned that South Africa still has a way to go.

* The NEEA began operations in April 2006 and is a division of the Central Energy Fund.