

eThekwini residents told to brace for load shedding

Communities in eThekwini will have to brace for the start of load shedding, Eskom has announced. Some areas in the municipality have thus far been exempt from the power cuts following damage to electricity infrastructure during flooding in the area in April.



Source: Sphiwe Sibeko/Reuters

eThekwini Municipality and Eskom released a joint statement clarifying the steps to be taken in the implementation of load shedding.

“The municipality has agreed on the process for the soonest implementation of load shedding to assist Eskom to mitigate the risk of a national grid collapse. The municipality has further assessed the long-term strategy to implement load shedding as soon as possible to the equivalent load as was the case prior to the [flooding] disaster,” the joint statement read.



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Promit Mukherjee 4 Jul 2022



According to the statement, following several meetings, the power utility and the municipality have agreed on the following:

- The eThekwini Municipality’s electrical network and water infrastructure is in an extremely vulnerable state and additional risk needs to be managed very carefully.
- The municipality is committed to implement load shedding in a safe and sustainable manner in consultation with Eskom when the national grid is at risk.
- If for any reason, after load shedding in the first few instances, a negative impact on the electrical and water infrastructure is deemed to be unacceptably high, the municipality will engage with Eskom immediately.
- The municipality has already begun to perform all the required planning to ensure that the above can be executed.
- The National Energy Regulator of South Africa (Nersa) will be kept informed of the status of the eThekwini

Municipality network.

Studies have shown that the municipality lost between 700-800MW of power on their electrical infrastructure during the floods which continues to be unavailable until extensive repairs can be conducted.



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Infrastructure severely compromised during floods

“[There] is agreement that the integrity of the electrical infrastructure was so severely compromised that if parts of the infrastructure and loads were to trip either through a manual intervention (load shedding) or an electrical fault, it is possible and likely that the municipality grid could be even more damaged, thus further lengthening the duration of the outage.

“Both Eskom and eThekweni Municipality are mindful that further electrical damage would severely compromise the municipality’s current water rationing programme. [However], as a responsible organ of state, the municipality agrees on the need to implement load shedding for the purposes of grid stability.

“Both Eskom and the municipality commit to assess the progress regularly and to work closely to minimise risk to the municipality and the grid,” the statement read.

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