

Smart meter woes

MIDRAND – Five months on and Vorna Valley resident, Charlie Vogel, is still waiting for his smart meter’s Customer Interface Unit (CIU), a device which helps customers see their consumption in real time so they are able to plan their pattern of consumption in relation to their affordability.

2 days ago



A smart metre. Photo: en.wikipedia.com

Vogel is not impressed with the way **City Power** handled the installations that took place in October last year. He claims that City Power failed to notify any of the residents of the planned upgrade other than a notice warning of power cuts the day the installations began.

He stated, “Unfortunately, I was unlucky and did not get a CIU, which I understand were thrown into people’s properties, due to the security wall surrounding my property and have spent months doing a run around just to get assistance from City Power.”

In response to the query, City Power’s spokesperson, Yumna Sheikh said, “The project to roll out smart meters across Johannesburg is a project of enormous scale and magnitude, therefore, it is inevitable that the implementation of this project would experience some challenges.”

Ward 112 councillor Candice James confirmed that she assisted another resident who has finally received a smart meter after almost a year of trying to get one. She added, “The installation of the smart meters was not efficiently done, there could be other residents experiencing the same problem.”

Information from City Power about smart meters:

- Automated meter reading reports the exact amount of electricity used during a particular period, without requiring physical visits to properties by City Power technicians, assisting with billing accuracy, as consumption is monitored in real time and estimated readings will no longer be required.
- Smart meters contribute to the stability of electricity supply, as they send an alarm as soon as power is lost or interrupted. This means unplanned power interruptions can be detected immediately, leading to quicker response and shorter power restoration times.
- Alarms report any tampering or illegal activities and electricity losses can be monitored. Smart meters also enable residents to enjoy the benefits of load limiting.
- When the grid is under pressure during peak periods, City Power alerts households via smart meters to reduce consumption by switching off non-essential items such as pool pumps and geysers. The deployment of load limiting will enable City Power to forestall the implementation of the early stages of load shedding in its areas of supply by curtailing consumption.

Details: City Power 0860 562 874.