

## Frequently Asked Questions



# FAQs in the City

### Can I apply to have a prepaid water meter installed at my house?

This project is currently only being implemented in Soweto through operation Gcin'amanzi. It is a 7-year programme focused on reducing the amount of wasted water. Prepaid water meters are not yet available anywhere else in the city.

### I have a prepaid water meter. Why am I still being billed for water?

Joburg Water is currently writing off the installation of prepaid water meters in equal amounts over a 3-year period. You will continue to receive a statement which reflects the amount of the write off. For more information, you can call Joburg Water on 688 1600 during business hours or you can contact Joburg Connect on 375 5555 and select option 3.

### If I am unable to settle the outstanding balance on my water account, can I make an arrangement to settle it over time? Can I do this over the phone?

No, all arrangements need to be made in person at selected council paypoints. In the case of water (remember the account number starts with 44) you can also visit Joburg Water at Argent House, 21 Loveday Street, Marshalltown to pay your account or make arrangements.

### What should I do if I do not receive a statement?

From time to time, your statement may not arrive in the post for a variety of reasons. It is important to remember that even if you do not receive a statement you must pay your account in full on or before the due date. Remember you can also register to receive your statement by email on the City's website at [www.joburg.org.za](http://www.joburg.org.za)

### How do I find out my balance if I do not receive a statement?

You can contact the Joburg Connect call centre for the balance. You can also register on-line at the City's website at [www.joburg.org.za](http://www.joburg.org.za) to receive your statement by email.

### Why do I receive my statement at different times in the month?

The City has an ongoing cycle of printing statements due to the number of statements printed each month, around one million. Your due date is listed on the statement. It is important to pay your account by the due date to prevent any interest charges being added or final demand letters being issued.

### What if I only get paid after the due date? Will I be cut off or charged interest?

Yes, unfortunately the billing cycle dates will not always coincide with your salary date. If your account is not paid on the due date (which is printed on your statement), you will be charged interest, and the credit control process immediately begins.

### What is a Final Letter of Demand?



If you do not pay your account by the due date the City implements its credit control process and a Final Letter of Demand is issued. The Final Letter of Demand is our way of giving our customers notice that their municipal services may be restricted or terminated. The cost of the letter, which is R37.50, is paid by the customer and is included on your statement. Should the outstanding payment still not be made, the City's credit control process will continue to be implemented and customers will be liable for legal costs that result from the credit control action.

## Electricity cut off or your water restricted?

You have just arrived home and discovered that your electricity has been cut off or your water restricted. What steps do you need to take to get reconnected?

- Establish what service has been cut off – water or electricity
- Also, check that you **have** been cut off, and that there isn't a service problem like a power outage
- If you do not know the amount outstanding you can phone Joburg Connect on 375 5555 to find out the balance
- Pay the full amount outstanding or visit selected paypoints to make arrangements to pay off the arrears. Take note, if it is a Level 3 cut-off the full outstanding balance must be paid before reinstallation of services can occur
- A Level 1 cut-off is where your electricity is cut-off and your water restricted. A Level 3 cut-off is where the meter, cable or circuit-breaker is removed. A Level 3 cut-off is considered to be a new service connection according to the municipal by-laws
- Before you can be reconnected you will have to pay various costs, depending if it is a Level 1 or Level 3 cut-off

#### Level 1

The cut-off fee for electricity is R318.60 (excluding VAT) and the reconnection fee is R318.60 (excluding VAT)

There is no restriction fee for water, however there is a reconnection fee of R840.10 (excluding VAT)

#### Level 3

Reconnection of electricity for a single phase meter is R2693.77 (including VAT) and a three phase meter is R9 867.00 (including VAT). These costs may only be paid at a City Power office. Reconnection of water costs R1693 (excluding VAT)

- You will need to phone Joburg Connect and log a call to ask to be reconnected. Make sure you receive a reference number as you need this when you fax through proof of payment to the Credit Control Department. The fax numbers are 358 3164 or 358 3110
- Any other sundry amounts such as Final Notice costs will need to be paid at the same time
- You may need to increase your deposit, as per the terms of the Credit Control By-law
- Payment can be made at selected council paypoints or through any major bank Internet Banking or EasyPay outlet or any SA Post Office. (Remember that it may take up to five days for the payment to reflect through a third party)
- Fax proof of payment to the Credit Control Department on 358 3164 or 358 3110. Remember to include your reference number from Joburg Connect
- A Level 1 reconnection may take up to 72 hours. A Level 3 reconnection will take longer due to the reinstallation of the meter. A clearance letter is required by City Power before the reinstallation of the meter can take place. Clearance letters are issued by the City on payment of the full outstanding balance of your account
- Contact Joburg Connect on 375 5555 to follow up on your reconnection. Joburg Connect is open 24 hours a day

#### Please note:

- If you have a query on an account, you must log it with the call centre. While your query is being resolved you must continue paying for your average consumption to prevent your services being cut off
- Payments can be made at selected council paypoints between 07:30 and 15:30 during weekdays and Saturdays between 08:00 and 11:00. Alternatively, payments may also be made through our third party partners. **Please remember to keep proof of payment.** Payment arrangements can only be made at council paypoints; it may not be done telephonically

#### Statement codes

Every statement has a prefix (the first two numbers of your account number), which indicates which city department or company is responsible for preparing the statement. You should address your queries to the relevant department or company to ensure the speediest resolution of your query.

#### If your account number starts with:

- 22 – this is a City Power account. Contact them on 375 5555
- 44 – this is a Joburg Water account. Contact them on 688 1600
- 33 – this is a Pikitup account. Contact them on 712 5200
- 50 or 20 or 40 or any another number with a zero following the first number – this indicates that this account is managed by the City's Revenue Department. Contact them on 375 5555.
- Alternatively, you can contact the above companies through Joburg Connect and select the following options:
  - Option 2 – City Power
  - Option 3 – Joburg Water
  - Option 4 – Pikitup

Joburg

# CITY BUZZ

May/June 2006

REVENUE NEWS FROM THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG



## Contact us

- Fault reporting, complaints and general enquiries call **Joburg Connect (011) 375-5555**
- Joburg Connect e-mail address **[joburgconnect@joburg.org.za](mailto:joburgconnect@joburg.org.za)**
- Read your own meter and phone the reading through to **(011) 375-5555** or fax it to **(011) 375-6555** or submit online **[www.joburgconnect@joburg.org.za](http://www.joburgconnect@joburg.org.za)**
- Emergency Connect - for life threatening emergencies **(011) 375-5911**
- Joburg Water (for billing queries) customers should call **(011) 688-1600**
- To report water/sanitation/sewer service problems call **(011) 688-1500**
- City Power - for billing queries and electrical problems customers should call **(011) 375-5555**
- Fraud and Corruption Hotline **0800 002 587**
- Register to get your statement by e-mail by logging onto the City's website **[www.joburg.org.za](http://www.joburg.org.za)**

## On the cover!

"Hoezit" one of the wall paintings from a series of custom-designed murals that decorate the public spaces of our offices at Thuso House, 61 Jorissen Str (cnr Simmonds Str), Braamfontein.





# METER READINGS

Three years ago the City appointed qualified meter reading companies to read water and electricity meters on a regular basis. If a meter reading cannot be obtained for whatever reason the consumption of the customer is estimated based on the customers historical consumption. When a reading is obtained the estimated consumption is reversed and actual consumption is billed. The meter reading scheduled date is determined for several months in advance and the meter reading dates are then published and hand delivered to every customer. The meter reading date is also displayed on the monthly bill.

Meter readings are obtained more or less the same date every month accommodating weekends and public holidays.

We encourage you to read your meters to confirm the billed readings and then phone it in to Joburg Connect or record the reading on-line on the City's website [www.joburg.org.za](http://www.joburg.org.za). This will assist Joburg Water and City Power to record or confirm the meter readings, facilitating accurate billing.

All meter readings are recorded and electronically validated by the City's computer systems against your consumption profiles. When a meter reading fails the validation process, the system will reject the failed reading. We endeavor to use the latest most suitable meter reading when we bill.

When submitting your meter reading via the website, you are first required to register. The registration process is important as it is necessary to link your account number to your profile by entering the PIN number you will find printed on your most recent posted statement. You can then select the specific meter on your account and enter a reading. Your meter reading is then validated by the system; if the reading fails the validation process our meter

readers will verify your reading manually.

Meter readings can be submitted on the Web every month. Ideally the reading should be inputted approximately 15 days before the payment due date on your account. While you can submit more than one reading per month, only the latest one at the time of billing will be used.

#### Points to remember:

- Remember to allow meter readers access to your property
- If your meter is broken or you suspect it may be faulty, you will need to report it to Joburg Water on 688 1600 or City Power on 375 5555 (select option 2). You may request that your meter is tested, and there is a charge for this service. You can also check your own water meter (if you have access to your meter) by turning off all the taps and seeing if your meter is still running. This may indicate a leak on your property



The Reathusa Municipal Account Scheme is available to customers that earn less than R6500 per month, and facilitates the opportunity of having half of your outstanding arrears written off.

Registration for this scheme is currently underway. Applications can be made any of the Municipal regional offices.

Special registration roadshows will be taking place during the month of June across the City. Please be sure to bring along the following documentation when applying to register:

- A valid SA Identity book
- An original payslip
- Spouse's original payslip
- A copy of your municipal account
- A copy of your recent bank statement

#### The special registration dates and venues are:

##### 5 – 10 June

Protea North Office  
229/49 Kunene Street  
Protea North, Soweto

Mofolo Admin Office  
666 Roodepoort Road  
Zondi

##### 4 – 9 June

Eldorado Park Rates Hall  
4064 Link Crescent  
Eldorado Park

##### 19 – 24 June

Eureka House  
Cnr Glenroy & Opineer Road  
Pioneer Park

##### 26 – 30 June

Lenasia South/East Corobrick  
K43 Old Corobrick Complex 4  
Cnr Roase Ave and Eland Street  
Lenasia Ext 2

#### Hours of operation for special registration days:

**Monday to Friday 07:30 – 19:00**

**Saturday 07:30 – 18:00**

## BUDGET FOR AN INCREASE IN YOUR ELECTRICITY ACCOUNT THIS WINTER

With the winter chill upon us and the cold front already settling in, you are reminded that if household items such as heaters, tumble dryers, electric blankets or under-floor heating are being used regularly, you need to anticipate an increase in your electricity account.

The amount your account will increase by is directly related to your consumption. You can expect an increase to reflect on your statements from June to September. You must budget for any additional electricity used.

Remember that winter started considerably earlier than usual this year than usual, and weather reports indicate that it may last longer than usual.

Below are a few tips to save electricity this winter:

- When bathing, use as little hot water as possible, or have a shower. Hot water used in a bath can account for half of the entire contents of your geyser
- Do not wash only one cup at a time using hot water, rather stack the dishes and wash them all at the same time

- Set the hot water thermostat as low as possible - 50 to 60 degrees Celsius is recommended
- Heat water in a kettle rather than on a pot on the stove as this is more economical. Using small appliances such as slow cookers, electric coffee pots and bottle warmers require less electricity than a stove
- Do not cook food for longer than necessary, and use flat-bottomed cookware
- Do not cook food with the controls set higher than necessary
- Switch off heaters when leaving the room for any length of time
- It is cheaper to use an electric blanket than to heat the bedroom with a heater
- Curtains help to retain the heat in a room. Draw the curtains earlier in the evening, and keep doors closed to prevent heat escaping
- Do not leave lights on unnecessarily
- Thermostat-controlled heaters used at the lowest comfortable setting are very electricity-efficient.

