



We answer your questions

- 1 Question:** How do I get a refund if my account was overcharged and is now in credit?

Answer: It takes a minimum of 30 days to determine whether there has been an overcharge before we can pay you the refund. A written application, signed by the account holder, must be faxed, together with a copy of the account holder's ID document, to 011 358 3733. Postal details will be required if the refund is to be posted, or if the refund is to be collected, please specify. To transfer credit between accounts, both accounts must be in the same name and initials. If you owe the Council any money, we will use the overcharge to pay for this.
- 2 Question:** How do I get a refund on an electricity and water account?

Answer: It takes a minimum of 30 days for us to effect the refund once your account has been investigated and finalised. Please remember that a copy of your ID document and proof of all payments made into the account after the finalisation date must accompany your written request for a refund. If a refund is for a joint account, please provide copies of both individuals' ID documents and a letter of consent agreeing for the cheque to be paid to one individual.
- 3 Question:** What services are available on e-Services?

Answer: With e-Services you have the convenience of:

 - accessing your electricity and water statements online.
 - receiving your statements by e-mail
 - logging and querying a problem online
 - updating your billing address online
- 4 Question:** Can I get my refund in cash?

Answer: No, we only issue cheques, or transfer the money to your new account.
- 5 Question:** Do we collect the refund cheque or will you deposit the monies due to us?

Answer: Cheques may only be collected, although we are working on making internet transfers available in the future. Please ensure you bring your ID document and a signed letter from your attorney authorising collection, when collecting your cheque.
- 6 Question:** What happens if I dispute my clearance figures?

Answer: If you have issues with the clearance figures supplied on your account, you must log a query with Joburg Connect on 011 375 5555 to resolve the problem. The Clearance Certificate department will review the figures. The reviewed figures will be available within 5 working days and the Clearance Certificate department will re-issue the statement with the details of how the figures were generated by the system. Only when all the queries on the account are resolved can transferring attorneys apply for a Clearance Certificate.
- 7 Question:** My electricity bill was the same for months, and then suddenly it went up. Why should this happen?

Answer: Each month a meter reader will visit your house to read the meter. The meter should be positioned in a place easily accessible to the Council meter reader. But if no one is home and the meter reader cannot gain access, he will give you an "estimate" based on the average previous usage. When eventually the Council does get to read your meter, one of two things will happen:

 - You will have used more electricity than estimated, and you will receive a higher bill than before, covering what was owed in the previous months;
 - You will have used less electricity than estimated, and the council will "credit" you in your next account.
- 8 Question:** I have just bought a property. Do I have to have my own water account with Johannesburg Water, or can I inherit the previous owner's account?

Answer: Each customer within Johannesburg should have his or her own water and electricity account. A person cannot inherit an existing water and electricity account from a previous owner or tenant of a property. REMEMBER: If you continue to make payments into someone else's account that you have inherited, that money will accrue to them, not to you, as the account is not in your name.

NEWS 2 USE

Water leaks are for your account

Customers can no longer apply for a rebate on their accounts for wasted water due to leaks, faulty equipment or defective pipes on their premises. In this regard, plumbers' reports are no longer accepted as confirmation of a water leak on your premises. As the consumer and account holder, it is your responsibility to pay for all registered (metered) water used – or wasted – and to pay for the repair of any faulty equipment or materials to stop the wastage. Only when the leak is on municipal property is it the responsibility of the Council.

Extended Opening Hours

Because life is hectic and there is always too much to do and too little time in which to do it, certain of the City's pay points are open on Saturdays, public holidays and later at night, for your convenience. Check these out:

- All Category A offices are open every 1st and last Saturday, including those that fall on or the day after a public holiday.
- The Category B offices in Soweto (except Dobsonville, Orlando East/West, Diepkloof, Pimville) are open every public holiday and until 22h00 every evening and are only available to purchase Gcinamanzi water vouchers.
- Jorrisen and Randburg offices are generally open every Saturday.
- The other Category A and B offices are only open on the first and last Saturday of each month.

For a full breakdown of all Category information, visit our website at www.joburg.org.za, click City departments, then Revenue and Customer Relations Management, Newsletters, City Buzz, and then the September 2006 issue.

YOU! are Responsible for Opening Your Municipal Account

Remember, it is your responsibility to open a municipal services (water, electricity, refuse and sewerage) account with the City. This is not the job of your conveyancing attorney. If you fail to open your account when you buy your property, you will be liable for all arrears accrued on the account from the date of transfer.

Get your timing right

If you are planning to visit your local Customer Service Centre, please check the times before you leave, as some offices may have differing opening hours and days. For example (see below), in Region B (Melville, Northcliff, Rosebank, Hyde Park, Randburg), the Eufeoord Old Age Home office only opens on a Thursday between 07h30 and 12h00, while the Randburg Customer Service Centre is the only office open on a Saturday morning, in this region. If you are not sure, call your local office before you set off. Remember, paypoint opening hours are also often different from Customer Service Centre opening hours.

Region B Paypoint operating details

PAYPOINT	OPENING DAYS	OPENING TIMES
Claremont Rent Office	Monday to Friday	7:30 to 16:00
Coronationville Rent Office	Monday to Friday	7:30 to 16:00
Rivelea Rent Office	Monday to Friday	7:30 to 16:00
Eufeoord Old Age Home	Thursday	7:30 to 12:00
Vredorp-Jan Hofmeyer Rent Office	Monday to Friday	7:30 to 16:00
Auckland Park	Monday to Friday	7:30 to 16:00
Randburg Rates	Monday to Friday	7:30 to 16:00
	Saturday	7:30 to 11:30



In this issue

Switch to prepaid meters

Check your paypoints' opening times

Illegal connections - do the right thing



Contact us:

011 375 5555

Joburg Connect – one number for all billing queries related to the City of Johannesburg

- Fault reporting, account queries and general enquiries
 - Rates & Taxes - for account queries
 - Pikitup - for waste removal and disposal queries
 - Joburg Water – for account queries and to report water / sanitation / sewer service problems
- City Power – for account queries and to report electrical problems

Other numbers to remember:

Fraud and Corruption Hotline
0800 002 587

Emergency Connect – for life-threatening emergencies **only**
011 375 5911

Fax proof of payment for reconnections to the Credit Control Department
011 358 3164

Register to get your statement by email by logging on to the City's website
www.joburg.org.za

Report change of postal address for account statements
statements@joburg.org.za
Joburg Connect at **011 375 5555**
Fax to **011 381 9377**

Send proof of payment for account queries to
cashcollections@joburg.org.za fax: **011 358 3044 / 3843**
or by hand to your nearest Customer Service Centre

For queries regarding the City's implementation of the National Credit Act, please email
nca@joburg.org.za

On the cover..

Stop, go and keep looking forward to a great future in Johannesburg.



Enjoy the Convenience and Control of Prepaid Meters

If you want to be more in control of your money, switch to easy-to-use pre-paid water and electricity meters. No more unexpectedly high bills, no more going over budget.

Prepaid Electricity Meters

You'll be surprised at the wide range of people now installing and effectively using pre-paid electricity meters. In order to ensure that you never run out of power, regardless of the time of day, or day of the week, City Power has introduced a common vending system that enables customers to buy vouchers from a cell phone, Pick 'n Pay, Shoprite/Checkers, garages, etc.

Applying for a prepaid electricity meter is easy:

- Complete a Prepaid Conversion Form, available at all City Power Customer Service Centres.
- A City Power planner will assess your electrical requirements and, thereafter, you will be quoted a fee. If you would like to proceed with the prepaid meter, then City Power will check your power account is paid up-to-date. You can also make an arrangement to pay it off. This must be done before you can convert to a prepaid meter.
- City account holders must pay for the meter through the City, and City Power account holders must pay through City Power.
- Once you have confirmation of your account being paid and closed, and your new meter having been paid for, take the confirmation to City Power and your application will be processed. At this time you must get a final meter reading on your current meter, which will make up your final electricity bill.
- Your meter will be installed with 55 kilowatt units pre-programmed.

Prepaid Water Meters for the Soweto area only

Pre-paid water meters are only located in Soweto and have been responsible for slashing both water wastage and high bills.

Applying for a prepaid water:

- Complete a Prepaid Conversion Form, available from Johannesburg Water Customer Service Centres.
- A Joburg Water planner will assess your water requirements and position and confirm whether you may be allowed to buy a prepaid water meter. Thereafter, you will be quoted a fee. If you would like to proceed with the prepaid meter, then Joburg Water will check your water account is paid up-to-date, or if you have made an arrangement to pay it off. This must be done before you can convert to a prepaid meter.
- CoJ account holders must pay for the meter through CoJ, and Joburg Water account holders must pay through Joburg Water.
- Once you have confirmation of your account being closed, take the confirmation to Joburg Water and your application will be processed. At this time you must get a final meter reading on your current meter, which will make up your final water bill.
- Your meter will then be installed.

Just Add Water

- Not everyone can buy a prepaid water meter: ask at your local Joburg Water office to see if you qualify.
- Always be prepared with prepaid vouchers and you'll never be left high and dry. It is always best to buy vouchers to the value of your regular monthly usage but remember, your consumption will change from summer to winter, and with the addition of guests in your home. Check your meter regularly to be aware of the consumption used and units still available.
- The smallest voucher denomination is R15.
- Prepaid meters eliminate the need to check your meter readings, however, new technology means that Joburg Water technicians can remotely tell whether your meter has been tampered with, as well as general information such as consumption and when most water is used.
- For further information on prepaid meters, ask at your nearest Joburg Water Customer Service Centre. Call them on 011 688 1500 (Technical Call Centre) or 011 688 1600 (Revenue Call Centre) or call Joburg Connect on 011 375 5555, or visit them at www.johannesburgwater.co.za

Power Up

- Anyone in any suburb can have a prepaid meter.
- Always be prepared with prepaid vouchers and you'll never be left in the dark. It is always best to buy vouchers to the value of your regular monthly usage but remember, your consumption will change from summer to winter, and with the addition of guests in your home. Check your meter regularly to be aware of the consumption used and units still available.
- The smallest voucher denomination is R20.
- Standard meters are billed at a tariff of 31.18 cents per kilowatt, and the prepaid at 42.80 per kilowatt. However, prepaid meters are not billed the fixed charge of R78.86 that standard meters are liable for.
- Prepaid meters eliminate the need to check your meter readings, however, new technology means that City Power technicians can remotely tell whether your meter has been tampered with, as well as general information such as consumption, when most electricity is used, and even what you use it for.
- For further information on prepaid meters, ask at your local City Power Customer Service Service Centre, call them on 011 490 7000 or Joburg Connect on 011 375 5555, or visit the the City Power website at www.citypower.co.za

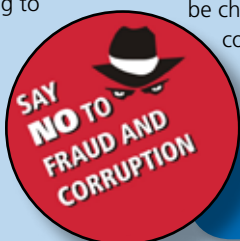
www.citypower.org.za

Illegal Connections

An illegal connection is any interference with the water or power network, or the meters, by unauthorised persons. This can include:

- A meter which has been removed and connected to an illegal power supply;
- Two or more houses connected to one power supply;
- Stealing of cables and pipes to illegally reconnect a supply;
- Tapping into a power infrastructure that does not belong to the household, such as a street light;
- Tampering with meters and reversing the readings, or slowing them down; and
- Illegally connecting a wire that has been disconnected due to lack of payment.

All of these fraudulent activities are not only illegal, they



can lead to power reductions and outages, and can be dangerous, with the electrocution of innocent people and children, and starting of fires, causing pain and even death.

Apply for Amnesty

If you have an illegal power connection and you want to make it legal, contact Joburg Connect or City Power and you will be given amnesty in return for opening and paying a legal services account. However, if you are caught without owning up to the illegal connection, you will be charged retrospectively and perhaps even convicted. City Power is constantly updating the network with new technology and you will be caught eventually. Come forward now, rectify the situation and you can have a prepaid meter installed without legal retribution.

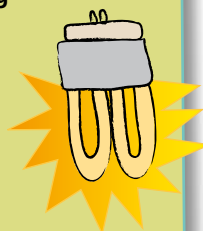
Report Fraud!
0800 002 587

If you know anyone who is committing fraud in anyway, call our Fraud Hotline and report it immediately.

Great tips to save power this winter

Small efficiencies around your home will make a big difference when saving power and money. Try these simple energy saving tips and see the difference in your electricity bills each month.

- More heat is lost through walls than any other way, so insulate cavity walls.
- **Geysers are also big culprits. Replace old (10 – 15 years) and inefficient geysers with a high efficiency one.**
- An insulting blanket on your geyser will pay for itself in a year.
- **Switch off your geyser in the morning and then on again in the late afternoon or early evening. Switch it off completely if you are going away for a while.**
- One 80 watt fluorescent tube provides the same light as a 150 watt light bulb.
- **Buy energy efficient appliances (look for the mark or sticker); an energy-efficient washing machine will use a third less electricity for each wash.**
- Close your curtains at dusk rather than waiting for it to get dark.
- **Change your light bulbs to energy efficient globes.**
- **Block gaps under your doors to stop drafts.**
- Avoid leaving on appliances such as TVs, computers and stereos when you are not in the room.
- **Avoid charging appliances unnecessarily, such as cell phones.**
- Only heat the required amount of water in your kettle each time.
- **Maintain an effective temperature control with heaters and air conditioners.**
- A standard shower uses one fifth of the energy of a standard bath.
- **When cooking use a pan that is the right size for the ring and keep the lid on when cooking.**
- Fill gaps in the floorboards and skirting with newspaper or sealant.
- **If your windows are draughty and double-glazing is too expensive, try taping polythene across your window frames.**
- By turning down your thermostat one degree you could save up to 10% on your heating bills.
- **Set your geyser thermostat to 60C, any higher is a waste.**
- Always put the plug in your bath or sink: don't let the water run.
- **Always turn lights off when you leave a room.**
- Don't leave the fridge or freezer door open for longer than necessary or the cold will escape.
- **Defrost your fridge and freezer regularly to keep them running efficiently.**
- If the fridge or freezer frosts up too quickly, check the seal. Avoid placing them next to a geyser or cooker.
- **Always wash a full load in your washing machine and use a low temperature.**
- Don't put wet clothes into a tumble dryer; wring them out or dry the worst off them first.



Oops!

A gremlin crept into our City Buzz last month! We reported that our customer service centres accept **bank guaranteed** cheques as one of the payment methods for when a customer is paying for his or her account to be reconnected. We should have stated that only **bank cheques** are accepted in cheque form - no personal cheques, no bank guaranteed cheques and no company cheques are accepted as payment for disconnected services. We apologies for the error and any inconvenience caused!

The Editor