
Annexure B: Efficient management of municipal and utility services

Schools are expected to implement appropriate measures to ensure the most economical, efficient and sustainable use of municipal and utility services. Governing bodies should monitor consumption trends regularly, identify unusual increases in usage and take corrective action, where necessary.

1. Electricity

Schools should:

- switch off lights in classrooms, offices and other facilities when not in use;
- maximise the use of natural light during the day;
- switch off computers, printers, projectors, photocopiers and other electrical equipment when not in use;
- restrict the use of high-energy appliances to operational requirements only;
- ensure that only essential security lighting remains operational after hours;
- consider replacing conventional lights with energy-efficient Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting, where financially feasible;
- consider the installation of prepaid electricity meters or other energy management systems to improve budgeting, expenditure control and consumption monitoring; and
- monitor monthly electricity consumption and investigate significant unexplained increases.

2. Water

Schools should:

- use irrigation systems responsibly and only when required;
- inspect taps, toilets, urinals, water meters and pipelines regularly for leaks;
- ensure that external taps are secured after school hours and during weekends, where practical;
- monitor monthly water consumption and compare usage trends with previous periods;
- investigate abnormal increases in consumption immediately;
- consider the installation of smart water meters, automated leak detection systems or water management devices, where available;
- encourage water conservation practices among learners and staff; and
- where available, implement rainwater harvesting or other sustainable water-saving initiatives to reduce reliance on municipal water.

3. Refuse management

Schools should:

- review the number and size of refuse bins required to avoid unnecessary municipal charges;
- promote recycling initiatives to reduce waste volumes;
- consider separating recyclable waste where municipal or private collection services are available; and
- periodically review refuse removal services to ensure that the most cost-effective option is utilised.

4. Monitoring and financial management

The governing body should ensure that:

- municipal and Eskom accounts are reviewed monthly before payment is made;
- consumption trends are monitored and unexplained variances are investigated promptly;
- meter readings are verified regularly to detect possible leaks, faulty meters or abnormal consumption;
- utility expenditure forms part of the school's monthly financial monitoring process;
- schools experiencing persistent increases in utility costs implement appropriate corrective measures to improve efficiency and prevent the accumulation of municipal debt; and
- schools participating in municipal smart metering or other utility monitoring initiatives actively use the information provided to improve consumption management.

5. Awareness and responsibility

Schools are encouraged to promote a culture where resources are used responsibly by:

- raising awareness among learners and staff regarding the responsible use of electricity and water;
- including resource conservation initiatives in environmental and sustainability programmes where appropriate; and
- encouraging all members of the school community to report leaks, faulty equipment or unnecessary energy consumption promptly.