



BREAKING THE ESKOM MONOPOLY

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The ongoing threat of load shedding means that breaking the Eskom monopoly and allowing the Cape Town City Council to buy electricity from independent power producers has become an urgent matter.

The City has already made an application to the High Court to be allowed to deal directly with IPP's but its arguments were based largely on the threat of climate change and the court decided that it was not an urgent matter.

The situation has now changed and we are living with a daily threat of load shedding.

We urge the City Council to again approach the court with new evidence and a request for the matter to be treated as urgent.

Cape Town is already buying surplus electricity from people who have installed rooftop solar panels but in small quantities.

One of the problems is that joining the electricity department's scheme to have their solar panel tied to the grid is expensive.

The City charges R450 a month to connect solar to the grid and R8 000 for a new meter. One member of the Chamber said it was unlikely that he could sell enough surplus electricity to recover the monthly fee and the cost of the meter was unrealistic. As a result he decided to go off-grid.

He told the Chamber that if the charges were more reasonable the City would be able to buy a lot more solar electricity from home owners and this would improve energy security.

In view of the escalating threat of load shedding and damage to the economy the City should revise its tariffs to make better use of surplus rooftop electricity.

Janine Myburgh

President of the Cape Chamber



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