Energy in South Africa

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The recent electricity hikes have had South African's in an uproar, but this is not to say that it is all together a bad thing. According to Nersa chairman, Collin Matjila,
“The increase will have an impact on South Africans, but it is not necessarily negative if we have an Eskom that is viable; it contributes to economic growth,”

Even though Nersa recently granted Eskom a 13.3 percent increase, in addition to the 14.2 percent granted in December, we can be expected to have an increase of between 20 percent and 25 percent over the next three years.

This does not mean that our experience of load shedding is now a thing of the past. According to Eskom chief executive Jacob Maroga, the possibility of load shedding resuming soon is high due to the fact that the company still suffers from inadequate reserve margins. This has a very negative on businesses and following the last power shortages many might have to close their doors. For good.

Because of all these power outages, companies and households are using generators as a source of energy. This is doing substantial damage to our environment by releasing carbon emissions and thus increasing our carbon footprint. South Africa should consider investing in alternative energy sources instead of spending billions on new coal power stations. There are many different sources of alternative energy which are not based on the burning of fossil fuels or the splitting of atoms, and are not harmful to the environment. These include solar, wind, geothermal, hydrolectric and tidal power. South Africa (and the windy Western Cape) is an ideal place to use wind power to generate energy. The only drawback of the windmills is aesthetic and that they can be noisy in inhabited areas.

In 2002/3 Eskom started a three year pilot wind project at Klipheuwel which in 2006 was deemed as successful. This facility will be commercially operated for its twenty year lifespan by Eskom's generation division. There is an active wind farm in Darling and Eskom has approved plans for a 100-MW wind power plant which could start in 2009 and operations starting at the beginning of 2010. This project forms part of Eskom's R300-billion capacity expansion programme to increase our power supply over the next five years.

You can make a difference in saving energy (and money) by making a few minor adjustments in your home.

Replace your regular light bulbs with energy efficient ones.
Switch your geyser off when you are going away for a couple of days.
Insulate your geyser.
When not using appliances, unplug them from the wall.
Turn off all stand-by modes before leaving the house or going to bed.

Simple. Make a difference where you can and lets keep our power going!

For a load shedding schedule in your area, visit the following link

http://www.eskom.co.za/live/LoadSheddingNew.php?Item_ID=6219