

PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE ON ELECTRICITY OUTAGES HOURS – ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION (STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE) LI1935, REGULATIONS, 2008

The Public Utilities Regulatory Commission in collaboration with the Energy Commission has developed Regulations aimed at improving standards of performance in the electricity distribution sub – sector in the country.

These Regulations spells out the number of hours the electricity distribution and supply utility can interrupt the service of a consumer within an operation year.

The allowable outage hours vary according to geographical location. The following are the different outage hours:

- Metropolitan, Municipal areas and Industrial estates – Total outage duration per customer in one year should not exceed forty – eighty hours.
- In District capitals outages should not exceed seventy – two hours.
- In Rural areas outages should not exceed 144 hours.

Despite the above Regulations the duration of each single continuous outage (planned or unplanned) should not exceed.

- Eight hours in a municipal, metropolitan area or an industrial estate (outages should not exceed six times in an operational year in this category)
- Twelve hours in a district capital
- Twenty – four hours in a rural area.

It should also be noted that the period of interruption of electricity supply shall be consistent and commence from the time the suppliers is initially informed by:

- A customer that the supply to customer's premises has been interrupted or
- A person other than the customer or is otherwise made aware by the operation of any automatic system operated by the supplier in circumstances in which the supply to the customer's premises has been interrupted or may have reasonably expected to have been interrupted

Interruption in electricity supply as a result of a major fault or damage to indispensable equipment in the electricity supplier's distribution system or a planned maintenance cannot be treated as wrongful and therefore does not attract any penalties.

However where a major outage was due the negligence of the supplier the prescribed penalties under the law would apply and the necessary compensation given to the consumer.

The Public Utilities Regulatory Commission is therefore urging consumers of electricity to complain to the Commission if they suffer any of the above breaches for the necessary action to be taken on their behalf.

The Commission on its part has intensified its monitoring efforts to ensure that the Electricity Utilities do not flout any of the above quality of service and standard of performance benchmarks which are meant to protect consumers of electricity in the country.

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