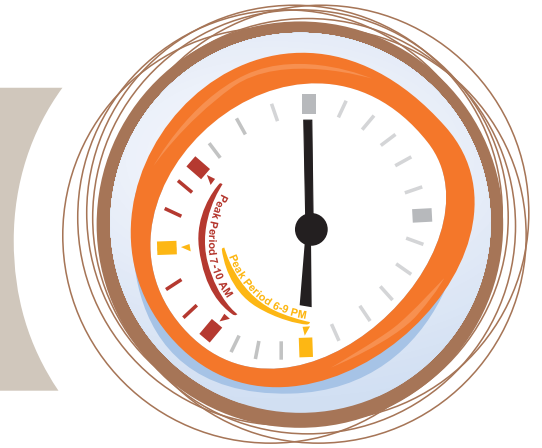


Switching off your geyser helps everybody

Eskom's residential customers consume around 17,5% of the total electricity generated, with their share increasing at peak periods to over 30%. Peak periods are from 07:00 to 10:00 in the morning and the evening peak period is from 18:00 to 21:00.



Geysers consume the most electricity in the home so turning them off is effective when trying to control the peak demand and prevent load shedding. Load shedding is what happens whenever there is an unplanned shortfall in the country's electricity supply.

Here are some commonly held myths about geysers and electricity supply:

Myth: Switching off the geyser does not have a significant impact on the overall electricity demand from Eskom.

Fact: Not so, if all the geysers in the country are switched off at the same time load shedding will be minimised.

Myth: More electricity is used if a geyser is switched on and off, compared to its being left on permanently.

Fact: "A geyser will definitely not use more electricity if it is switched on and off," says Kwikot's Technical Director, Herman Weber. "When a 150-litre geyser is switched off and stores its water at the thermostat set point, the water temperature reduces by approximately 10°C over 24 hours. This so-called 'standing loss' is a quality standard set by the SABS. If the water is then used at this lower temperature, a small electricity saving is achieved. If the geyser is switched back on, electricity will be used to heat the water to its original temperature. No saving will be achieved but the geyser will also not use more electricity than if it was not switched off at all."

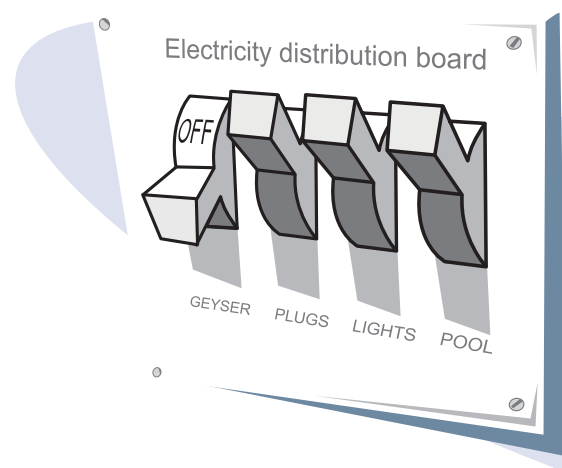
Harold Burgess, MD of Franke Water Heating Systems concurs and adds, that users **must** switch off their geysers when away on holiday.

Myth: Switching a geyser off and on damages the thermostat.

Fact: "No damage will occur if the geyser is switched off and on," says Herman Weber. "The thermostat, by nature of its operation, switches off and on all the time."

Myth: Switching geysers off and on will cause cracks in the geysers.

Fact: "Not true," explains Harold Burgess. "The thermal range during normal operation is much greater than the slow cooling of a geyser that is simply switched off."



Myth: If you use a geyser blanket, the geyser doesn't need to be switched off.

Fact: “Geyser blankets and pipe insulation,” Eskom’s Andrew Etzinger clarifies, “Will significantly contribute to savings but you will still be requested to switch the geyser off due to general system demand.”

Myth: A geyser covered by a geyser blanket can overheat, explode or catch fire.

Fact: Provided the correct materials are chosen for the blanket, there is no risk of fire or explosion. The blanket simply reduces the heat loss to the atmosphere while the thermostat still controls the water temperature.

Myth: Using a timer on your geyser is a more efficient way to manage electricity demand.

Fact: “Not so,” says Harold Burgess. “Whether you opt for a timer or do it manually the impact is precisely the same.”

Saving You Money

Not all measures for reducing electricity demand, such as switching your geyser off at peak times, will have a direct or significant personal cost benefit. That being said, there are a number of energy efficiency methods that help save on the water heating component of your electricity bill.

1. Insulate your geyser and your pipes. A geyser blanket and pipe insulation reduce the cooling rate of a geyser when it is switched off, meaning that less electricity is required to reheat the water. Tests have shown that geyser blankets save 20% of the 2,59 kWh of electricity required to reheat the water in a geyser that's been off for 24 hours. A geyser blanket and pipe insulation will save an average household of four between R180 and R250 annually.
2. Set your geyser's thermostat to 60°C.
3. To optimise electricity efficiency, geysers should be fitted close to the points where hot water is being used.
4. When using small quantities of water, like washing your hands, use cold water as hot water is not necessary.
5. By taking a shower instead of a bath, you can save the 1 kWh required to heat an average bath.
6. Install an energy and water saving shower head and you'll further reduce your energy and hot water consumption by up to 24%.

7. Do not let hot water run unnecessarily. Get into the habit of using basin plugs when washing.
8. If your clothes are not particularly dirty, skip the pre-wash cycle on your washing machine. This can save up to 20% of hot water usage.
9. Wash bed linen at 60°C instead of 90°C and make sure your washing is a full load.
10. Only use the dishwasher when it's full, turn it off before the drying cycle and dry the dishes with a cloth. Connect the dishwasher to the cold water supply when you clean the filters.
11. If you can afford it, install a solar water heater. The achieved saving per month will cover the investment in 5 years with the Eskom subsidy.

Conclusion

This will contribute to lower the risk and limit the load on the electricity network.

For more information please visit www.eskom.co.za/dsm

