



ISSUE 6 • JULY – SEPTEMBER 2016

LEWANEWS

The newsletter of the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority

COVER STORY

Butha-Buthe, Leribe and Berea stakeholders' public meetings discuss service delivery - **PAGE 3**



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...

6 LEWA customer complaints handling procedures – an overview

9 Ministry of Energy and Meteorology observes African women month

12 Approved 2016/17 electricity, urban water and sewerage tariffs

WWW.LEWA.ORG.LS



Water or electricity problems?
First present your complaint
to LEC or WASCO...
...to have the...

**Problem
Solved**

*Customers of **LEC** & **WASCO**
may lodge **complaints** with **LEWA** thereafter.*

One of the general functions of the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) is to resolve customer complaints between the regulated entities (Water and Sewerage Company - WASCO or Lesotho Electricity Company-LEC) and their customers.



*For more information, please contact us at
Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority, 7th Floor, Moposo House, Kingsway, Maseru, Lesotho
Tel: +266 22 312479 • Fax: +266 22 315094 • Email: secretary@lewa.org.ls*



LEWANews

LESOTHO
ELECTRICITY & WATER
AUTHORITY

7 Floor, Moposo House, Kingsway
Private Bag A315 • Maseru
Maseru • Lesotho
Tel: +266 22312479
Fax: +266 22315094
E-mail: secretary@lewa.org.ls
Website: www.lewa.org.ls

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Ntoi Rapapa
Email: nrapapa@lewa.org.ls

**CONSUMER AFFAIRS
AND COMMUNICATION MANAGER**
Shao Khatala
Email: skhatala@lewa.org.ls

CUSTOMER AFFAIRS OFFICER
Kuenta Chele
Email: kchele@lewa.org.ls

LEWA NEWS is the newsletter of the
Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority.
It is published in English and Sesotho
It is distributed free of charge
to stakeholders.

The opinions expressed in it are not
necessarily those of LEWA and the
inclusion of an advertisement implies
no endorsement of any kind by LEWA.
The contents of the publication may be
reproduced free of charge on condition
that acknowledgement is given
to this publication.

Please allow some time from receipt
of LEWA NEWS for additions to,
deletions from or changes in the
mailing/distribution list.

Copyright © LEWANews 2016

CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM CE

LEWA's stakeholders consultations to discuss service delivery	2
---	---

QOSSS OUTLINED

Standards for disconnection of urban water supply and sewerage	5
--	---

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

LEWA customer complaints handling procedures – an overview	6
--	---

ELECTRICITY SAFETY TIPS

Electricity safety tips at home	7
---------------------------------	---

AFRICAN WOMEN

Ministry of Energy and Metereology observe African women's month	9
--	---

MEDIATION MECHANISM

Mediation as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism	11
--	----

APPROVED TARIFFS

2016/17 Electricity, Urban Water and Sewerage Tariffs	12
---	----



LEWA undertakes stakeholders' consultations to discuss services delivery

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) undertook stakeholders' public meetings at Butha-Buthe, Leribe and Berea on 20, 21 and 22 July, 2016 respectively, where it used the events to discuss level of regulated services.

In terms of the Urban Water Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QOSSS), water supply services may be disconnected by the service provider, Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO). Consequently customers and stakeholders are made aware of the conditions for disconnections.

The customers who wish to complain about disconnections of electricity, water and/or sewerage services may lodge such complaints in writing to either Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) or Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) for expedient resolution of the same before referring them to LEWA for resolution. This cardinal customer right is once more highlighted in this issue.

As a measure towards ensuring the demand side management, consumers are urged to practice electricity safety inside their homes as part of their routine activities.

LEWA participated in the celebration of African Women's month on 31 August 2016 at Avani Lesotho organised by the Ministry of Energy and Meteorology wherein the Honourable Minister Selibe Mochoboroane MP delivered key note remarks. LEWA women also got an award.

We also shed light on the upcoming 13th Annual Conference and AGM of the Regional Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA) to be hosted from 07-11 November, 2016 in Maseru, Lesotho 

Assoc. Prof. Ntoi Rapapa
Chief Executive



For comments or questions in respect of the contents of this newsletter or LEWA in general, please secretary@lewa.org.ls



Butha-Buthe, Leribe and Berea stakeholders' public meetings discuss service delivery

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) continued to embark on initiatives to meet with different categories of stakeholders in various districts. This was with the purpose of raising further awareness on regulatory issues and providing customers who had participated in the last tariff determination process for electricity, water and sewerage services with feedback on the process undertaken to determine the charges of the above mentioned services.

It was precisely for this reason, that the Authority undertook stakeholder's public meetings in Butha-Buthe, Leribe and Berea on 20, 21 and 22 July, 2016 respectively.

All meetings were attended by stakeholder groups that comprised chiefs, the media, civil servants, business people, local and district council representatives,

business forums and general customers, LEC and WASCO representatives, and District Administrators. In all the meetings, the Authority was represented by Mrs. 'Machabalala Koatsa, the Consumer Affairs Officer. It is prudent to indicate that stakeholders in the three visited areas had common views regarding the standard of service received from Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) and Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO). In spite of this, each district had its own distinct challenges and expectations based on their peculiar circumstances.

In all occasions, LEWA was commended for undertaking the initiative of keeping regular contact with its stakeholders. Mr Lehlohonolo Qhasho, who is the district administrator of Butha-Buthe, summed it up by noting that the public appreciated the role that the Authority was playing by reaching out more to its stakeholders.

A WASCO delegate addresses customers during stakeholders meeting in Leribe



"LEWA should be requested to undertake more public awareness initiatives because that had a great impact on issues of transparency when customers were regularly given information on issues that affect them," Mr. Qhasho noted.

Still on the same issue of sharing of information, he urged Rural Electrification Unit (REU) representative at the meeting and emphasised that the Unit should share some light on issues around electrification and schemes to the public on regular basis.

During the three visits to the northern districts, the Authority explained its mandate and further elaborated on the tariff determination processes and the rationale for approved tariffs for 2016-17 financial year. Moreover, the Authority informed its stakeholders on their rights and responsibilities towards service delivery. The complaints handling procedures in the regulated sectors were also explained for stakeholders to be aware of.

Stakeholders in Berea and Butha-Buthe were of the opinion that WASCO issued customers with water connection service quotations which were higher than the actual costs that the Company incurred when providing services. They requested that WASCO should allow customers to buy water service connection equipment.

WASCO responded that such a suggestion was flawed because apart from the costs of equipment, there were other connection costs included. Amongst others, labour engaged for provision of water services constitute other costs.

The Leribe business people were concerned that they were not made aware of water interruptions, and they hence suffered loss of business due to the disruption that happened sporadically. The Authority highlighted that there were Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QOSSS) that should be observed by the utility. WASCO apologised for the inconvenience suffered thereof and pledged to improve their service in the future.

Generally, in the three districts, there was a concern over ownership of water and electricity service infrastructure such as water meters and electricity poles. Customers in the districts were of the view that when they paid for connection, they automatically paid to own the infrastructure involved.

WASCO responded that customers paid for service delivery and not for the infrastructure used, hence why utilities repaired and replaced the infrastructure when there was a need to do so.

Another overall concern was that WASCO did not attend to pipe bursts timeously and hence the public was of the view that they suffered consequences of high tariffs since thousands of litres were lost and not billed. WASCO indicated that it had insufficient manpower, and it was doing all it could to attend to bursts timeously. WASCO further urged customers to report the problem immediately on occurrence for expeditious resolution of the problem.

The Authority further added that WASCO infrastructure was in a poor state in some areas and that constituted one of the reasons for regular bursts. As a result, inspections were being undertaken on WASCO infrastructure and findings and recommendations would be communicated to WASCO for consideration and rectification of unsatisfactory conditions.

Another concern throughout the districts was whether the service providers would still meet the expected quality of service and supply standards, now that LEWA had approved lesser percentage of what was requested. The utilities had indicated that the companies would still strive to improve service delivery, even though some of the initiatives intended for the recent financial year might be a challenge to achieve.

The meetings were interactive and fruitful. The Authority was given an opportunity to have a sense of level of service in all districts and it was found that there was still a need for improvement in service delivery □

General standards for disconnection of urban water supply and sewerage services outlined

In terms of the Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority's Urban Water Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QOSSS), water supply services may be disconnected by the service provider, Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO), for various reasons which include the following:

- Non payments of accounts; and/or
- Tampering or illegal connections.

Conditions and processes that WASCO should follow upon undertaking of disconnections and reconnections of water supply services are reflected in the table below:

Standards for Urban Water Supply Disconnections	
(Credit Metering)	
Non-Payment Of Water Accounts	Tampering Or Illegal Connections
Disconnection should be effected at least ten (10) working days after the due date for payment.	Disconnections should be effected without prior notice after verification of illegal connection or tampering.
WASCO should give customers two (2) days written notice prior to disconnection of supply.	
Disconnections should be carried out during morning hours, to allow timely reconnections.	
Disconnections should not be carried out over the weekends, public holidays or Fridays.	
Reconnections	
Reconnections shall be effected not later than the first working day after the account has been settled and reconnection fee has been paid.	Reconnections shall be effected not later than the first working day after the account has been settled and reconnection fee has been paid.

Standards for Sewer Disconnections	
Non-Payment of Sewer Accounts	Tampering or Illegal Connections
Disconnections of water supply should be effected without prior notice.	Disconnections should be effected without prior notice after verification of illegal connection or tampering.
A customer should be given 5 days' notice prior to blocking the sewer system.	
Sewer connection should be blocked if following disconnection of water supply, the customer continues to use sewer system.	
Disconnections should not be carried out over the weekends, public holidays or Fridays.	
Reconnections	
Reconnections should be made two (2) working days after all applicable fees due have been paid and all the necessary repairs had been done to standard.	Reconnections should be made two (2) working days after all applicable fees due have been paid and all the necessary repairs had been done to standard.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconnections for unjustified disconnections should be effected 8 hours after the unjustified disconnection have been confirmed. • All customers are urged to pay their accounts timely, and to avoid tampering or making illegal connections. 	

LEWA customer complaints handling procedures - an overview

Customers who wish to complain about issues around disconnections of electricity, water and/or sewerage services may lodge such complaints in writing to either Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) or Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) for expedient resolution of the same.

In cases where customers are not satisfied with the response received from the service provider, or where the latter has not responded at all, such complaints shall be directed to LEWA in writing for resolution.

All complaints referred to LEWA should meet eligibility requirements. These are explained as follows:

- As the first step, a customer should have lodged his/her complaint with either LEC or WASCO for it to be resolved thereon. It is advisable that the complaint be lodged in writing.

- The complaint may not have been attended, or resolved satisfactorily by either LEC or WASCO according to the Complainant; and
- The subject matter of the complaint should be on the regulated services.

Conditions for supply of urban water and sewerage services

The Quality of Service and Supply Standards (QOSSS) document set out the minimum level of service that Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO) must adhere to in providing service supply to customers, and these are sketched hereunder.

These document may be obtained from LEWA offices on request or from LEWA website at www.lewa.org.ls.

Standards for Urban Water Supply Disconnections		
Service Connection	Timeframe for issuing Quotations	Timeframes for making connections
Urban Water Supply	Within 6 working days, where required supply is within 150 metres of the existing network.	Within 10 working days, where required supply is within 150 metres of the existing network.
	Within 10 working days, where required supply is between 150 metres and 1000 metres from the existing network.	Within 30 working days, where required supply is between 150 metres and 1000 metres from the existing network.
Sewerage Services	Within 6 working days, where required supply of service is within 90 metres of the existing network.	Within 15 working days, where required supply of service is within 90 metres of the existing network.
	Within 15 working days, where required supply of service is between 90 metres and 500 metres from the existing network.	Within 30 working days, where supply is for industrial/commercial customer or where required supply is between 90 metres and 500 metres from the existing network.



Electricity safety tips at home

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) encourages home owners to ensure electricity safety inside their homes as part of their routine activities. Just because electrical wires are not exposed in your home may not mean that electrical safety should be forgotten.

Hereunder is a list of tips to take into account during spring and summer:

Extension cords, plugs and outlets safety

- Never plug many appliances into one outlet or extension cord;
- Keep electrical cords away from heat and water as they can both damage the insulation and create a short circuit;
- Put safety caps on any unused electrical outlets, especially if there are young children in the house;
- Clusters of wires and plugs can be a fire hazard along with using extension cords as permanent wiring. These products were never meant to be used that way so consider updating the wiring in your home. Inspect cords and plugs. Make it part of your routine prior to using a tool or an appliance. Replace electrical cords that have cut, broken or cracked insulation;
- Never run extension cords under carpets or under heavy furniture; and
- Ensure that electrical cords on your appliances are not lose or damaged.

Clustering many appliances into one electricity outlet is hazardous



Electricity is deadly when used carelessly!

We rely on electricity to get on with our daily lives. From the moment we wake up right through the day and down to sleeping time, electricity plays a big part in our day-to-day living. Hence, it is no surprise that when something becomes so familiar, we tend to forget how powerful and **dangerous** it can potentially be.



Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority
has mandate to ensure safety of the public in relation to electricity supply and usage.

Your home's electrical system

Do not ignore the following electrical hazard warning signs:

- Dim, flickering or surging lights;
- Fuses that constantly blow or breakers that often trip;
- Outlets that don't work when the fuse is replaced or breaker is reset; and
- Switches or fuses that are hot to the touch (turn them off immediately) or a hot, burning smell where you can't find the source.

A Licensed Electrical Contractor can help you assess and address these potential electrical hazards.

During outages

Just because power lines are damaged does not mean they are dead. Every downed power line is potentially energised and dangerous until Lesotho Electricity Company's (LEC) personnel cut it off. Downed power lines and stray wires all have the potential to deliver a fatal shock.

During outage, it is recommended that electrical appliances should be unplugged because power sometimes comes back in surges, which can damage electronics.

Your circuits could overload when power returns if all your electronics are still plugged in and on. Leave one light on to indicate that power has been restored. Wait a few minutes and then turn on other appliances and equipment, one at a time.


If you use a standby generator, it is critical that nothing is plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This

prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.

Operate generators in well-ventilated, outdoor, dry areas. Never attach a temporary generator to a circuit breaker, fuse, or outlet. Permanent generators should be wired into a house by a qualified electrician.

General tips

- Never tamper with appliances while they're plugged in, sticking a knife into the toaster being the classic example;
- Never touch any electrical appliance such as a hairdryer or shaver if your hands are wet;
- Never use power tools for anything other than their original purpose, or without wearing shoes;
- Never climb the fence around an electrical substation;
- Fly your kite far away from power lines;
- Look out for power lines before climbing a tree, as electricity can go right through the tree branch and right through you;
- When you are changing a light bulb, be sure to turn off the switch or circuit;
- Never walk bare feet while using an electric lawnmower and avoid cleaning outdoors after a storm; and
- Never use electrical cords or extensions with exposed wires.

These tips may be further accessed from the service providers and the Authority 



The Minister of Energy and Meteorology, Mr. Selibe Mochoboroane, honours Basotho women at the African Women's Month event.

Ministry of Energy and Meteorology observes African women's month

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) participated in the celebration of African Women's month on 31 August 2016 at Avani Lesotho organised by the Ministry of Energy and Meteorology.

This was made in the context of celebrating and honouring women making a difference in the energy and climate change sectors. The event was honoured by the presence of the Minister of Energy and Meteorology Honourable Minister Selibe Mochoboroane.

In his key note address, Minister Mochoboroane noted that he was of the view that Basotho women,

especially in the field of energy and meteorology had to be appreciated, as the Government would not have achieved its goals had it not been for their support. He further indicated that it was proper to honour and appreciate the efforts being made by Basotho women in the development of the energy sector.

"Today we have our own Basotho heroines and we have seen how strong and dedicated they are. Looking into 1996 drought situation and the recent one, women were the most affected by these disasters but they managed to survive and protect their children" Mr. Mochoboroane said.

The Minister added that Basotho needed to progress

in their economic and social lives to an extent whereby weather conditions such as snow would not be considered as a disaster, but instead be recognised as tourism attraction opportunities. He observed that snow was useful as it assist in moisturising the land for purposes of farming.

Dr. Puleng Matebesi, a lecturer at the National University of Lesotho (NUL), emphasised that energy and climate change issues are women concerns and hence the Government should include women right from the start of drafting policies that are meant for addressing energy sector challenges.

Dr. Matebesi added that an important issue that should be set across was that it did not matter where these Basotho women lived, but that all should be entitled to access of clean, safe and sustainable energy.

Mrs. Ntsoaki Segoete, an employee of LEWA, was one of the women who received women appreciation award on the day. Management of the Authority appreciated the efforts and the selfless nature of her support in service delivery and hence was identified as the best person to receive the women appreciation award □

**Electricity is
dangerous when
used carelessly!**

We rely on electricity to get on with our daily lives. From the moment we wake up right through the day and down to sleeping time, electricity plays a big part in our day-to-day living. Hence, it is no surprise that when something becomes so familiar, we tend to forget how powerful and dangerous it can potentially be.



Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority
has mandate to ensure safety of the public in relation to electricity supply and usage.

Mediation as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) is mandated in terms of Section 22 (j) and 105 of the Lesotho Electricity Authority Act as amended, to resolve customer complaints that have not been resolved by the service providers, being Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) or Water and Sewerage Company (WASCO).

It is incumbent upon the Authority to ensure that complaints are resolved effectively, expeditiously and efficiently. In so doing, the needs, interests and rights of the parties are taken into account. To achieve this, the Authority uses mediation, amongst others, as a means of resolving customer complaints.

This process has been found appropriate to be followed by LEWA simply because the interests of the customers and those of the service providers would be at stake, and that the relationship between the parties needs to be preserved and enhanced.

Mediation refers to a form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in which the parties (complainants and the licensees) meet with a neutral third-party (LEWA) in an effort to settle complaints.

The third-party is called a mediator. It is this person's job to listen prudently to the parties and

assist them to come to understand each other's viewpoint regarding the complaint at hand, and then facilitate the negotiation of a voluntary resolution to the matter.

The purpose of mediation is to assist the parties to come to an amicable solution between themselves. The mediator does not impose any decisions on the parties, but rather directs the process towards resolving the complaint.

This dispute resolution mechanism is done at no cost to the parties and hence the parties are not encouraged to engage legal representatives, but at the same time, parties are not denied their right to engage legal representatives.

In cases where the parties arrive at an amicable resolution, the parties are bound by the outcomes of the agreement and the matter is considered closed by the Authority.

On the other hand, it may happen that parties reach a deadlock, and in such cases, the matter is escalated to the Board of the Authority for final determination.

The decision of the Board is binding upon the parties, but any party who feels prejudiced by the decision, may approach the courts of law for review of the decision of the Board ☐



Approved 2016/17 Electricity, Urban Water and Sewerage Tariffs



Outing stakeholders during electricity tariff consultations

The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) is aware that following the determination of both electricity, urban water and sewerage services tariffs in early 2016, some members of the public are still not informed about the approved tariffs. In this short brief, a further attempt is done to inform the public about the approved tariffs.

In line with Section 24 (3) of the LEA Act 2002, as amended and based on the available information and analysis of both LEC's and WASCO's tariffs applications for the financial year 2016/17, submissions from stakeholders, reasons, facts and evidence provided, the Authority resolved as follows:

LEC tariffs effective from 01 May, 2016 have been adjusted as follows:

- Energy charges had been increased by 12.2 %, 12.3% and 12.4% for street lighting, industrial/commercial and domestic customers respectively, inclusive of both customer and electrification levies; and
- Maximum Demand Charges had been increased by 12.6% for industrial/commercial customers.
- These figures are not inclusive of the 5% VAT.

WASCO tariffs effective from 01 April, 2016 had been adjusted as follows:

- The standing charge for Band A customers (1st Band for Domestic Customers) had been abolished and only the approved volumetric charges are applicable;
- No increase on Standing Charge for All Customers excluding Band A Domestic customers; and
- Volumetric charges for both potable water (inclusive of customer levies) and sewerage services had been increased by 8.7%.

The above approvals are meant to ensure that both LEC and WASCO improve their service provision, to cover prudent operational costs, maintenance of their infrastructure, and replace equipment which is no longer efficient and effective. In addition, amongst others LEC should be able to procure electricity from its local and external electricity bulk suppliers while WASCO, cover costs of chemicals and of pumping.

The detailed tariffs determinations which provides detailed rationale behind the Authority's decisions on tariffs can be obtained from LEWA offices or LEWA website page link: http://www.lewa.org.ls/tariffs/Tariffs_Determinations.php 