

Fridges to have colour code

TONY CARNIE

New household refrigerators will soon be colour-coded with energy-efficiency labels as part of a major government energy-saving plan which aims to cut South Africa's oil, coal and electricity use by 12% within 10 years.

The first labels will be attached to some fridge brands later this month on a voluntary basis. Compulsory labelling for these appliances will take effect in about 18 months.

The labelling will be extended in stages to cover washing machines, tumble dryers, stoves, deep freezers and other household appliances.

Fridges will be labelled using an A to G grading system. Although the most energy-efficient A-grade fridges are expected to cost more, consumers are likely to start recovering their costs within two years through lower electricity bills.

The energy-saving drive – which also targets major industries – will be promoted via radio advertisements, in special taxi-rank promotions and via municipal utility bills.

Minerals and Energy Affairs Minister Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka announced the plan in Midrand last night. She said the country could shave R9-billion off the R60-billion earmarked for new power-generating facilities before 2015.

She said the appliance-labelling system would allow consumers to make more informed decisions on how to save on electricity bills.

The 10% reduction target for households is unlikely to dent SA's overall energy demand significantly because domestic use makes up a much smaller percentage than industrial use.

