Energy efficiency month powers ahead

Minister of Minerals and Energy Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

ON MAY 4, Minster of Minerals and Energy Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka announced the South African Energy Efficiency Accord at a banquet at Kyalami Theatre on the Track.

With the active support of Business Unity South Africa, the process for a voluntary Energy Efficiency Accord was signed.

"It encourages us as leaders to know the private sector recognises the advantages of promoting energy efficiency as an imperative for business to thrive in the future," says Ngcuka. "South Africa uses some 40 percent of the total electricity consumed by the continent.

The signing of this accord makes us one of the few countries in the world to have such a strategy."

On the current fuel price increases, the minister said, "Today petrol went up by 20c a litre. People complain but give little thought to buying cars that use less fuel. We plan to provide information on the fuel consumption of new vehicles."

She said, because electricity was a lot cheaper here than in many countries, South Africans had not developed the instinct of being energy savers. Ngcuka proposed that government should make consumers' choices easier. She said poor people spent time and money on inefficient and expensive energy sources that proved to be unhealthy, causing respiratory disease, burning of shacks and burns that caused terribly deformities.

The first step has been taken with the launch of the appliance label campaign, promoting the use of energy efficient appliances. The labels are graded A-G with G being the poorest performing product. The labelling process has been agreed upon by the SA Bureau of Standards and will be implemented in about 18 months.

Ngcuka concluded: "Remember Energy Efficiency is in your power!"

Energy efficiency targets set to be achieved by 2015 for the various sectors are as follows:

A total energy demand reduction of 12 percent across all sectors

Industry and mining -15 percent reduction

Power generation - 15 percent reduction in parasitic electrical usage

Commercial and Public Building sector - 15 percent reduction

Residential sector - 10 percent reduction

Transport sector - 9 percent reduction.

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