

SAVE POWER THIS WINTER



COOL
RUNNINGS: Mr
Power's satin jet
shower head.
PICTURE: DUNCAN COLE

Don't let Eskom empty your wallet this season

TANKISO KOMANE

THE chilly season is rearing its ugly, cold head and so are rising electricity tariffs.

While April, with its relatively dry days and long, cold nights, signals the start of the season many people dread, it may as well serve as a learning experience for those who want to find cost-effective ways to bring down their electricity bill while doing their bit for the environment.

Suitable for every budget, these tips are brought to you by local energy-saving solution specialists Mr Power, which is led by Roger Bulgin, an aeronautical engineer who believes that being environmentally conscious should be a habit.

Save power without spending a cent

- Reduce your electricity usage by switching off lights and plug points – basically anything that draws a current and isn't in use.
- Avoid using the hot water tap wherever possible – for example, wash hands in cold water.
- When showering, turn the water off while washing your hair and soaping your body. Do the same while brushing your teeth.
- Set your geyser thermostat down.
- Wash clothes in cold water wher-

ever possible. As much as 85% of the energy used to machine wash your clothes goes into heating the water.

Cut down your electricity bill

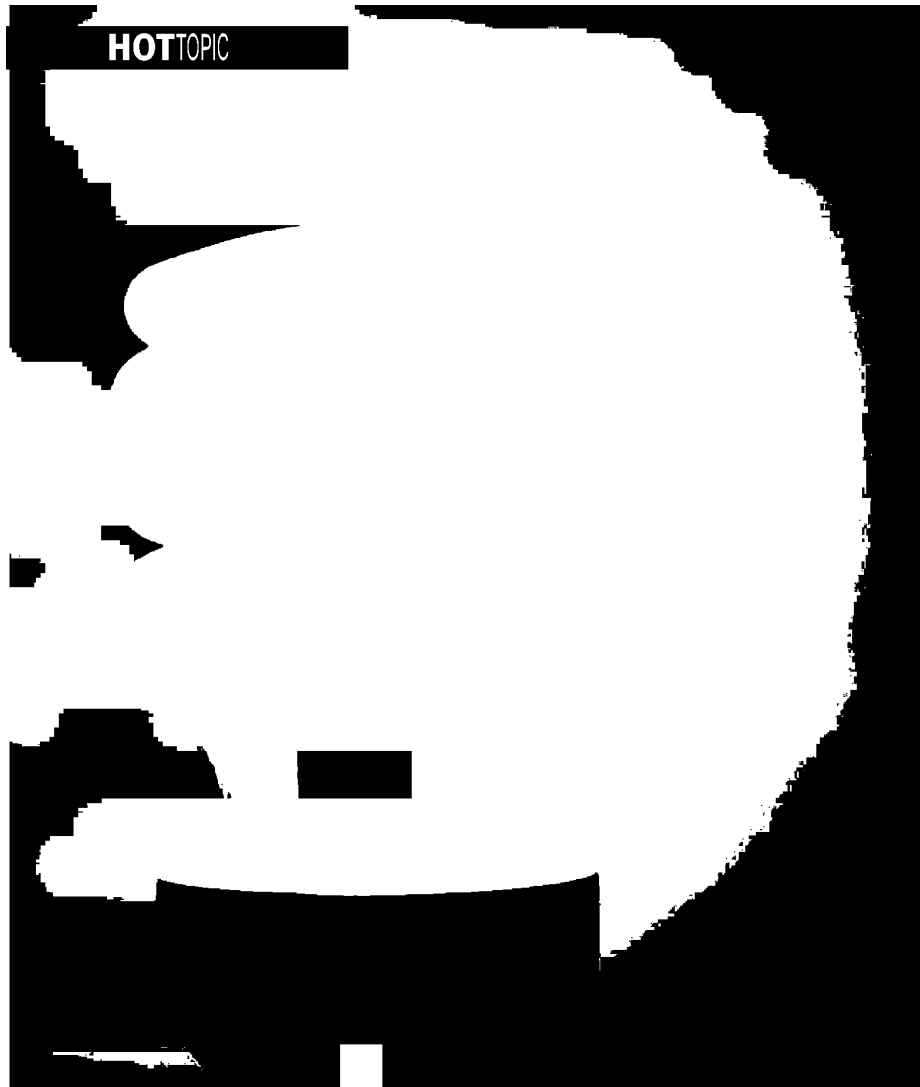
- Install a Mr Power Geyser Controller, as it checks the current during the pre-programmed time period. This means it switches off the circuit at the optimum time – no guesswork involved.
- Replace your showerhead with a water-efficient alternative such as the Mr Power satin jet showerhead.
- Change your dimmer-lights to locally manufactured Mr Power dimmables, which draw 10% of the energy of regular dimmer-lights.
- Invest in a clothes dryer that doesn't use electricity.
- While most people know about geyser blankets, which assist with insulation, the hot-water outlet pipe is just as important as this is where much of the heat losses occur.

If you have a big budget...

- Install solar geysers.
- Install a heat pump.
- Solar or photovoltaic (PV) panels use the sun's power for electricity.
- Invest in a grid tie inverter – no batteries required and very effective.

For more information, visit www.mrpower.co.za

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TAKE CONTROL: With a geyser controller.



LIGHTER BILLS: Use Mr Power LED downlights.

WHEN TO RUN HOT

HOUSEHOLDS and businesses use the hot water tap for a variety of reasons such as washing hands and dishes and filling pots and kettles.

On when to and when not to use the hot water tap, Roger Bulgin says: "Filling the kettle or cooking pot with water from a hot water tap would get the water to boil faster, but the quality of water from the geyser is questionable."

Based on research from the University of the Virgin Islands, as well as firsthand experience from the Mr Power team, the findings are clear – it is not advisable to use hot water from the geyser for cooking and drinking.

The reason is that most

geysers have a build-up of sludge, which contains sand residue, potential bacteria and other impurities.

This sludge can become a breeding-ground for bacteria, such as Legionnaires' disease, when temperatures are lower than 55°. Eeeeuw.

So now what?

- Avoid using water from the hot water tap for cooking.
- Use the hot water tap only for washing dishes or filling a bucket for cleaning.
- Only use the hot water tap when you need hot water.

Remember that each time you turn it on, it activates the geyser and reheats the water in it.

Utility industries to talk water, power

THE city of Cape Town will host the upcoming African Utility Week conference, which takes place at the International Convention Centre from May 14 to 16.

The conference will focus on the role of electricity and water in the utility industry. It will also have direct benefits for the residents of Cape Town, as experts from across the globe gather in the Mother City to share experiences and highlight standards for improved service delivery, energy efficiency and water management, among others.

Representatives from ArcelorMittal's steel plant in Saldanha, the single largest electricity consumer in the Western Cape, will be there to explain how they managed to save R90m in one year, as

the result of their participation in the Industrial Energy Efficiency Improvement Project in 2010.

More than 40 countries and 250 suppliers from across the world – top among them Powertech, Itron and Eskom – will not only exhibit their latest technology and solutions, but will be waiting to share their experiences, case studies and best practices with other industry professionals.

A number of delegates at the conference will be able to experience a unique site visit to ArcelorMittal's steel plant in the company of general manager Dhesan Moodley, who says their main message will be: "Once you start focusing on energy saving, there are numerous opportunities to achieve savings." – TK