

## CONSUMER HANDBOOK

### What is happening to Nigeria's electricity companies?

A reliable source of electricity is not a luxury; it is essential for daily life and for every modern economy.

From being able to cook and refrigerate food at home, use heavy machinery or computers at work, or keep lifesaving equipment going in hospitals, having enough power is crucial to our lives.

Unfortunately, for too long Nigeria has had an unreliable and inadequate power supply that has left many without electricity for long periods of time, or even without electricity at all.

The main reason for this is that, as a country, we just don't produce enough electricity to keep up with demand. And that problem is getting worse as we buy more and more electrical goods, all of which need power to run.

*Currently, Nigeria generates between 4,000-5,000 MW of power for 150 million people. However, South Africa generates and supplies about 10 times that much to only 50 million people. In the UK, 83,000MW of power is generated for 62 million people. The situation in Nigeria is so bad that an estimated \$100bn will be needed to meet consumer demand for electricity by the year 2020.*

So the government decided that if Nigeria was to have the power it needed, the previously Government run electricity power companies had to be privatized. Privatizing companies is something that has been shown all around the world to have many advantages.

And it is something that has already been done in Nigeria, with the privatizing of telephone companies. In this instance, the benefits of privatizing power companies will be even greater.

One of the key benefits will be the economic boom it will bring about, as more businesses can produce more goods and better services because they will have access to an affordable, reliable electricity supply. This will in effect mean more jobs for Nigerians, as communities become wealthier.

## **How things have changed already**

If we had enough electricity to go round, you would have power when you wanted it and not have blackouts. And there would be no need for you to have to buy your own generator to provide extra electricity, and to pay for expensive fuel to keep it going.

So, in 2005, the process began of improving Nigeria's power supply when the Nigerian Electric Power Authority (NEPA) was renamed the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN). Since then, PHCN has been split, or 'unbundled', into fifteen successor companies. Of these, five companies are responsible for generating the electricity (GENCOs), and the other ten companies (DISCOs) are responsible for distributing it to where it is needed around the country.

PHED (Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company) was one of the ten DISCOs, and in the next stage of improving the reliability and distribution of power in the area it serves, the company has now been privatized. It is no longer a Government run company, and will be operated and managed by the 4 Power Consortium instead.

## **Why this will make things better**

As a private company, PHED will be more efficient, because it will be operated and managed in better, more modern ways.

We will also be able to invest more money in electrical distribution, fitting new equipment, repairing old equipment, running more power lines to where electricity is needed and fitting more meters so that consumers pay fairly for the electricity they use.

In the past this would not have been possible, as investors were reluctant to put money into the power sector because of worries about long-term investment uncertainties caused by the constantly changing management with changing political administrations. Privatization has removed this major concern and has allowed an influx of investors into the sector.

Under 4Power Consortium, new systems and technology will be introduced to increase efficiency and productivity within the company. This will help ensure that the company achieves its strategic goal of being not just the most efficient and profitable utility company in Nigeria but also the preferred service provider.

This will have benefits for all concerned, including customers, employees, suppliers and investors, as well as Nigeria as a whole.

## **What challenges and problems have to be overcome?**

Generating and distributing electricity costs money, particularly in a large country like Nigeria, where power lines have to go very long distances and over rough terrain.

What's more, our current system is very inefficient, which means that as much as one third of the electricity that is produced leaks away and never gets to where it is intended to go.

The poor state of the electricity infrastructure means that we won't be able to make all the improvements that are needed straight away, as this requires a very large financial investment. However we **are** actively and aggressively working toward that goal.

## **Why we are stopping estimated billing?**

One of the things we have to do is make sure that everyone is paying the right amount for the electricity they use. This hasn't happened in the past because usually bills have been incorrectly estimated, leaving some people paying more and others paying less than they should. As a result the old PHED Company was suffering heavy financial losses, which it could not sustain.

As a result, one of PHED's priorities is to make sure that all its customers pay the fair amount for the electricity they actually use. We will do this by installing more meters, then ensuring that these are regularly read and the correct bill issued.

## **What is the right meter for you?**

PHED will supply the meters, and you will have a choice about which meter is installed. They include:

### ***Prepaid meters:***

With prepaid meters, you pay for the electricity before you use it - just like going to the market to buy fruit or vegetables. This will involve buying a token from a local store or other supplier, which you would then insert into your meter to give you electricity. When you insert your token into the meter, the purchased amount is the amount of electricity that you have available. Prepaid meters are a good idea if you are on a tight budget and need to make sure that you do not suddenly have to pay a large bill. It eliminates billing surprises.

### ***Smart meters:***

Smart meters measure the amount of electricity you use over a certain period of time. This information is then used to calculate your electricity bill. With this type of meter, you don't need to worry about suddenly running out of electricity and having to go out and buy a token. But you will have to make sure that you have enough money to pay your bill when it arrives.

## **Who will take meter readings?**

If you have a smart meter, our team of meter readers will visit your house or business premises at regular intervals to take a meter reading. This meter reading will then be used to calculate your bills.

If you use a prepaid a meter, you pay for your electricity as you use it, so there is no need for anybody to come and read your meter.

In addition to reading meters, our team may also need to look at the electricity system on your property and the appliances that you are using. This is important because faulty wiring or badly installed equipment could mean that you are using more electricity than you need to. It can also cause fires and electric shocks, which could be dangerous to you, your family or your employees, and your property. We will partner with you to ensure high standards of safety.

### **How to get a new meter**

If you have a fault with your current meter, or you think the reading is wrong, or you want to change to a different type of meter, you can phone the new PHED Customer Care number at 084 - 303450. We are open from 8am-5pm from Monday to Friday.

### **What this means for your electricity bill**

Electricity consumers are divided into different classes by the type of service they receive, or the sector that they are in, such as residential, commercial and industrial. Different tariffs or price rates apply to each. This price, together with the amount of electricity you have used, will determine how much your bill is.

Whether your electricity bill goes up and by how much will depend on a number of things such as:

- How accurately your bill has been estimated in the past

- How well the electrical system in your house or business premises has been fitted and maintained (*See Who will take meter readings? above*)
- Whether anything has been done to your supply that may make it look as though you are using less electricity than you actually are (*See Stopping electricity theft below*)
- Whether you using electricity inefficiently in your home or business (*See Better ways to use electricity below*)

## **How your electricity price will be controlled**

We know that in Nigeria electricity prices are very high. In large part this is because of under-investment, which has left the power infrastructure inefficient and badly maintained.

And while no one likes having to pay more for anything, is it not worth paying a little more for a better and far more reliable power supply, or compared to the cost of buying a generator and the diesel to run it, or the cost of being in the dark?

Of course, you may worry about prices becoming too high, but under the reforms that are happening in the electricity sector, you will be protected from excessive charges by the industry regulator – the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC). So you can be confident that the price you will pay is regarded as fair by the organisation that oversees the industry.

## How to pay your electricity bills

- You can pay in cash at any PHED office
- You can pay by bank draft
- You can make a deposit at a bank into our account
- You can use a scratch card
- You can pay online on our website

## What if I have a complaint about PHED?

One of things we want to do is dramatically improve our customer service. We have begun that process by setting up our Customer Care Center, which is the first place you should call if you are not happy with the service we have provided. It is open from 8am-5pm from Monday to Friday, but in future will be open 24 hours a day to provide you with even better service.

If we are unable to resolve your problem with you, you can contact the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC). NERC is the regulator of the electric power sector and it has been created to ensure that all participants in the industry play according to the rules. NERC is for the power industry what the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) is for telecoms.

## Using electricity safely

Badly installed electrical appliances and equipment, as well as faulty wiring, can cause SEVERE INJURIES AND DEATH. Fatal electric shocks often occur because someone tries to take electricity from a transformer or power line, or interferes with a meter so that it gives a lower reading.

But electric shocks can also happen for other reasons, so:

- Make sure that the electrical equipment you are using is correctly installed and well maintained. Be very careful if any wires are exposed.
- If the piece of electrical equipment you are using begins to spark, or smell, or begins to burn, stop using it immediately.
- Make sure that only someone who is competent and qualified carries out any electrical repairs or installations.
- If you see someone tampering with or vandalizing electrical equipment, please let us know as soon as possible, as they are putting themselves and others in danger by their actions.

## Stopping electricity theft

Some people try to find ways to get electricity without paying for it, but **anyone who does this is committing a criminal act**. So:

- If you take electrical equipment like cables or transformer parts to use yourself or to sell to someone else ... **that is stealing**.
- If you tamper with the internal mechanism of any equipment, like a meter, to make it seem that you are using less electricity than you are so that you pay less ... **that is fraud**.

If you want to connect to any of the power lines or transformers on our distribution network YOU MUST NOT DO SO WITHOUT A FORMAL AGREEMENT, otherwise this is also stealing.

Stealing electricity is bad for everyone. Not only is it dangerous, but it also means that we have to pay for equipment to be replaced, so we have to increase your bill.

So, if you see anyone stealing equipment or taking electricity illegally, please report it to us immediately, or you could be guilty as an accomplice to the crime. Be assured that you can do so in complete confidence and we will protect your identity at all times.

## **What to do in an emergency**

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION!**

#### **IF YOU THINK SOMEONE HAS HAD AN ELECTRIC SHOCK**

- 1) Approach them cautiously. It's not always clear if someone has had an electric shock, so take care.
- 2) Don't touch them with your hands, or feet, or any other part of your body, as this can put you in you in danger too.
- 3) If they have been using electrical equipment, then turn this off by unplugging the appliance, or switching off the electricity supply at the fuse box (consumer unit).
- 4) If you can't do this, push the item away from the victim using a length of wood, or something that is insulated. Never use something metal or anything that conducts electricity.
- 5) If the person is unconscious and you know first aid, treat them. Otherwise call for medical help.
- 6) Even if someone says they are OK, they may still need medical help.

## **Better ways to use electricity**

By doing a few simple things, you can reduce your electricity bills, and also help make Nigeria more energy efficient – and that is good for us all.

Here are some ways to do this:

### ***Buy the most energy-efficient appliances that you can***

The most energy efficient are rated A++++, but even those rated A+ will still use much less electricity. This is particularly important when buying a new fridge, freezer or air-conditioner, as they use a lot of power. These appliances are often a little more expensive to buy, but are less expensive to run. This means you will make your money back quickly through lower electricity bills.

### ***Make sure you aren't wasting electricity through poor connections and wiring***

You can do this by having all your electrical work done by a qualified and competent professional. Having this work done by somebody who isn't suitably qualified is also potentially dangerous.

### ***When you are using an air conditioner keep your doors and windows closed***

If you don't, you will be wasting energy and money.

### ***Keep your air-conditioner thermostat at 22-24 degrees***

Trying to keep the temperature of a room lower than this will mean you are using more energy than you need.

### ***Use a fan rather than an air conditioner when possible***

A fan uses less power and is cheaper to run.

### ***Turn off lights and appliances***

When you are not using a room, remember to turn the light off. When you are not using an appliance, turn it off. If you leave it on stand-by, it is still using electricity.

### ***Use energy efficient light bulbs***

These use less power and last longer.

### ***Keep your fridge and freezer doors closed***

Don't leave them open for too long when you are taking things out or putting things in or the temperature inside will rise and have to be cooled again, and this uses a lot of electricity.

### **Latest notification about tariffs**

The Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) approved the Multi-Year Tariff Order (MYTO) for the determination of charges and tariffs for electricity generation, transmission and retail tariffs for the period 1st July 2008 to 30th June 2013.

The average tariff was moved from approximately =N7.00/Kwh to =N8.50/Kwh with effect from 1st July 2010.

## Contact details for respective business units and HQ

### Ahoada Business Unit

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 74, Omoku Road, Ahoada

Rivers State

**Contact:** Anya Chukwu

Tel: 0812 9943235

#### **1 Ahoada Service Centre**

Old Local Govt. Secretariat, Opposite JTF Camp Abua Road, Ahoada

**08033604925**

#### **2 Igwuruta Service Centre**

PHCN Office, Opposite Model Primary School Igwuruta Roundabout,

**08064435038**

#### **3 Emohua Service Centre**

PHCN Office, beside Emohua L.G. Council, Emohua

**08052012290**

#### **4 Isiokpo Service Centre**



PHCN Office, Old Elele Road, Isiokpo.

**08037564737**

**5 Elele Service Centre**

Elele Civic Centre, PH Road, Elele

**08032717888**

**6 Abua Service Centre**

PHCN, Inside Water Works, opposite Abua market – Abua

**08166106122**

**7 Kalabari Service Centre**

Abonnema Akuku-Tori L.G.A.

**08051520107**

**Borokiri Business Unit**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 116, Aggrey Road, Port Harcourt.

Rivers State

**Contact:** Festus A. Nmegbu

Tel: 0812 994323



## **Calabar Business Unit**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 7, Calabar Road, Calabar,

Cross River State

**Contact:** J.A. Aikowe

Tel: 0812 9943245

## **Diobu Business Unit**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 69 Ikwerre Road, Mile 1 Diobu, Port Harcourt.

Rivers State

**Contact:** B.O. Nwaorehu

Tel: 0812 9943239

## **Eket Business Unit**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 2, Casino Lane, Eket.

Akwa Ibom State

**Contact:** Ezomoghene Friday

Tel: 0812 9943243



### **Ikom Business Unit**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 19, Ogoja Road, Ikom.

Cross River State

**Contact:** Hassan Dalhatu Soba

Tel: 0812 9943246

### **Ikot Ekpene Business Unit**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

Harley Road, Opp. First Bank, Ikot Ekpene.

Akwa Ibom State

**Contact:** Engr. Uzona Mbuko

Tel: 0812 9943244

### **Ogoja Business Unit**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 14, Mayne Avenue, Igoli, Ogoja.

Cross River State.

**Contact:** David D. Idung

Tel: 0812 994324



## **Onne Business Unit**

### MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

Ekra Street by IITA junction, Onne.

Rivers State.

**Contact:** Engr. E.N. Ezichi

Tel: 0812 9943236

### **OTHER SERVICE CENTERS**

- 1 Okon Service Centre**  
Opposite Filling Station, Ikot Ukudom, Okon
- 2 Mbo Service Centre**  
Mbo L.G. Area Secretariat
- 3 Urue Offong Oruku service Centre**  
Oyubia, Eket Oron Road
- 4 Nsit Atai Service Centre**  
19 James Town Road, Ikot Uso Ekong
- 5 Onna Service Centre**  
Old L.G. Area Secretariat, Onna
- 6 Ibeno Service Centre**  
Hospital Road, Ibeno

**7 Mkpat Enin Service Centre**

26 Ikot Abasi Road, Mkpat Enin

**8 Effa service Centre**

Effa Junction

**OYIGBO BUSINESS UNIT**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 223, Old Aba Road, Oyigbo.

Rivers State.

**Contact:** Engr. A.A. Dahunsi

Tel: 0812 9943237

**SERVICE CENTRES**

S/NO SERVICE CENTRE LOCATION

**1. Iriebe**

Iriebe

**2. Oyigbo North**

12, Seaside Road, Umuebule

**3. Oyigbo south**

Old Aba Road, by Governor's office



**4. Kom-kom**

Kom Kom

**5. Otamiri**

Otamiri

**6. Okomoko**

Okomoko, Eche

**Rumuodomaya Business Unit:**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

**Contact:** Olatunde O. Micheal

Tel: 0812 9943241

**Rumuogba Business Unit:**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

PLOT 207 Rumuogba Estate by Old Aba Rd, Port Harcourt

Rivers State.

Tel: 0802-3098279, 0803-5024259, 0803-324703



## **Rumuola Business Unit:**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 195, Aba Road, Rumuola, Port Harcourt.

Rivers State.

**Contact:** N.C. Onochie

Tel: 0812 9943240

## **Trans -Amadi Business Unit:**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

Ordinance Junction Trans Amadi industrial layout

TRANS AMADI

- 1 Trans- Amadi Service Center:**  
118 Ordinance Junction Trans Amadi industrial layout  
TRANS AMADI
- 2 Elekahia Service Center:**  
118 Ordinance Junction Trans Amadi industrial layout  
TRANS AMADI
- 3 Elemenwo S/C**  
56, Old Refinery Rd Elemenwo  
ELELENWO

- 4 Akpajo S/C**  
56, Old Refinery Rd Elemenwo  
ELELENWO
- 5 Abuloma S/C**  
221 Abuloma Rd  
ABULOMA
- 6 Amadi Ama S/C**  
221Abuloma Rd  
ABULOMA
- 7 Woji S/C**  
Ezebakagbaka Shopping Complex Via Slaughter Bridge  
WOJI
- 8 Rumogba S/C**  
POWA Shopping Complex Near Mini - Okoro Police Station  
RUMUOGBA

### **UNDERTAKING OFFICES**

- 1 Eket Urban**  
Kasino Avenue, off Court road, Eket
- 2 Oron Undertaking**  
Eket / Oron Road, Oron

### **3 Ikot Abasi Undertaking**

Ikot Ekong Street by Market Square

#### **Uyo Business Unit:**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

No 3 Ekpenyong Street, Off Barracks Road, Uyo. Akwa.

Ibom State.

**Contact:** Uduma O. Okala

Tel: 0812 9943242

#### **Yenago Business Unit:**

MAIN BUSINESS UNIT OFFICE

Yenagoa-Mbiama Road, near Opolo Junction, Yenagoa.

Bayelsa State.

**Contact:** Engr. Madu Reginald U.

Tel: 0812 9943248