

Illegal electrical connections can kill.

A very convenient basic service that allows for so much, electricity should still be respected and handled with care. “This also means not connecting to the electricity supply illegally,” says Knysna Municipal Manager Dr Sitembele Vatala.

“If you are paying to have electricity connected from anyone other than this municipality, you are doing so illegally,” he said. “The person charging you to do so, is also doing so illegally. And an illegal electrical connection can end up costing you much, much more than the money you paid for it.”

Electricity is dangerous. Risks associated with illegal electrical connections include, but are not limited to, damage to property, fires, disabling injuries, and even death. These connections can overload the existing legal infrastructure, create protection grading problems, interrupt the quality of the supply and lead to faults occurring. It also presents an external financial implication to the municipality.

“You may think that you are simply connecting your home to electricity when doing so through an illegal supplier,” said Vatala. “The truth is that you are inviting damage and bodily harm into your home. Perhaps even worse, death and destruction. I am not engaging in fear mongering, these are very real possibilities.”

Knysna Municipality is constructing formal housing in various wards and have temporarily relocated some of the beneficiaries. While it is impossible to pinpoint the exact amount, it is estimated that approximately 340 illegal connections have been made in these temporary relocation areas. That does not take into account the number of existing illegal connections in other areas, or those being made every day.

“Please do not consider having electricity connected illegally,” Vatala concluded. “Not only are you putting strain on and negatively impacting the existing legal infrastructure, you are – quite literally – playing with fire.”

Residents are encouraged to report illegal electrical connections to 044 302 6397 or 399.

ENDS
