

# Living with Controlled Load Shedding of the Electricity Supply

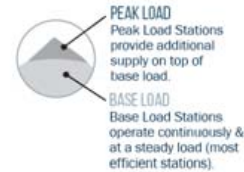
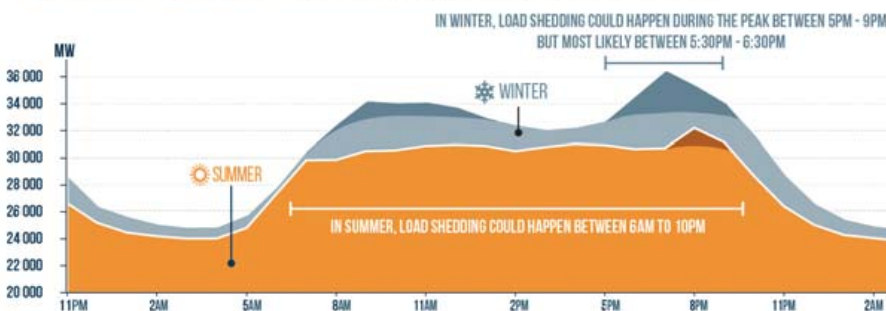
What are we able to do at home to assist and survive, to live comfortably with the controlled load shedding of the electricity supply and prevent or survive a country-wide “blackout”, should it occur ?

**How to Live Comfortably with Controlled Load Shedding** – without electricity for typically 2 to 4 maximum 6 hours per day for the next few years

Yes, this is going to change the usage of energy in your household. However, even if you do absolutely nothing and accept being in the dark during load shedding you should still be able to survive the discomforts. On the bright side you will also be saving on the electricity bill.

## WINTER AND SUMMER ELECTRICITY PROFILE

The load profile for summer and winter is different. This means that the national power system will be particularly strained during the evening peak between 5pm and 9pm in winter, and any time of the day in the summer months.



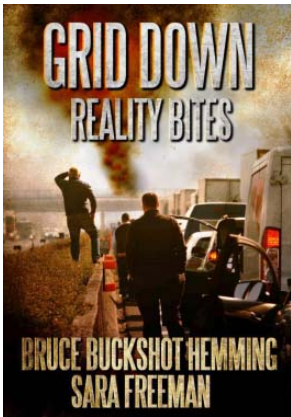
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Now, to live comfortably during load shedding, and save electricity at home the following is recommended:

1. To help understand why Eskom load sheds, go to <http://www.eskom.co.za/Pages/MakeTheCall.aspx>.
2. Find out your load shedding schedule, go to <http://loadshedding.eskom.co.za/>.
3. Help save electricity, go to <http://www.eskom.co.za/sites/idm/Residential/Pages/Residential0602-4556.aspx>.
4. Install battery bank (charged from power network) with integrated inverter large enough to supply electricity for up to 6 to 8 hours during load shedding for your security system, some low energy lighting and critical power plugs. Be selective when deciding on what lights and plugs should be energised as the cost of this uninterrupted power supply is proportional to how much load and for what time you have it connected. The life expectancy of the batteries, depending on the type, could be between 5 to 10 years. Or install standby generator with changeover switch and live with the noise, supplying fuel and doing maintenance.
5. Install surge arresters to protect your electrical equipment against switching surges.
6. Install solar energy driven well insulated hot water geyser. Another option is to install direct inline gas hot water geyser. Save water usage by installing low-flow shower heads.
7. Install gas stove and oven. Or save electricity when available by using induction heating stove. Play around with fast (parabolic) and slow (box type) solar cookers they are great energy savers.
8. The fridge and freezer should be fine if not opened and closed too frequently during load shedding. Or install gas operated fridge and freezer.
9. When using the kettle pour surplus boiling water into hot water flask for later use.
10. Keep your food warm by using the “hot box” (see <https://www.wonderbagworld.com>)
11. Keep your transport full of fuel (at least 500km range), the spare wheel pumped up and with at least the following out of site in your boot: 5 litres of drinking water and purifying tablets, first aid kit (do first aid course), large fire extinguisher, lighter with fire starters, sturdy pocketknife with tin opener and saw, self-powered flashlight, sleeping bag, some energy bars, roll of duct tape, tow rope, jumper cables, medium sized shifting spanner, star-flat screwdriver and cash money available.
12. Enjoy the silence ...

## How to Survive Country-wide “blackout” – without electricity for weeks and worst-case months

Now, this could change your life for the worse (good read is the book “Grid Down Reality Bites” by Bruce Buckshot Hemming and Sara Freeman). Thus, it will be worthwhile to be prepared. However, the possibility of a “blackout” occurring is slim. The occurrence of a “brownout”, where only part of the network is lost for days, is more likely.



Ok, to survive local “brownout” and at worst country-wide “blackout” you need to decide whether to stay and survive at home or “bugout” to pre-selected place with fresh water far away from civilisation.

**In the event of local “brownout” (maximum 3 days) it is recommended you get back to and stay at home and survive there comfortably (don’t go to work or leave home) be prepared as follows:**

1. It is assumed you are fully prepared for load shedding (first 2 to 6 hours).
2. The main reason you keep a low profile by surviving at home is to evade the possible chaos out there during long power cuts and for self-protection (see <https://youtu.be/pyPjGwGg4-s>). The power utility should have successfully managed to get power stations back online by day 1. By day 2 all critical loads must be energized and you should have electricity by day 3. If you feel unsafe at any time treat this as a “blackout”, “bugout” to place with fresh water far away from civilisation and come back home when all has settled (listen to the news on radio). Enjoy the one week camping holiday in nature.

THE FOLLOWING ARE **CRITICAL LOADS**:

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT** **WATER PUMPING (POWER STATION REQUIREMENTS)** **POTABLE WATER SUPPLY TO THE PUBLIC** **SEWAGE SYSTEMS** **REFINERIES AND FUEL PIPELINES**  
 **COAL MINES THAT SUPPLY POWER STATIONS** **CRITICAL LOADS ASSOCIATED WITH ESSENTIAL SERVICES E.G. POLICE, FIRE FIGHTING, HOSPITALS** **TELECOMMUNICATIONS**  
 **TRAFFIC LIGHTS** **AIRPORTS** **RAILWAYS**

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3. Water to flush the toilet and good quality water for drinking, cooking and hygiene needs to be in storage, as the municipal water supply will not be available. Swimming pool or Jacuzzi could be a good source of water. Rather be safe and install water harvesting tank onto the roof rainwater downpipe. This water tank can be connected in line with the mains water supply (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7lhQpjab3y0>).
4. Add solar panels to charge within 6 hours of good sunlight your existing battery bank.
5. Make certain you have full spare gas bottle, fuel for generator (if you have one) and enough braai wood at home.
6. Have seven day revolving food storage cupboard that’s always fully stocked.
7. Have six weeks revolving medicine storage cupboard that’s always fully stocked. Your doctor should be able to help with prescription for chronic medication.
8. Do self-defence course and ensure your home security is well established. Setup barriers as part of your security to try and keep thieves, beggars and strangers out. Get advice from a security specialist.
9. Sit back, listen to the news and wait it out. But stay vigilant regarding your safety.

**In the event of country-wide “blackout” (weeks to months) it is recommended you “bugout” to pre-selected place with fresh water far away from civilisation and be prepared as follows:**

1. It is assumed you are fully prepared for load shedding (first 2 to 6 hours) and for the event of local “brownout” (first 3 days).
2. The main reason you “bugout” from home before the end of day 3 is that the chaos out there is going to expand to the point that you will not be able to safely survive at home or reach your “bugout” place. An indication to “bugout” is if the power utility has not successfully managed to get any power stations back online by day 1 and not enough by day 2 so as to have critical loads connected.
3. The best is to retreat to your small off the grid weekend “bugout” home with access to fresh water, fully stocked for six weeks occupation, extra fuel and far away from civilisation. You rotate the perishables during weekend and holiday visits.
4. Another option is to identify a safe “bugout” camping area (could be on family or friends farm) with access to fresh water and far away from civilisation. Store your “bugout” six weeks camping goods at home in area out of direct site. Remember everything has to fit into your motor car, so don’t go overboard. You must also be able to get back home with the fuel left in your motor car, if not take extra along. Use and replace the perishables, and go camping so as to enhance your practical survival knowledge. Camping trailers with built-in sleeping etc. fully equipped and ready is a great option. What is nice is that you can suddenly decide to go on a camping holiday and leave - you are already fully prepared.
5. Enhance your practical knowledge on how to survive if the “blackout” takes longer than six weeks to recover and you are without food. Remember to take your medicine along, and find out from doctor what to do if you run out.
6. The more remote and away from people you are the safer you will be.
7. Enjoy the experience and don’t panic.

If you maintain simplistic survival lifestyle that is not dependent on modern commodities (such as the Berg Damara from Namibia in the photo below) you will hardly know about or be affected by “blackout”...



Remember the Survival Rules of 3’s:

- 3 seconds to decide to live
- 3 minutes without oxygen
- 3 minutes bleeding
- 3 hours without shelter or 30 minutes in severe climate conditions
- 3 days without water
- 3 weeks without food
- 3 months without human interaction

Without meeting these basic needs you are in serious trouble and will die ...

The wealthiest person on earth is one that can stand naked with absolutely nothing but their wits and know they have the practical knowledge and ability to survive anything.