

## **Electricity Shortage In Orange Farm**

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Some orange farm Residents haven't had electricity for two to three years, but still Eskom hasn't stopped fining them for bridging illegal connections. The community in Orange Farm is suffering. Over 120 households are without electricity, some for more than two years and they say efforts to get the electricity restored and ongoing protests have not made any impact on Eskom. There is no electricity.

There are high numbers of transformer failures in the area. The area is dark and that leads to high numbers of house break-ins, hijacking and muggings because the township lights are off in most Extensions in Orange farm.

Thokozani, a resident said "Eskom is busy removing illegal connections, and fining those who have tampered with their connections." He continued, "Eskom wants every household to pay R 6000 per but we cannot afford to pay that much money. While some residents can afford, others are not able to pay because they are not working."

"Over 15 transformers have blown out due to not being serviced," Ntombifuthi Mbatha a resident in Orange Farm Extension 4 said. "We are trying to keep warm," said Mbatha who has not had electricity for over two years. Mbatha uses a smoky coal stove which is not good for her as she has chronic health problems.

"The money needed for us to have our electricity back is too much as no one in our home is employed," said Mbatha's son, Yanga.

One resident told *Karibu*, "The electricity went off in June two years ago. We have tried all we can to get Eskom to reconnect our electricity. We even paid small amounts of money during the first months. Eventually we stopped paying because the money is too much and most of us are not working and some are pensioners."

The community is tired of protesting, roads have been blocked and tyres burnt but to no avail. The residents admit that 90% of them have bridged their electricity illegally.

"Eskom says they are owed money, but where will poor township people like ourselves get the money from?" said Yanga Mbatha. In Extension 3, where 60 houses have not had electricity for over a year, the residents are begging Eskom to fix the electricity.

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