

CONSUMER'S GUIDE FOR ELECTRICITY SERVICES

**Information on consumer
related rules and
regulations**



आरोग्य, ऊर्जा, शिक्षण आणि पालकत्व
या विषयातील विशेष प्रयत्न

Prayas Energy Group



Consumer's Guide for Electricity Services

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ABOUT THE BOOKLET

Electricity is one of the basic necessities in today's society. In spite of this, there seems to be little awareness among the consumer community about its system of operation, the acts and regulations governing it, as well as their rights and responsibilities related to it. There is also very little awareness about how the electricity company operates. As a result, there remain a number of unanswered questions about electricity services, such as: Where does one get the application form for getting a new connection? How much does one need to pay for it? What is to be done if the meter is burnt or stops working? What is to be done if one receives an inexplicably high bill? Where should one lodge a complaint? What is the process for its redressal? Host of such unanswered questions continue to plague the common consumer. Inefficient bureaucracy and corruption only adds to this confusion.

The idea of this booklet emerged from this lack of informational access. It was felt that the availability of such a booklet would help a great deal in educating the consumers about their rights, duties as well as rules and regulations associated with respect to the electricity service and empower them to address their grievances. Generally, it has been observed that any governmental or other agency finds it difficult to refute a consumer's argument if it is put forth on basis of relevant laws and regulations. An attempt has therefore been made to explain the rights, responsibilities and regulations related to electricity service in a simple and lucid manner.

The booklet mainly focuses on small consumers and it tries to address some of the common problems faced by domestic as well as small commercial consumers. Except for Mumbai, MSEDCL is the principal distribution company for the rest of Maharashtra and hence most references are made to this company, keeping in mind this majority consumer community. The annexure at the end of the booklet also refers to MSEDCL. Since the aim is to give only preliminary information about consumer grievances redressal mechanism, addressing individual and/or complex cases is out of the purview of the booklet. It does not claim to offer a “final solution” to all consumer grievances. It only provides general information on consumer issues and a broad framework for

grievance redressal which can be used by consumers, depending on their specific needs.

The primary aim of this booklet is to facilitate better coordination and communication between the consumer and the Electricity Company. We hope that it acts as a useful guide for the consumers as well as activists working on these issues at various levels. We also hope that it would help in generating public awareness about consumer rights and bringing in a consumer oriented approach in the Electricity Company's functioning. Since this booklet is the first step towards consumer awareness, we hope that we can improve it with every successive edition by incorporating your feedback which we sincerely look forward to.

Chapter 1 talks about the necessary legal framework and background necessary to initiate the ensuing discussion on consumer rights. The common issues that the consumers face have been individually discussed in Chapter 2 to Chapter 7. In these chapters, various regulations, standards and consumer rights within the legal framework have been detailed out. An attempt has been made to discuss each issue in as much detail as possible, so that the consumer finds all the necessary information through a single discussion. Chapter 8 discusses the three-tiered consumer redressal mechanism for addressing grievances. The issues like power theft and unauthorized power usage which fall beyond the purview of the above mechanism have been discussed separately in Chapter 9. The responsibilities of the consumer and a future plan of action have been briefly outlined at the end of the booklet.



CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

Electricity is one of the most essential services in modern society. Its use is proving to be indispensable in all spheres of operation, from domestic purposes to heavy industries. Availability of electricity directly reflects upon the development of a nation. It therefore becomes necessary to have adequate information about the various regulations and relevant institutions and agencies related to electricity services. In the chapters that follow, we will be looking at these regulations in greater detail. But before we proceed, it will be useful to understand the institutions that lay down these regulations, their powers and their operational structure. We will also take a brief overview of the legal procedures behind these regulations.

The “Electricity Act 2003” was enacted in June 2003. This new Act nullified all the previous legislations related to electricity, causing fundamental and far reaching effects in this sector. Along with the other changes, several consumer-oriented provisions were also laid down in order to improve the electricity services. As a result of these provisions, the consumers gained certain rights. The Act strengthened the “Electricity Regulatory Commissions” at the state level, for better control over the operations of the Electricity Companies. In addition to laying down the schedule of rates for electricity, the Commission was also authorized to decide upon the rules and regulations to be followed by these companies while providing the service. The Commission was also empowered to create necessary institutional structures for implementation. Accordingly, each Commission has laid down state-specific regulations within the broad framework of this Act.

1.1 Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission

The Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (referred to as “Commission” hereafter) was established in 1999 in order to bring about greater transparency in the power sector in Maharashtra. It consists of three members who are nominated by the State Government through a Selection Committee. Besides specifying the electricity tariff for various

categories, the Commission also has the responsibility of safeguarding the interests of the consumers. In order to do this, the Commission issues various directives from time to time. All functions within the purview of the Commission are conducted with total transparency and any citizen has the right to participate in it. Although the office of the Commission is in Mumbai, public hearings on important issues are conducted by the Commission in many parts of the state.

1.2 Fixing electricity rates

The Electricity Companies need to get the proposed electricity tariffs approved from the Commission annually. This includes the estimated electricity tariffs to be recovered from various categories of consumers after considering the costs incurred and the expected returns on it. The Commission, along with some consumer representatives, conducts a technical validation session of this proposal. In this session, the documents and information furnished by the Company are assessed and scrutinised. After such validation, the proposal is made public and objections or exceptions to it if any, are invited. The Commission then conducts public hearings in different parts of the states to hear the responses and feedback of the people. Any consumer can participate in these hearings. After this process is complete, the Commission issues final orders on the proposal. It is binding on the part of the company to abide by the tariff decided by the commission for each category of consumer.

Along with tariff orders, the Commission may also issue directives regarding the Schedule of Charges. This includes details of all charges other than the electricity tariff, like, cost for a new connection, cost of the meter, application processing fees, etc. The directive for Schedule of Charges for the Maharashtra state Distribution Company was published on September 8, 2006. Any charges levied by the Electricity Company on any consumers must be in accordance with this schedule of charges.

Thus, besides issuing various orders and directives for regulating the operations of the electricity utilities, the Commission also lays down certain regulations to make the functioning of electricity companies more consumer oriented, and to ensure quality of electricity supply and service as well as to simplify the redressal procedure for addressing consumer grievances. Some such important regulations are as follows:

A. Supply code and other conditions of supply, Regulation 2005

This includes the mandatory procedures, rules and conditions that the electricity company has to fulfil while providing the service. For e.g. the procedure for new connection and its charges, procedures and conditions

for meters and billing, the provisions regarding security deposit, etc. The electricity company has to abide by these procedures and regulations while providing the service. If it fails to do so, the consumer can lodge a complaint against the company and get it resolved through the Grievances Redressal Forum. (This regulation has been referred to as “Supply Code regulation, 2005”, in the booklet)

B. Standards of Performance of Distribution, Licenses, Period of giving supply and Determination of Compensation Regulations, 2005

This includes the regulations and standards of quality of service to be adhered to by the electricity company while providing the service. Standards regarding the period for starting the supply, expected voltage, time taken to reconnect the disconnected supply, frequency of taking meter readings, etc. are included herein. The quality of service provided by the company is determined through these standards. If the company fails to follow these standards, it may be liable to pay due compensation to the affected consumers. The amount of compensation and the procedure for its payment is also laid down here. (This regulation has been referred to as “Standard of Performance Regulation (SoP) 2005”, in the booklet)

C. Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum and Electricity Ombudsman, Regulation, 2006

This regulation is devised to ensure proper implementation of the two regulations mentioned above and to resolve the grievances of the consumers in these regards. The three-tiered system that has been established for redressal of consumer grievances has been explained under this regulation. The procedures, powers and limitations of this system have also been stated herein. This system can be accessed only by consumers for redressal of their grievances. (Referred to in the booklet as Forum and Ombudsman Regulation, 2006)

All these regulations are of statutory nature and it is binding on the Electricity companies to abide by them in letters and spirit. Thus, the consumers can make use of these regulations to resolve their grievances. In Maharashtra since June 2005, the State Electricity Board has been unbundled into three separate companies namely, Mahanirmiti (Generation), Mahapareshan (Transmission) and Mahavitaran (Distribution) respectively. The consumer has direct contact only with the Distribution Company. Hence, all references to Electricity Company in the booklet imply Electricity Distribution Company.



CHAPTER 2

GETTING A NEW CONNECTION

Electricity is an indispensable utility in today's modern society. However, many of us are unaware about the procedures for getting access to this service. People seldom have the information about how, where and to whom one applies for an electric connection. Often the consumers end up paying exorbitant amounts due to lack of information about the exact charges involved in getting a new connection. In this chapter we will look at the various steps involved in getting a new electricity connection and the various charges to be paid for it.

Generally, the procedure for getting a new connection for domestic and small commercial consumers is as follows:

Apply for a new connection to the electricity company

Inspection of the applicant's premises by the company officer

Company informs the applicant about the applicable costs

Submission of the internal wiring report by the applicant

Grant of connection by the company



2.1 Applying for a new connection

(Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 4)

For a new connection, the applicant has to fill up **Form A -1**. This form is available **free of cost** at all the branch offices, divisional offices or consumer centres of the electricity company. It is mandatory on part of the utility to make this form available both in English as well as in Marathi at all the above mentioned locations and also to make it available in a downloadable format on its website. The format of this form is attached as Annexure 1 for reference. The consumer can also use this format. As per the Electricity Act, the applicant for a new connection is also considered to be a consumer of the electricity company. {Electricity Act, 2003, Part 1, Section 2(15)}.

The same form can also be used by an existing consumer for requesting increase in sanctioned load, changing the site of power supply, restoration of supply as well as transfer of name.

The applicant has to fill up basic information like his/her name, ownership of the premises of connection, reason for application, etc. The applicant has to get the wiring in the premises inspected from a licensed electrical contractor. The name, address and license number of the contractor also needs to be mentioned in the application. Similarly, the type of connection (single phase or three phase) and the type of consumption (domestic, commercial, etc.) needs to be mentioned in the application.

2.1.1 Determining the necessary electric load

The applicant has to mention his requirement of electric load in terms of kilowatts or Horse power. This can be determined by the applicant independently or in consultation with the wiring contractor. The various electrical appliances being used or proposed to be used in the premises of connection determine the necessary electric load. The total electric load used by all the proposed electrical appliances put together forms required electric load. An illustration on how to estimate of the electric load requirement for a two-room house is provided in the box on the following page.

In case of small consumers, the application for connection itself is considered to be an agreement between the company and the consumer and hence no other agreement needs to be signed with the company.

The necessary documents to be attached to the application

(Supply Code Regulations, 2005, Regulation 4)

Copies of relevant documents need to be attached to the application. The type of documents to be attached depends on the type of connection. The list of such documents is given at the end of the application form. The applicant should attach them as per his/her connection type. **While submitting the application, it is advisable to carry the originals of all the documents** as the concerned officer might need them for verification.

If the applicant is applying for a domestic connection, a **copy of one of the following** documents regarding the proof of ownership of the premises or residence needs to be attached: 1. Ration card, 2. Photo pass, 3. Voters card, 4. Passport, 5. Ownership / proof of residence related documents (7/12 certificate, rent receipt, etc.)

No other documents are needed for this purpose.

For a commercial connection, the applicant needs to attach a copy of the shop licence along with the proof of ownership of the said place.

Application processing fee

(Order of Schedule of Rates by the Commission, September 8, 2006)

The applicant has to pay a processing fee in cash (refer table no. 1) at the time of submitting the application. The company charges a nominal amount to the applicant for the internal assessment procedure. The applicant should also attach a copy of the receipt of this amount along with application. It is binding on the company to charge the fee as per the schedule of charges determined by the Commission. (Order of Schedule of Rates by the Commission, September 8, 2006). The scheduled Application processing fees to be charged by all the electricity companies in Maharashtra has been given in the following table:

Table no. 1 : Application Processing Fee

Type of power supply	Application Processing Fee
1. Single Phase	25 rupees
2. Three Phase	50 rupees
3. Agricultural (low electric load)	50 rupees

The completed form with all the necessary documents and receipt of the fee being paid should be submitted at the concerned divisional office. The concerned officer is expected to immediately assess the application and give an acknowledgement. **The consumer should insist on the acknowledgement**, if not given proactively, as it is necessary for any

A rough estimate of the necessary electric load for a two-room house:

Let us assume a two-room house that needs new electric connection will have 2 tube lights (electric load 50 watts), two bulbs (electric load 40 watts), two fans (electric load 50 watts), and one colour television (electric load 120 watts).

Thus, total electric load that needs to applied for using these appliances is calculated as follows:

Total electric load:

Two tube lights of 50 watts $(50 \times 2) = 100$ watts

Two bulbs of 40 watts $(40 \times 2) = 80$ watts

Two fans of 50 watts $(50 \times 2) = 100$ watts

One colour TV of 120 watts $(120 \times 1) = 120$ watts

Therefore, total electric load $= (100 + 80 + 100 + 120) = 400$ watts

Let us consider the possibility of addition of more appliances in future years and add another 100 watts, making the total 500watts.

Thus the necessary electric load for a two-room house is 500 watts (i.e. 0.5 kilowatts).

For reference of the consumers, a list of household appliances and their average electric load (in kilowatts) attached as Annexure 2

The electricity company must provide the connections on a “first come, first served” basis. It is also mandatory for the company to display information about the details of processed applications and the status of applications, every day in the concerned office. The applicant can demand information from the company about the status of his/her application as well as the reasons for delay, if any. The electricity company is bound to give a written explanation for any such delay. (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 4.3 and 4.4)

future follow up. The prescribed duration for granting a new connection is calculated from the date of submission of the application and hence the copy of acknowledgment is essential.

2.2 Inspection of the applicant's premises

(Supply Code Regulation 2005, Regulation 5)

On receiving the application, an authorized representative of the electricity company inspects the applicant's premises. **It is binding on the company to assess the applicant's premises within 7 days in urban and 10 days in rural areas, on receiving the application.** Failing this, the company has to pay a compensation of Rs. 100/- week of delay to the consumer. (Standards of Performance Regulations 2005, Annexure A). The consumer should be informed in advance about the assessment. Accordingly, the applicant or his/her representative should be present at the given time.

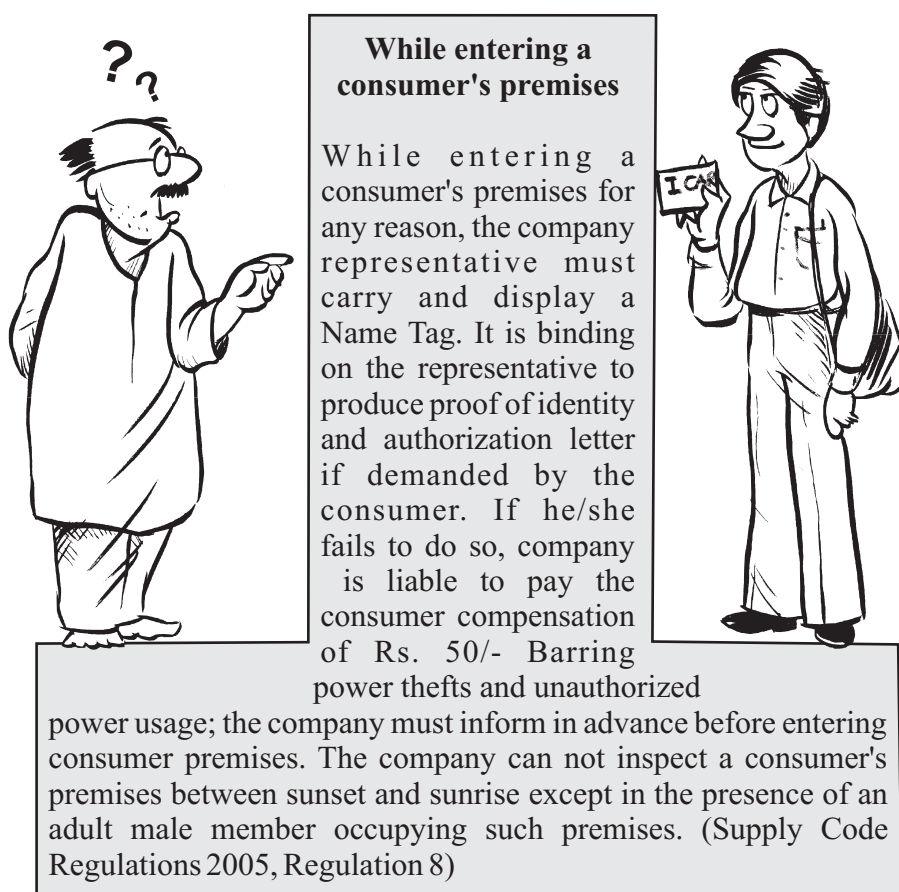
This assessment includes a scrutiny of certain technical issues. For e.g. is there a sufficient pre-existing distribution network of the company adjoining to the applicant's premises in order to provide the supply? If not, what can be done for it? etc. Accordingly the company representative sanctions the required electric load. Similarly, he/she decides the appropriate locations for Mains, cut outs, circuit breakers or meters in consultation with the applicant. The location of the meter has to be accessible and convenient for taking the reading.

2.3 Conveying the electricity costs

After inspecting the premises the company conveys to the applicant, the details of costs to be incurred for getting a new connection. This is known as “firm quotation”. It consists of the following charges that the applicant is supposed to pay:

1. Service connection charges (SCC)
2. Security Deposit amount

These charges are fixed according to the mode of installation of the connection in the applicant's premises. If it is possible to extend the connection from the existing distribution network of the company then the company must convey the charges to the applicant within a period of



15 days in urban and 20 days in rural areas. If giving the connection entails expansion of the existing network or establishing a new sub-station then these charges should be conveyed by the company to the applicant within a period of 30 days (Standards of Performance Regulations, 2005, Annexure A). If the company fails to do so, it has to pay compensation of Rs.100/- per week to the consumer (Standards of Performance Regulations, 2005, Annexure A).

The company must levy all charges in accordance with the “order on Schedule of Charges” published by the Commission. Any other charges demanded by the company from the applicant would be considered illegal. So the applicant should firmly refuse to pay any other charges other than those mentioned above. Details of the various charges to be paid for a new electricity connection are mentioned below in para 2.6

2.4 Submitting the internal wiring report

As mentioned earlier, the applicant has to get the wiring in the premises done through a licensed electrical contractor. After completing the entire wiring, the electrical contractor prepares a report of completion. A sample format of this report has been given in Annexure 3 for ready reference. It consists of information regarding the various electrical equipments that will be used in the applicant's premises and the earthing details of the same. The applicant has to submit this report to the electricity company. On receiving this report the company inspects the wiring that is done. It is advisable that the applicant and the contractor be present during this inspection. The company representative gives a letter of approval about the safety of the wiring done in the premises of the applicant. The applicant is not supposed to pay any charges for this inspection. **The cost of this primary inspection to be done before giving a new connection is to be borne entirely by the electricity company.** However, the company charges a nominal amount for any subsequent inspections. As per the Order of Schedule of Charges issued by the Commission on September 8, 2006, these charges are Rs. 25/- for single phase consumers and Rs. 50/- for three-phase consumers.

2.5 Granting new connection

If the quotation conveyed by the electricity company is proper, then the applicant should pay the said charges as early as possible, since the company is mandated to grant new connection within a stipulated period of time, after payment of the charges. The stipulations of standards of performance regulations that decide the time frame within which new connection should be granted are as stated in the table below:

Table no. 2: Period for starting the power supply
(Standards of Performance regulations, 2005, Annexure A)

Type of Connection	Period
1. If the connection is to be given from the existing network	1 month
2. If the Connection needs distribution network to be extended or expanded	3 months
3. If a new sub-station needs to be established	1 year

If the company does not grant connection within the period stated above, it is liable to pay compensation to the concerned consumer at the rate of Rs.100/- per week of delay. It is the responsibility of the company to carry out all the necessary tasks within this period for providing connection. Arranging for all the necessary material and equipments is also the responsibility of the company. This includes erecting new electricity poles, laying cables, transformer installation etc. It is illegal on part of the company to demand any extra costs from the applicant for purchase of any material. The applicant is also not supposed to pay for the meter or the meter-box and hence it is necessary that the company itself installs it at the premises of the consumer.

Various charges to be paid for a new electricity connection

After getting an overview of the procedure of getting a new connection, let us now understand the various charges to be paid for it. As mentioned earlier, the applicant has to pay a nominal “**Application Processing Fee**” at the time of submission of the application for the new connection. This fee depends upon the type of connection applied for. Similarly,

according to the firm quotation, he/she has to pay some amount towards the **Service Connection Charges (SCC) and the Security Deposit**. We have already looked at the details of the Application Processing Fee (ranging between Rs.25 - Rs.50 depending on supply type, please refer Table no.1). Now let us understand the other two charges in more details.

1. Service Connection Charges (SCC)

The cost incurred to extend the electric cable from the distribution network up to the premises of the applicant is recovered from the consumer through these charges. SCC includes charges towards the service wire to be extended from the nearest electric pole up to the applicant's meter, and all other related costs. The company cannot demand any other extra charges. The material required for this is also to be arranged by the company. Hence, if the company representative demands any other amount the applicant should firmly refuse such demands. The Service Connection Charge applicable to the consumer is determined from his approved electric load and the type of connection (whether on surface or underground). The charges fixed by MSEDCL according to the Order of Schedule of Charges issued by the Commission are as following:

Table no. 3: Service Connection Charge (SCC)

Electric Load	Supply through overhead cable (Rs.) Single phase	Electric Load	Supply through underground cable (Rs.) Single phase
Up to 0.5 KW	500	Up to 0.5 KW	2000
0.5 KW to 10 KW	1000	0.5 KW to 10 KW	4000
Three phase		Three Phase	
Up to 16 KW	2500	Up to 20 KW	8000
16 KW to 50 KW	6500	20 KW to 50 KW	14000

2. Security Deposit

A consumer first consumes electricity and then pays for it through the bill. Therefore, the electricity company takes some advance amount

from the consumer as a security for the bill. This is known as the Security Deposit. This amount is equivalent to the cost of power that is likely to be consumed by the consumer during one billing cycle (the period between two bills). Thus, for those consumers who get their bills every two months, the deposit amount is equivalent to cost of power consumed in two months, while for those consumers who get their bill every three months, it is equivalent to the cost of power consumed in three months.

At the time of a new connection, it is not possible to determine this amount and hence certain specific power consumption is assumed. For Domestic Consumer 108 units of electricity consumption per month for connected load of 1 kilowatt is considered while for a Commercial Consumer it is 270 units. The estimated Bill amount corresponding to above mentioned units is the amount of Security Deposit that a consumer has to pay at the time of getting a new connection. This amount can vary as per Commission's Directive and Tariff Order from time to time. The Security Deposit amounts to be paid at the time of a new connection, for domestic single and three phase consumers, according to the currently applicable rates are given in the following table. We will be analysing these charges greater details in the Chapter 6 of this booklet.

Table no. 4: Security Deposit: For Domestic Consumers
(For a billing cycle of 1 month)

Electric Load	Expected consumption	Security Deposit	
		Single phase	Three phase
(Kilowatt)	(Units / Month)	(Rupees)	(Rupees)
1	108	266.2	336.2
2	216	687.4	757.4
3	324	1142.2	1212.2

The total cost for the new connection is determined from the type of connection (Residential or Commercial) and the electric load. As an illustration, the total cost incurred for a single phase domestic consumer to get supply through an overhead connection is given in the table below.

Table no. 5: Total cost to the consumer for getting a new connection

(Single phase, Overhead connection)

	For 0.5 KW load	For 2 KW load
Charges	(Rupees)	(Rupees)
Form assessment fees	25	25
Service Connection Charges	500	1000
Security Deposit	150	690
Total Cost	675	1715

Thus, the consumer can verify the total cost incurred depending up on the type of connection and the Sanctioned Load and can also ask for its details to the company. Thus, if the company charges an amount much more than the above, the consumer should certainly demand to know the reasons for the same.

Should the cost of the Meter be paid while getting a new connection?

The consumer need not pay any charges for the Meter or the Meter-box at the time of a new connection. As per the Order issued by the Commission (dated September 8, 2006), while granting a new connection, the company has to install the Meter at the consumer's premises at its own expense. Also, the Meter is generally owned by the electricity company. (Central Electricity Authority, Regulation on Meter, 2006, 17th March 2006, Section 6.2 (a)) Hence, it is important to note that it is illegal on part of the company to demand the cost of the meter or the meter-box from the consumer at the time of issuing a new connection. If the consumer wishes to own the meter, he/she can always exercise the choice of buying it from the company or from the market. More details about this have been explained in the chapter (Chapter 4) titled “Meter”.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Any person applying for a new connection is also considered to be a consumer of the electricity company.
- All the application forms required by the consumers are available free of cost at any of the offices of the company. Similarly, it is mandatory that they be available in a downloadable format on the company's website.
- The consumer should attach copies of the required documents to the application and carry originals at the time of submitting the application.
- The consumer should always explicitly demand the acknowledgement of the application.
- The consumer can demand a written explanation from the first company about the status of his/her application and the reasons for delay, if any.
- The consumer is not liable to pay any cost for the first assessment of the premises done before issuing the new connection.
- It is not mandatory for the consumer to purchase the Meter at the time of getting a new connection.
- The company has to arrange all the material required for the new connection at its own cost.
- The consumer should duly check that the charges to be paid at the time of the new connection are in accordance with connection type.
- The consumer can demand to see the identification of the representative of the electricity company, or ask for the reason of his/her visit, before admitting him/her into the premises.



CHAPTER 3

TRANSFER OF CONNECTION

In cases where there has been a change in ownership of the property or demise of a consumer, the electric supply connection can be transferred to the new owner or heir, as the case may be. To do this, the prospective consumer has to fill-up **Form A -1** (Annexure 1) and then depending upon the reason of transfer, he/she needs to attach relevant documents along with the form. There is also a nominal Form assessment fee (Rs. 25/-) that needs to be paid. (For more details, refer table no. 1)

The consumer should make it a point to ask for the acknowledgement for the submitted form. The electricity company is obligated to convey its decision within 2 billing cycles after receiving such application (as per the Supply Code Regulation, 2005 Regulation 10), failing which, as per the Standards of Performance Regulations, the electricity company is liable to pay Rs. 100/- per week of delay on pro rata basis to the consumer. Even if the company decides to reject the transfer application, the consumer has to be given a fair chance to present his/her case before the decision is made (Supply Code Regulation, 2005, Regulation 10). However, it needs to be mentioned here that the transfer application does not empower the consumer to physically move or relocate his/her electrical supply connection.

3.1 Transfer of connection due to change in ownership of the property

If the consumer wishes a change in name on account of change in ownership of the property, he/she needs to submit the duly completed **Forms X, Y along with Form A-1**. Please refer to Annexure 4 for sample forms.

In Form X, the consumer has to submit the consent of the previous owner (No objection certificate) in the given format. Through this form, the previous owner gives his/her consent to transfer the security deposit and the cost of connection in the name of the new owner. While in Form Y, the

new owner gives written assurance to the electricity company to accept all the liabilities, if any, of the previous owner.

If No objection certificate from the previous owner is not available, the applicant has to fill up Form Z. Through this form, the applicant states that the ownership of property has been transferred via an agreement with the previous owner. The consumer has to attach any one of the following documents as a proof of the transfer of ownership of property:

1. Proof of ownership of the property
2. Proof of division of property if property has been divided
3. The sale deed of the property
4. If the property has been acquired in auction, a letter from the authorized officer stating the same

In some cases, the consumer may even have to attach a copy of the licence for the purpose for which the power supply will be utilized, to fulfil certain legal obligations if necessary. (E.g. registration under Shop Act)

3.2 Transfer of connection to a legal heir

In case of demise of a consumer, the connection can be transferred to the legal heir. For this purpose, the applicant has to submit an affidavit stating that he/she is the legal heir along with Form-A1 . Other heirs, if any, also need to sign on this form to mark their consent to the transfer of connection. Similarly, a copy of inheritance certificate needs to be submitted along with the application. (Please refer Annexure 5).

3.3 Transfer of arrears

Except in case of legal heir, transfer of connection to a new owner / occupier, the electricity company can recover from the new consumer previously outstanding amounts (called arrears), if any up to maximum period of six months of the unpaid charges for electricity supplied to such premises. Thus, if the arrears of the previous owner are more than six months old, the electricity company cannot hold the new owner responsible for the same. However, if the new owner is a legal heir of the previous owner, he/she is liable for payment of all the previous arrears.

POINTS TO NOTE

- If there is a change in ownership of property or death of a consumer, the new owner or heir can get the connection transferred on their names.
- For transferring the connection in case of change of ownership, Form A-1 along with a consent letter of the previous owner needs to be submitted; whereas the heir of a deceased consumer needs submit a copy of no objection certificates from other heirs, if any along with Form A-1. These forms are available free of cost with the electricity company.
- The electricity company has to convey its decision within 2 billing cycles after receiving the application for transfer of connection. Failing this, it is liable to pay a fine of Rs. 100/- week to the consumer.
- The electricity company cannot hold the new consumer responsible for arrears that are more than six months old of the previous consumer (except for legal heirs).



CHAPTER 4

METER

The Electricity Meter is the means of measuring the use of electric power. As per the Electricity Act, 2003, it is binding upon the electricity company to provide electric supply to the consumer only through a meter (Section 55, Electricity Act). With the exception of a few agricultural consumers all other consumers receive electric supply only through their meters. Thus, the electricity meter is the only connecting link between the consumer and the electricity company. Hence it is extremely important for the consumer as well as the company to ensure that the meter is in good condition and measures power supply accurately. In this chapter we will look at the details of various aspects of metering and related regulations.

4.1 Ownership and cost of the Meter

(Commission's Order on Schedule of charges dated September 8, 2006, part 3)

The electric meter installed in the premises of the consumer should essentially be owned by the electricity company (as per the regulations of the Central Electricity Authority Installation and Operation of Meter Regulation, January 2006). Hence, as explained in the chapter on new connections, the company cannot compel the consumer to buy the meter while issuing a new electric connection. On the contrary, the company should install the meter and meter box at the premises of the consumer, at its own cost. However, the company can demand a security deposit from the consumer for installing meter on the consumer's premises. But this amount should not exceed the cost of the meter. Moreover, the company has to pay the consumer an interest on this amount at a rate decided by the Reserve Bank of India (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 14.1)

However, if the consumer wishes to own the meter, he/she can buy it from either the company or from the market. If the consumer buys the meter from the company he/she has to pay the company the amount as per the table below. The cost is decided according to the Schedule of

charges approved by the Commission. As per the commission's Order dated September 8, 2006, the cost of meter for consumers of MSEDCCL is mentioned in the table below. Even if the consumer buys the meter, the responsibility of installing the meter box still lies with the distribution company and hence it cannot recover the cost of the meter box from the consumer.

Table no. 6: Cost of the Meter

Type of Meter	Rupees
Single Phase	700
Three Phase	3110
H.T.T.O.D Meter	5227

Note: The amount mentioned in the table are applicable in case consumer opts to purchase the meter from the company

If the consumer decides to buy the meter from the market, it must be of an authorized company. The consumer can demand a list of such approved manufacturing companies from the electric company. This list is also available on the electric company's website (http://mahadiscom.in/consumer/cons_mtr_pur.shtm) (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 14.1). The consumer should ensure that the meter carries a BIS mark on it and the company shall examine such a meter before installation and put its own seal on it. The consumer can choose to buy the meter at any point of time. However, he/she can claim the meter as a personal asset, only after it has been permanently removed from the licensee's network. (Central Electricity Authority Regulation on Meter Installation and operation, 2006, section 6.2).

4.2 Meter Reading

The representative of the electric company reads the consumer's meter at regular intervals. The electricity bill of the consumer is generated based on these readings. Since the consumer's energy consumption is determined by the meter reading, it is crucial for both, the consumer as well as the company, that the reading is correctly recorded. Hence the

consumer should ensure that the meter is fixed at a place which is convenient for recording the meter reading. **It is binding on the company to take the reading at least once in three months for agricultural consumers and at least once in two months for all other consumers.** (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 14.1)

If the company fails to take at least one reading as per the above stipulated period, it has to pay compensation to the consumer. The compensation is Rs.100/- for the first month of delay or part of it and Rs.200/- for the subsequent months or their parts. Let us understand this further through an illustration. (Refer box below)

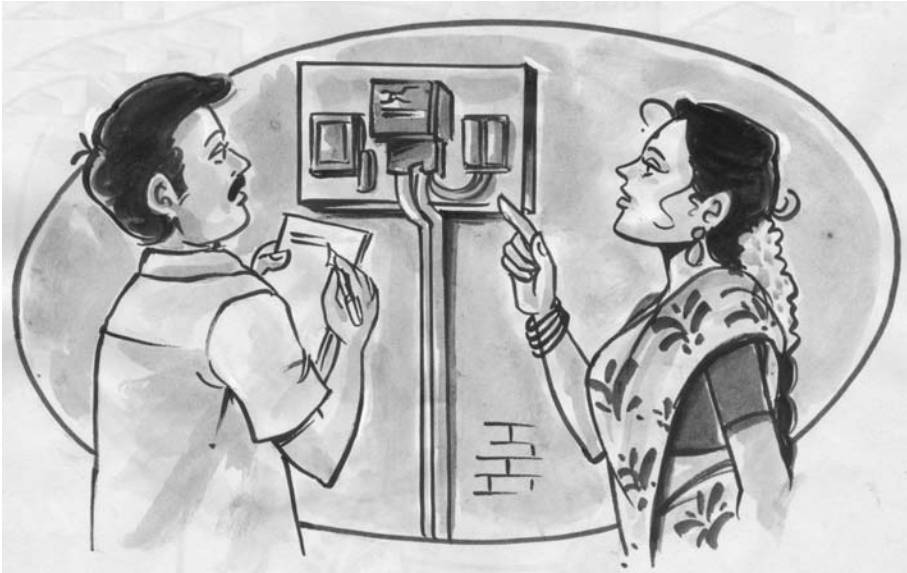
If for any reason (e.g. the premise being locked, inability to locate the meter) the meter reader is unable to take the reading, then the company can issue **an average bill** to the consumer. If the reader is successful in reading the meter in the next cycle, the average bill amount

Meter Reading

Let us suppose that the company had recorded the reading on a residential consumer's meter on May 31. However, in the subsequent period from June 1 to July 31, the meter was not read. In such an event, August being the first month of delay, if the next reading is taken on any day from August 1 to August 31, the company will have to pay a compensation amount of Rs.100/- to the consumer.

Further, if the reading is not recorded even in August but on some day in September, the company will have to pay Rs.300/- (Rs.100/- for the first month and Rs.200/- for the second month of delay) to the consumer. Similarly, if the reading is taken only in October, the compensation amount shall go up to Rs.500/-

Hence, the consumer should ensure that the meter reading is being recorded regularly and correctly. If the meter reading is not recorded in the stipulated period, the consumer can make a complaint to the electricity company and also demand compensation for the same. It is binding on the company to pay the compensation voluntarily or after being demanded by the consumer, through the electricity bill.



paid earlier by the consumer is deducted from the next bill. If the meter reader is unable to read the meter even after two consecutive attempts, the company can issue a notice to the consumer. In the notice, the consumer is asked to keep the meter accessible for reading on a given date. Such a notice should reach the consumer at least 7 days (working days) prior to the given date of recording. (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 15.3) If the consumer fails to do so, the company can disconnect the power supply of the consumer within 24 hours.

4.3 Changing the location of the Meter

If the meter is situated at a location that is inconvenient for recording the reading, or is at risk of damage, the consumer can get the location changed within his own premises. The consumer has to submit an application to the company about this. It is necessary to clearly state the reason for shifting the meter in the application. A fee of Rs.100/- should be paid to the company for this purpose and a copy of its receipt should be attached to the application. The concerned officer assesses the application and confirms that the new location is convenient. Only after such approval, the location of the meter can be changed.

The consumer should note that the fee includes the cost of material needed to shift the meter, labour charges and other expenses. Thus, while changing the location of the meter, the consumer need not pay any other amount than the above mentioned fees.

4.4 Meter Maintenance and Testing

The meter may belong to either the electricity company or the consumer, but the responsibility of regular maintenance and testing of the meter lies entirely with the electricity company. **The company should test the meter of the consumer at least once every five years.** Similarly, the cost incurred for this purpose has to be borne by the company. However, the responsibility of the safety of the meter lies with the consumer (Central Electric Authority Regulation on Meter Installation and operation, January 2006, section 18.2).

If the consumer wishes to verify the accuracy of the meter or has any doubts regarding its functioning, he/she can get the meter tested. For this, the consumer needs to apply to the company for getting the meter tested. A fee has to be paid in advance and its receipt should be attached along with the application. The fee amount for a single phase meter is Rs.100/- while for a three-phase meter is Rs. 300/-. (Schedule of Rates by the Commission, September 8, 2006). The consumer should demand for the receipt as acknowledgment of the submitted application.

The company tests the meter in its regional office and gives a copy of the report to the consumer. It is not binding on the consumer to get his meter tested only in the laboratories of the company. The consumer can also request the company to get the meter tested from any other authorized laboratory. **The company has to test the meter and submit the report to the consumer within 2 months of receiving the application.** If the report indicates that the meter is beyond the limits of accuracy (e.g. meter rotates too slowly or too fast, etc.), the company has to reimburse the fee paid by the consumer and make the necessary corrections in the bill for a maximum period of three months prior to the month in which the dispute has arisen, as per the outcome of the report (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 14.4). The amount should be reimbursed to the consumer through the next bill.

4.5 Stopped Meter

A consumer's Meter can break down due to lack of maintenance or any other technical problem. Sometimes it stops metering the energy consumption which means meter has stopped. In such cases the company sends an “average bill” to the consumer. (We will learn more about “average bill” later in chapter 5.7). If the consumer finds that the meter has stopped he/she should inform the electricity company about the same. If the company representative finds that the meter has stopped, the company can test such a meter.

In this testing, the company first confirms that the meter has not been deliberately tampered with by the consumer. After this, the company replaces the meter at its own cost. **In case of a stopped meter, the company can recover bill up to maximum of three months prior to the month of being informed about the stopped meter.** For this purpose, the company considers the average bill amount of the consumer based on previous 12 months consumption (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 15.4). As per this regulation, if a stopped meter has been in such condition for several months, the company cannot hold the consumer responsible for the same. Similarly, it cannot recover bills for more than three months.

4.6 Defective Meter

Sometimes a fault in the meter can lead to errors in measurement of power consumption. This error could be either more or less than the actual electricity consumption by the consumer. If the consumer suspects a fault in the meter, he/she should get it tested. For this purpose, he/she can make an application as per the procedure mentioned in the section above on “Meter Maintenance and Testing”.

If the meter is found to be defective, the company can adjust consumer bill for a maximum of three earlier months. For e.g., if the test report shows that the meter had been recording at a faster speed, the company has to repay the excess amount paid by the consumer for a maximum of three earlier months. However, this is applicable provided that the consumer has not deliberately tampered with the meter. (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 15.4) Similarly if the meter has been recording at a slower speed, then the consumer needs to pay for the difference between the correct reading and defective

reading for a maximum of three earlier months.

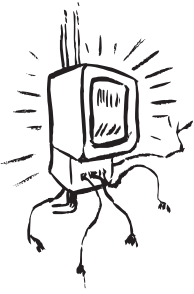
4.7 Meter with broken Seal

In order to ensure the safety of the meter and to avoid the meter tampering, the company puts its own seal on all the meters (whether owned by the company or the consumer). If the consumer finds that the seal on the meter is broken, he/she should immediately make a complaint at the local office of the company. The company can also test such a meter on its own. Once it is established that the meter has not been deliberately tampered with, the same provisions as mentioned in the section above on “Defective Meters” apply for cases of meters with broken seals. However, if it is found that the consumer has deliberately tampered with the meter then it is assumed that the consumer has indulged in unauthorized power usage or power theft. But this can be established only after testing the meter and hence only a broken seal does not directly imply unauthorized power usage. (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 15.4)

4.8 Burnt Meter

A meter can get burnt due to several causes. For e.g. if more power than the permitted connect load of the consumer is drawn through the meter, faults in the distribution network, faulty earthing of the meter, etc. can lead to burning of the meter. Regardless of the cause, the responsibility of the burnt meter lies with the consumer and hence he/she has to pay for the cost of the new meter to the company (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 14.2).

If the consumer finds that the meter is burnt, he/she should immediately make a complaint about this at the local office of the company. The consumer should also attach a copy of the receipt for the cost paid for the new meter and get an acknowledgement receipt for the application from the concerned officer. **It is binding on the electric company to replace the meter and restore power supply of the consumer, within 24 hours in urban areas and within 48 hours in rural areas, after receiving the complaint for the same.** Failing this, the company has to pay compensation of Rs. 100/- per week (or part of it) of delay, to the consumer {Standards of Performance, Regulations 2005, Annexure A(7)}.



4.9 Loss of the Meter

If a consumer's meter gets lost, he/she has to first lodge a complaint at the local police station. The police station gives a copy of the FIR to the consumer. On receiving the copy of the FIR, the consumer should submit a written complaint at the concerned office of the electricity company. The consumer should also attach a copy of the FIR as well as the receipt of the amount paid towards the cost of the meter. If the meter is lost, it is the consumer who has to pay for the new meter and hence the receipt of cost of the meter needs to be attached. On receiving the application for loss of meter along with the FIR and the receipt of cost of the new meter, the company installs a new meter as soon as possible.



POINTS TO REMEMBER....

- The meter at the consumer's premises should preferably be owned by the electricity company. It is not binding on the consumer to buy a new meter at the time of getting a new electric connection.
- At all times, the meter box must be installed by the company at its own cost.
- It is binding on the company to record the meter reading at least once in three months for agricultural consumers and at least once in two months for all other consumers.
- It should be duly ensured that the location of the meter is convenient for noting the reading. If it is not, the location can be changed within consumer's premises.
- If the consumer has doubts about the accuracy of the meter, he should get it tested and also demand a copy of the test report.
- The meter can be tested either in the company's utility centre or at a centre authorized by the Commission.
- The responsibility of maintenance and testing of all the meters lies entirely with the electric company.
- A broken seal does not necessarily imply unauthorized power usage on part of the consumer. This can be established only after testing the meter.
- If the meter is burnt or lost, it is the consumer who has to pay for its cost.



CHAPTER 5

ELECTRICITY BILL

The electricity bill of the consumer is the sole document that is essential for all the financial transactions between the consumer and the electric company. It is therefore important for both the consumer as well as the electric company that the bill is regular, timely and also accurate. Most consumer complaints are regarding the bills. It certainly helps if the consumer understands all the details mentioned in the bill, before she takes her complaint to the electric company. In this chapter we shall understand the electricity bill format as well as discuss various issues related to the bill

5.1 Details in the Electricity bill

(Supply Code, Regulations 2005, Regulation 15.2)

The consumer receives the bill either in English or in Marathi. It includes the list of the various charges that she has to pay. However, the format is



often complicated to understand as the consumer lacks knowledge about it and hence ignores the details. Consumer does not feel it necessary to understand these details. But when the consumer receives a wrong or exorbitant bill, he/she is often very confused about the various figures mentioned in it. Hence, let us first understand the various charges mentioned in the bill. For reference, a picture sample bill has been shown on page 41.

5.1.1 Various Charges

The total payable amount for a consumer is determined from the various charges that are applicable. These charges and their amounts are indicated in the bill. The rates for these charges are fixed by the Commission. These charges are determined based on the type of consumer (domestic, commercial) and the type of connection (single phase, three phase, etc.). The details of applicable rates are mentioned in the table printed on the reverse side of the bill. From this table, the consumer can tally the various charges that are applied. Please note that these charges are for a period of 30 days of power usage.

Fixed Charges

Each month, the consumer has to pay a specific fixed amount to the electric company. This amount needs to be paid even in absence of power usage. The fixed capital costs that the electric company incurs on creating basic infrastructure facilities for supplying electricity to the consumers are recovered to a great extent through these charges. These charges are mainly towards the network infrastructure like electric cable network, Transformers, Substations etc. and are determined based upon the total connected load of the consumer and the type of connection (single phase or three phase). The rates for these charges are given in the column “Demand Surcharge” in a table printed on the back side of the bill.

Electricity Charges

Electricity charges indicate the cost of power consumed. This cost is determined from the number of units consumed by the consumer. The cost that the company incurs on power purchase is recovered through

these charges. **The rate for initial units is low which gradually increases for subsequent units.** For this purpose, the units consumed are split into different slabs. The intention behind this approach is to incentivized lower consumption and penalise higher consumption. There rates are decided as per the tariff orders issued by the Commission from time to time. As an illustration, the rate for per unit per month for domestic consumers as per the tariff orders for MSEDCL issued by the Commission on 17th Aug., 2009 is mentioned in the table below.

Table no. 7: Electricity charges for domestic consumers

Consumption per month of domestic consumers	Electricity rate (Rs./unit)
0-100 units	2.35
101-300 units	4.25
301-500 units	5.85
501 units and above	6.85

Accordingly, the Electricity charges for different units consumed by the consumer in one month (30 days) is shown in the table below.

	Power used by consumer	Electricity charges
	(Units/month)	(Unit x rate)
1	75	$75 \times 2.35 = \text{Rs. } 176.25$
2	150	$(100 \times 2.35) + [(150 - 100) \times 4.25] = (235 + 212.50) = \text{Rs. } 447.50$
3	350	$(100 \times 2.35) + [(300 - 100) \times 4.25] + [(350 - 300) \times 5.85] = (235 + 850 + 292.50) = \text{Rs. } 1377.50$

Electricity duty

The Government of Maharashtra levies duty on the power utilized by the consumer. The directive of the Maharashtra Government regarding this is mentioned behind the bill. Currently, the tax levied on the consumer are in accordance with the GoM Notification no. ELD-2003/C.R.-52/Urja -2 issued on 31.3.2003. This amount is calculated as a specific percentage of the bill (which includes fixed charges, electricity charges and fuel surcharge). The electricity duty applicable for various types of consumers is specified in the table below.

Table no. 8: Electricity duty*

Type of Consumer	Electricity duty (percentage of total bill)
Domestic	12%
Non-domestic	13%
Industrial	6%
Agricultural	Not Applicable

Fuel Surcharge

In order to supply power to the consumers, the electricity company needs to purchase power from the power generating companies. This rate of power purchase can vary due to certain inevitable circumstances (e.g. increased prices of oil or natural gas in the global markets, increased demand for power or shortage in power supply). In such eventualities, the electric company has to purchase power at a higher price in order to meet the demand. This difference in price is recovered from the consumers through the fuel surcharge.

The Commission independently determines this rate. For this purpose, the Commission assesses all the documents related to power purchase, from time to time. The rate and the month of purchase are also mentioned in the consumer's bill.

Other Charges

Other than those mentioned above, any other charges as approved by the Commission are recovered from the consumers through “other charges”. However, it is binding on the electric company to mention the details of all such charges in the consumer's bill. If the consumer needs any clarification about any of the charges mentioned in the bill, she can request the electric company for the same. It is binding on the company to provide such clarification to the consumer.

* As per state cabinet meeting dated 12th Jan. 2010, the government has decided to change the electricity duty. As per this decision the duty would now be 15% for domestic, 17% for commercial and 9% for industrial consumer.

The above charges are determined as per the category of consumer. Thus, based upon the power consumption, consumers are classified into different categories such as domestic, non-domestic (commercial), industrial, agricultural etc. For the domestic consumers whose power consumption is exceptionally low, the Electricity Regulatory Commission has created another sub category called BPL (Below Poverty Line) consumers.

As per the earlier definition, a consumer was eligible for BPL tariff, if his/her sanctioned load was of up to or less than 1KW, and consumption for the past 12 months was 30 units per month or less. However, with the effect from tariff order dated 20th June 2008, the criterion for defining BPL consumers has been changed. As per this Order, domestic consumers who have sanctioned load of up to or less than 1KW, and average consumption of less than 360 units in previous financial year, will be classified as BPL consumers. This new provision gives some flexibility to such consumers for extra consumption on special occasions such as weddings or festivals without revoking their right to low cost power for the rest of the year

Rates of consumption for BPL consumers

The Commission gives special concessions to those consumers who have sanctioned load of up to or less than 1KW and consumption of less than 360 units in previous financial year by classifying them as BPL Consumers. For these consumers the **fixed charges** are only Rs.3.00/month and the Energy charges are 40 paise/unit. (As per the orders issued by the Commission to the MSEDCL on 17th Aug., 2009.)

5.1.2 Other important information in the bill

Details of the consumer and the local sub divisional office

Details of the consumer are mentioned on the left side at the top of the bill. These consist of the consumer's name, address, meter number, consumer number, PC number etc. The consumer must always mention her consumer number and meter number on any application made to the electricity company. The consumer's electric load and

Consumer Category	Details in the Bill
Domestic Single phase	RES1 – PHASE
Domestic Three phase	RES 3 – PHASE
Non-domestic single phase	COMM 1- PHASE
Non-domestic three phase	COMM 3 – PHASE
Agricultural pump	AGRI

the type of connection are also mentioned in the bill. As mentioned earlier, the power consumption of the consumer and the type of his connection determines his category. This category is indicated in the bill as follows:

Name of the concerned local sub divisional office and phone number are mentioned in the bill above the consumer details. This number can be useful to the consumer for his complaints about the bill or in case of any other complaints.

Electric consumption of the consumer

The electric consumption of the consumer is determined from two consecutive meter readings. For this purpose, the last meter reading and the current meter reading are mentioned on the bill along with the dates. The difference in the two readings yields total units consumed. This indicates the consumption of the current month. Similarly the power consumption of the consumer for the past six months is also mentioned in the bill. This information is useful for the consumer to monitor his/her monthly consumption pattern. It can also be used to calculate or verify the average power consumption.

Essential phone numbers for Grievance redressal

The bill also contains information that can be used by the consumer to resolve grievances or complaints. A toll free number is mentioned in the bill. However, this facility is available only to urban consumers and it can provide assistance only in queries regarding technical faults (for e.g. power cut, burnt transformer, cable breakdown, etc.). For Metering and Billing related issues, the consumer is advised to contact the local sub divisional office. In such cases, the consumer can lodge a complaint by

calling on the phone number mentioned on the bill. If the company fails to resolve the complaint within two months or if the consumer is not satisfied by the redressal offered by the company, she can approach the Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum. The name, address and phone number of the local Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum is mentioned on the bill.

5.2 Billing Cycle

The regularity and timeliness of the bill is as important as its accuracy. The period between two consecutive bills is known as the billing cycle. Thus, if urban consumers get their bills every month, their billing cycle is said to be of one month.

As per the directives of the Commission it is binding on the electricity company to issue bills at least once every two months to urban and semi-urban consumers and at least once every three months to other consumers. (Supply Code, Regulations 2005, Regulation 15.1)

5.3 Misplacing or not receiving the bill

If a consumer misplaces the bill or doesn't receive a bill at all, she can ask for a duplicate copy of the bill from the company. For this, she should make a complaint to the company before receiving the next bill. She can lodge the complaint in the local office of the company or can even inform about it on phone. A duplicate bill is issued as soon as consumer's identity is confirmed; or the duplicate bill is delivered to her within three days after she informs the company. It is binding on the electric company to give information about the bill amount and the due date of payment even on phone if the consumer demands so. The consumer has to pay a charge of Re.1.00 for the duplicate bill.

However, the consumer must remember that not receiving the bill or misplacing it does not grant her any concession in the due date for its payment. If the due date has elapsed she is bound to pay the charges for delayed payment. (Supply Code, Regulations 2005, Regulation 15.5)

5.4 Paying the electricity bill

It is mandatory for the consumer to pay the electricity bill before the due date of payment. **It is binding on the company that the due date of payment for agricultural and domestic consumers should be at least 21 days from the date of issuing the bill (bill date).** For other consumers this period is of 15 days (Supply Code 15.5). Irrespective of the billing cycle duration, it is binding on the company to grant a period of 21 days to the domestic consumers for bill payment.

The consumer can pay the bill at the local office of the company or at any of the authorised payment centres, either by cash or by cheque. The details of payment can be filled in the format provided at the bottom of the bill. If the consumer wishes to pay the bill by cheque, she must draw a cheque in favour of “MSEDCL” and if she wishes to pay by cash, she must write the details of cash denominations in the column provided behind the bill. On payment, the concerned officer stamps the bill for being paid and returns it to the consumer. In some urban areas, there is a 24-hour bill payment service available. Here the billing machine accepts the bill paid by the consumer.

The consumer can also pay the bill amount in advance. The company issues a receipt to her for the advanced amount. It also pays interest on this amount to the consumer according to the rates fixed by the RBI. Such advanced payment is mentioned in the bill issued to the consumer. The bill indicates the deducted due amount from the advance the remaining balance, if any.

Such advance payment can save the consumer's time that he has to spend every month in paying the bill as well as avoid the risk of disconnection of supply in case she fails to pay the bill. If the consumer has to travel away from home for a couple of months making the meter unavailable for reading, she can inform the company accordingly and pay an advance amount as mentioned above (Supply Code, Regulation 2005, Regulation 15.5). Although the consumer would not be using power during this period, she is still liable to pay the fixed charges every month as stated earlier.

महाराष्ट्र स्टेट इलेक्ट्रिसिटी डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन कंपनी लि.

बीज आकार देयक

मासिक बीज देयक ई-बिल द्वारा प्राप्त कार्यासाठी कंपनीचा वेबसाईटवर (www.mahadiscom.in) आपल्या प्राधिकृत क्रमांकाची सुचना देत करावी.



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श्रेणी COMM 3-PHASE 3 WI

दर संकेत LT2/04

बीज शुल्क संकेत : 6

संलग्न भार

8.00 KW

मंजूर भार

8.00 KW

पुरवठा तारीख : 09/06/06

मिटर क्रमांक	पॉल रिडिंग	मागील रिडिंग	गणक अंश	युनिट	समा. युनिट	एकूण बीज वापर
1234567890	2099	1901	1	198	0	198

5



मागील बीज वापर

महिना युनिट

FEB-08	135
JAN-08	146
DEC-07	157
NOV-07	161
OCT-07	175
SEP-07	118
AUG-07	139
JUL-07	176
JUN-07	150
MAY-07	154
APR-07	255

6

ग्राहक तक्रार निवारण मंचाचा पत्ता KASBA PETH PH. NO. 24570520

7

Call centre Toll free No. 18002333435
महानगरपालिका क्षेत्रासाठी

Bill for 1 months (FR .03) / FAC2 charges : Rs. 41.58 / ASC % 20 / Reliability charges Rs. 83.16 / Prompt payment incentive amount is Rs. 9.84 / DPC : Rs. 22.19 /

मासिक बीज देयक (महिन्यासाठी)

३. शुभेच्छा

पुनः अधिकार (संलग्न)

पावती स्वयच्छत्र

बिलिंग युनिट क्र. 4613

ग्राहक क्रमांक :

पी. सी. :

दर : LT2/04

चेक लिहीण्यासाठी सूचना

* चेक अकाउंट पेयी असावा * चेक 'MSEDCL' च्या नावे असावा, चेक स्थानिक बँकेचा असावा
* चेक सोबत पावती स्वयच्छत्र, ग्राहकी, स्टॅम्प करू * चेक पूर्वील तारखेचा असावा



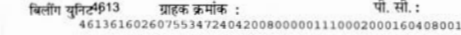
बँकेची स्वयच्छत्र

बिलिंग युनिट क्र. 4613

ग्राहक क्रमांक :

पी. सी. :

दर : LT2/04



अंतिम तारीख	24/04/08	1110.00
या तारखेपर्यंत भरल्यास	16/04/08	1100.00
या तारखेनंतर भरल्यास	24/04/08	1130.00

महावितरण

अंतिम तारीख	24/04/08	1110.00
या तारखेपर्यंत भरल्यास	16/04/08	1100.00
या तारखेनंतर भरल्यास	24/04/08	1130.00

महावितरण

- Consumer information
- Telephone no. of the concerned sub divisional office for lodging complaints at the local level
- Connected Load of the consumer
- Duration of power usage
- Total units consumed in the current month as per the meter reading
- Power usage of the last month, necessary for verifying the average power usage
- Telephone no. of the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (to be approached after approaching Internal Consumer Grievance Cell)
- Electricity tax to be paid as per the orders of the Govt. of Maharashtra
- Security deposit amount paid by the consumer to the electric company

Charges for Delayed payment

If the consumer fails to pay the bill on or before the due date, she is liable to pay a delayed payment charge to the company. **This charge is equivalent to 2% of the bill amount.** On the other hand, if the consumer pays the bill within 7 days of the bill date or within 5 days of receiving the bill, she can get a concession of 1% on the bill amount. (Regulatory Commission Order, 17th Aug., 2009.)

If the consumer has paid the bill after the due date, it does not get mentioned in his next bill. Hence, his next bill amount is inclusive of the amount of the earlier bill. In such cases, the consumer has to produce the receipt or the stamped copy of the earlier bill before the officer at the collection centre. The officer shall deduct the amount of the earlier bill and collect the balance amount. This provision is also mentioned in the bill.

5.5 Outstanding amount in the bill

The outstanding amount mentioned in the bill is another important item that is often a cause of worry for the consumer. If the consumer has failed to pay the bill or has not paid it before the due date, then the company recovers it from the consumer as outstanding amount. The consumer also has to pay an interest on such outstanding amounts. The rate of interest applicable on this amount is as per the orders of the Commission and is mentioned in the table below. Thus, to avoid outstanding dues, it is essential for the consumer to pay the total bill amount regularly. If the consumer cannot pay the outstanding amount through a single payment, he/she can request the company to accept payment in multiple instalments (Regulatory Commission Order 17th Aug., 2009).

Table No. 9: Interest on Outstanding Amounts

	Period of delay from the due date (in months)	Rate of Interest (p.c.p.a)
1.	Up to 3 months	12%
2.	3 months to 6 months	15%
3.	Payment after 6 months	18%

An important thing to remember in context of outstanding amount is that according to section 56(3) of the Electricity Act 2003, **the company cannot recover any outstanding amount from the consumer after 2 years of the date of commencement of the period of delay, without repeatedly mentioning it in all the bill.** In other words, the company cannot recover any outstanding amount from the consumer that is more than 2 years old, without continuously mentioning it in all subsequent bills (Electricity Act, 2003, Section 56).

5.6 Disconnecting the power supply

The company can disconnect the power supply of the consumer for two reasons only. Firstly, if the concerned authorised representative of the company confirms that the consumer is involved in power theft, or secondly, if the consumer ignores or refuses to pay any amount or charges liable on her. The company cannot disconnect the power supply of the consumer for any other reasons.

We shall look at the provisions concerning power theft more closely in chapter 9. **However, if the company has to disconnect the power supply of the consumer due to non-payment of charges, it must inform the consumer about the same through an independently issued advance notice.** The consumer must receive such notice at least 15 days in advance (Electricity Act 2003, Section 56). This information cannot be mentioned in the bill but has to be given to the consumer through an independent notice and an acknowledgement of his having received the notice should also be taken (Electricity Act 2003, Section 171).

5.7 Average Bill

Sometimes the electricity company issues an average bill to the consumer. This bill is calculated from the earlier meter readings of the consumer (Supply Code, Regulations 2005, clause 15.3). The company may issue such an estimated bill but it has to also mention the reason for the same on the bill.

The company may have issued an average bill due to any of the following reasons:

1. The location of the meter being closed or inaccessible
2. Inability to locate the meter
3. Unclear reading on the meter
4. Change of meter
5. Defective meter
6. Stopped Meter

If the meter could not be read for two consecutive attempts due to the location being closed, the company can ask the consumer to make the location available by issuing an independent notice. It is binding on the consumer to make the meter available for reading on the date and time mentioned in the notice. However, the company is responsible for the consumer to receive such a notice at least 7 days in advance. **The company can issue such an average bill to the consumer consecutively for maximum 3 times.** Moreover, when the consumer's meter is being read accurately the earlier bills need to be amended accordingly.

If an average bill is issued due to a defective or stopped meter, it is binding on the company to ensure that it has been issued as per the provisions mentioned about it in the Chapter No 4 titled “Meter”.

The consumer can get his complaints related to the average bill resolved as per the provisions mentioned in the Chapter No 8 “Redressal of Consumer Grievances”.

5.8 Incorrect or overcharged Bill

If a consumer receives an incorrect or unduly high bill she should make a primary assessment of the reasons behind it. Extra power consumption during this period or non-payment of earlier charges could be the reasons behind such a high bill.

Sometimes an incorrect bill could be a result of faulty recording of the meter reading or an incorrect entry in the computer. In such cases, the

consumer should verify the meter reading mentioned on the bill with the actual reading on the meter. If it is found that the incorrect bill has been issued due to a fault in recording the reading, it should be brought to the notice of the officer of the company.

Often when the consumer visits the local office to complain about the unduly high bill she is compelled to first pay the complete amount of the bill, without which the complaint is not accepted. In such cases, it is important to remember that as per section 56 of the Electricity Act 2003, it is not binding on the consumer to pay this full amount. The consumer can pay the average amount as per his earlier bills of six months under protest. **If the consumer has paid either his complete bill amount or the average of six months' bill, whichever is less, the company cannot disconnect her power supply.** The consumer can then get the complaint resolved as per the procedure elaborated under “Redressal of Consumer Grievances” in the chapter no 8 ahead.

POINTS TO NOTE

- The consumer should verify the bill amount and understand the necessary information about the various charges mentioned in the bill.
- The rate of the electricity consumed increases with increased consumption. It is lower for the initial units and increases with increasing units of consumption.
- It is binding that the due date of payment of the bill is at least 21 days further from the date of the bill for the domestic consumers.
- The electricity company cannot recover any outstanding charges from the consumer after 2 years without repeatedly mentioning it in all the subsequent bills.
- The company has to issue an independent notice to the consumers before disconnecting power supply.
- The company can issue such an average bill to the consumer consecutively for only maximum 3 times.
- It is not necessary for the consumer to pay the complete due amount of an incorrect bill; she can record her protest and pay the average amount as per earlier bill of six months.



CHAPTER 6

SECURITY DEPOSIT

The Electricity Company demands certain amount as security deposit from the consumer through his bill. What exactly is this security deposit? Why does the company take it? How is the amount decided? Is it refundable? In this chapter, we will look for answers to the above questions.

The consumer first uses electricity and pays for it later, through payment of the bill. The company recovers the bill every one or two months as per the billing cycle of the consumer. Hence as a security for the bill, the company takes an advance amount from the consumer, which is known as security deposit. According to section 47 of the Electricity Act 2003, the company can demand such a security deposit from the consumer. The amount is mentioned as security deposit in the bill. The company has to pay interest to the consumer on this deposit equivalent to the bank rate of the Reserve Bank of India. The company pays the interest amount once in 12 months to the consumer through the bill.

The security deposit amount is equivalent to the average amount of a bill in one billing cycle for an existing consumer (Supply Code Regulation 2005, regulation 11.2). For e.g., the security deposit for consumers who get their bills every month, will be equivalent to the average amount of bill of one month and for those who get their bills every two months, the amount will be equivalent to their average bill for two months. For agricultural consumers if the billing cycle is every three months, then the security deposit is equivalent to the average bill of three months.

The average bill amount is decided by considering the bills of previous 12 months. If the consumer has been receiving supply for less than 12 months, then the average for those months is calculated. However, in case of new connections, average consumption cannot be calculated. Hence, a certain amount of power consumption is assumed in order

to calculate the security deposit. We have discussed this in more detail in the chapter “New electric connections”. For information, refer table no. 4.

Since the average power consumption of a consumer keeps varying, the company re-estimates the amount of security deposit every 12 months. This estimation is done on the basis of the amount of power consumed by the consumer and the tariff fixed by the company. The newly estimated amount is compared with the previous security deposit amount paid by the consumer. If the new amount is more than the previous amount of security deposit, the company can ask the consumer to pay this difference. The consumer has to pay this difference in one instalment within 30 days or if the company permits, in two instalments along with next two bills. Similarly if the newly estimated amount is less than the previously paid deposit, then the company has to pay the surplus amount to the consumer within 30 days in a single instalment. As per the consumer's request, the company can pay this amount through the next three bills or through a separate demand draft. However, **it is important to note that the company is liable to return the surplus amount only if it is more than Rs. 300/- or it is more than 10% of the newly calculated security deposit.**

The security deposit can be used to recover any kind of dues or arrears that the consumer owes to the company. Even when the company disconnects a consumer's connection, any dues or arrears are deducted from the consumer's security deposit.

POINTS TO NOTE....

- The consumer has to pay a security deposit amount equivalent to the average amount of a bill in one billing cycle.
- The security deposit is calculated on the basis of the bills of previous 12 months and it is re-estimated annually.
- Any dues or arrears that the consumer owes to the company can be recovered from the security deposit



CHAPTER 7

QUALITY OF POWER SUPPLY

The quality of power supply is as important to the consumer as an access to it. The electricity company is committed to provide electricity through an efficient and good quality distribution network. For this purpose, the Commission has laid down certain standards for the electricity companies. It is binding on the part of the companies to follow these standards, failing which they are liable to pay compensation to the consumers. Such compensation can be paid voluntarily by the company or in response to a complaint filed by the affected consumer(s). In case of complaint filed by consumer(s), the company must compensate all consumers who are affected by the problem and not just the one(s) who have filed the complaint. The company has to pay this compensation to the aggrieved consumers within a period of 2 months. Appropriate Voltage and uninterrupted supply are the two major components in determining the quality of power supply. Let us learn a little more about these standards.

7.1 Voltage

(Standards of Performance Regulation, January 2005, Regulation 5)
The company has to provide power supply to the consumer as per the declared voltage standards specified by the Commission. **The declared voltage for consumers receiving low and medium voltage supply is 240 Volt.** The Commission permits a variation of up to plus/minus 6 % from the declared voltage. This means that the distribution company must provide electric supply within the limit of 225 to 255 Volt to domestic and small commercial consumers.

If the supply voltage varies beyond the permissible limits (i.e. less than 225V or greater than 255V) the company has to pay compensation of Rs.100/- for each week of such variable supply, to the consumer. If the consumer feels that the supply that is not within the permissible voltage range, he/she can lodge a complaint about it to the company. If the company fails to take appropriate action on the complaint, the consumer

can approach the Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum. We will be learning more about this in further chapters. Currently, the company is liable to pay this compensation only in large city areas like Mumbai and Pune. The Commission has not yet fixed the duration for payment of compensation for areas other than those mentioned above.

7.2 Interrupted Power Supply

(Standards of Performance Regulation January 2005, Annexure A)

Another important consideration with respect to quality of supply is the frequency of interruptions in the supply. If the company needs to cut off the power supply for certain pre-scheduled reasons (like load shedding, regular maintenance, etc), it has to inform about the duration of such interruption through a public notification issued in advance. **The period of scheduled interruption shall not exceed 12 hours on any day.** However, if the power supply fails due to the inefficiency of the company, the period of restoration depends upon the cause for the failure. The standard practices to be followed by the company in the event of various types of interruptions, the time needed to resolve them and the respective amount of compensation to be paid by the company to the affected consumer are listed in the table below.

Table No. 10: Interrupted Power Supply: Standards

Incidence	Period of restoration (Standard)	Amount of compensation (Rupees)
1. Fuse Off	4 hours (towns and cities) 24 hours (rural areas)	Rs. 50/- per hour of delay
2. Breakdown in 22kv/11 kv/415 v overhead lines	6 hours (towns and cities) 24 hours (rural areas)	Rs. 50/- per hour of delay
3. Fault in underground cable	12 hours	Rs. 50/- per hour of delay
4. Scheduled interruption	Should not exceed 12 hours on any day	
5. Distribution transformer failure	24 hours (towns and cities) 48 hours (rural areas)	Rs. 50/- per hour of delay

Thus, if the power supply of a consumer fails on account of any of the reasons listed above, and is not restored within the period specified for the cause of failure, he/she can demand compensation from the company. However, the consumer must lodge such a complaint with the company as soon as the interruption occurs and keep a copy of due acknowledgement receipt or a complaint number from the company to support his case.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- It is binding on part of the electric company to provide good quality power supply at all points of time.
- The power supply available to domestic consumer should be 240 Volt, with a permissible variation of plus/minus 15 Volt
- The company is bound by specific standards regarding restoration of the interrupted power supply. If the company fails to fulfil these criteria it is liable to pay compensation to the consumers at a rate of Rs.50/- per hour of delay in restoration.



CHAPTER 8

REDRESSAL OF CONSUMER GRIEVANCES

In the last chapter looked at the issues related to electricity service that generally bother common consumers as well as the rights of the consumers in this regard. We also learnt about the various regulations, standards and procedures that govern the distribution company while providing electricity service. Still, questions such as: What should the consumer do if she wishes to lodge a complaint? Where and how she can do it? What time limit is acceptable for redressal of a given complaint? often remain unanswered. In this chapter we will try to find answers to these and other such questions. We will also look at the institutions that can be approached in this regard.

In case of any kind of complaint related to the electricity service, the consumer can report it to the local office of the concerned electricity company. The consumer can register his complaint on phone or even through a written application. The consumer can find the phone number and the address of the local office on his electricity bill. **The consumer should immediately ask for the complaint number to the concerned officer on registering the complaint**, since this proves to be important if he needs to follow up on the complaint later on. After registering the complaint at the local office, the company solves it within a stipulated duration. For the MSEDCL this duration is fixed at 15 days.



Call centre facility

For urban consumers the facility of call centre is now available for registering their complaints. The toll free number of the call centre is mentioned on the bill. The call centre of the MSEDCL only handles complaints related to technical matters such as load shedding, power failure, cable breakage, fault in the transformer etc. The consumer is asked to contact the local office of the company for meter and billing related complaints.

To resolve the complaints appropriately and within the stipulated duration, the Electricity Regulatory Commission has laid down a set of regulations known as “Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum and Electricity Ombudsman, Regulations 2006”. In case of any deficiencies or issues in provision of the electricity service the consumer can get his complaint resolved through the three-tiered machinery as mentioned in these regulations.

8.1 Three-tiered machinery of Redressal of Consumer Grievances

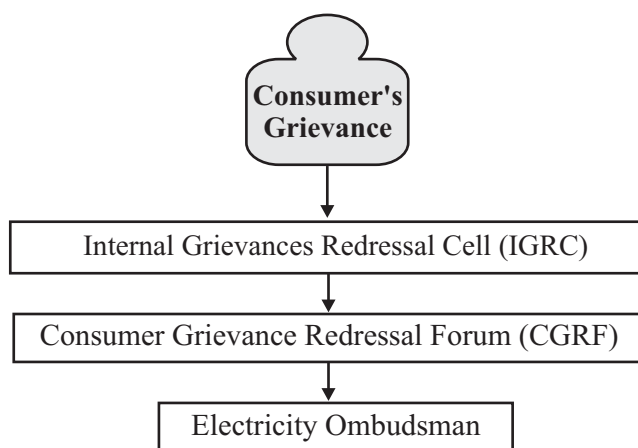
The Electricity Regulation Commission, through its orders and regulations has laid down standards and rules to ensure consumer-oriented and good quality electricity service. In case the company fails to follow them, the consumers can get their complaints resolved through the three-tiered machinery.

The consumer should first register her complaint with the concerned “Internal Grievance Redressal Cell”. The company has constituted such Internal Cells at the Circle level (Revenue District) to resolve consumer grievances. These Cells register the consumer's complaint and notify the consumer about their proposed action/s for redressal, within a period of two months. If the consumer is not satisfied with the solution provided by this Cell or if the Cell fails to give any solution within a period of two months, the consumer can approach the “Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum” at the Zone level. It needs to be mentioned here that MSEDCL for the sake of its own administration and management has divided the territory under its jurisdiction into zones, circles, divisions, sub divisions, section and sub sections. This division, though based on electrical map also converges roughly with the geographical map such that each zone roughly corresponds to a district and circle to one or more talukas. There are about 14 zones and 42 circles.

The Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, although instituted by the company, is an independent body for grievance redressal. It consists of three members. Two of these members are external, out of which one is a representative of the electricity consumers' organization. The Forum conducts hearings and considers both sides of the complaint. It comprehensively tackles all aspects of the issue and gives its decision in two months. If the consumer does not agree with this decision as well or if the Forum fails to give any decision within two months, the consumer can take his/her complaint further to the Electricity Ombudsman. The Electricity Ombudsman is a state-level machinery with the Electricity Ombudsman being appointed by the Electricity Regulatory Commission. And the most important point is that **only a consumer can appeal to the Electricity Ombudsman against the decision of the Forum, the company cannot make such an appeal.**

Although the three-tiered machinery instituted for consumers' grievances redressal is a semi-constitutional body, **it does not permit the consumer to plead his/her case through a lawyer.** The consumer himself or through a representative (except a lawyer) has to present the case. Similarly the hearing conducted before the Forum or the Ombudsman is open to all the public (within the constraints of space available). It is the duty of the Forum and the Ombudsman to give a fair hearing to the consumers' grievances and give an appropriate and comprehensive decision on it.

Figure: Three-tiered Grievances Redressal Mechanism



The consumer can resolve grievances about the electricity service through this machinery, except the complaints related to electric accidents, power theft and unauthorized use of electricity. In case of complaints regarding the fine imposed for unauthorized power consumption and power theft; the consumer needs to approach the appellate authority, whereas the powers to investigate electricity related accidents have been assigned to the electrical inspector.

8.2. Internal Consumer Grievance Redressal Cell

The Internal Consumer Grievance Redressal Cell (IGRC) is an entity instituted internally by the electric company itself for registration of consumers' complaints/grievances and its timely redressal. It is binding on the company to establish such a Cell in each Circle office of every revenue area. The electric company appoints its own officers in the Cell and through them resolves the grievances reported. **It is binding on the consumer to present its grievance at the Cell first, before approaching the Forum.**

Public awareness on Internal Consumer Grievance Redressal Cell and Forum

It is the responsibility of the electric company to inform the public regarding the grievance redressal Cell and the Forum. The company has to disseminate this information to the public through various mass media, as well as through its various offices, bill payment centres, and the internet. It is also binding on the company to mention this information from time to time on the electricity bills of the consumer.

The address, email, phone and fax numbers of the Internal Consumer Grievance Redressal Cell and Forum should be prominently displayed at all the bill payment centres and company offices for easy access to the all the consumers.

The MSEDCL has appointed such a Cell at each of its Circle office. The Cell consists of three members - the Executive Engineer, Accounts Officer and a Senior Clerk. The consumer should first inform the Cell about the grievance. He/she can obtain the address and phone number of

the Cell assigned to given Circle from the local office of the company. The list of Cells is also available on the Commission's website. (Link for reference: http://mercindia.org.in/CGR_Unit.htm#mseb)

8.2.1 Submitting an application to the Cell

The consumer has to submit her grievance application to the Cell in a prescribed format of the Electric Company. This format is available in the local office of the company. The Distribution Company's prescribed format of application to the Cell is given at the end of this booklet in Annexure (6). This format could also be used by the consumer. However, the consumer has to attach copies of all the relevant documents along with the application. If the consumer is not capable of submitting a written application, she can ask for assistance from the Cell to present her orally stated grievance in a written form. It is binding on the Cell to extend all the necessary assistance to such a consumer. Table no. 11 indicates the various means of submitting applications to the IGRC and the duration of acknowledgement to be received. The same procedure is applicable for the Forum as well as the Electricity Ombudsman.

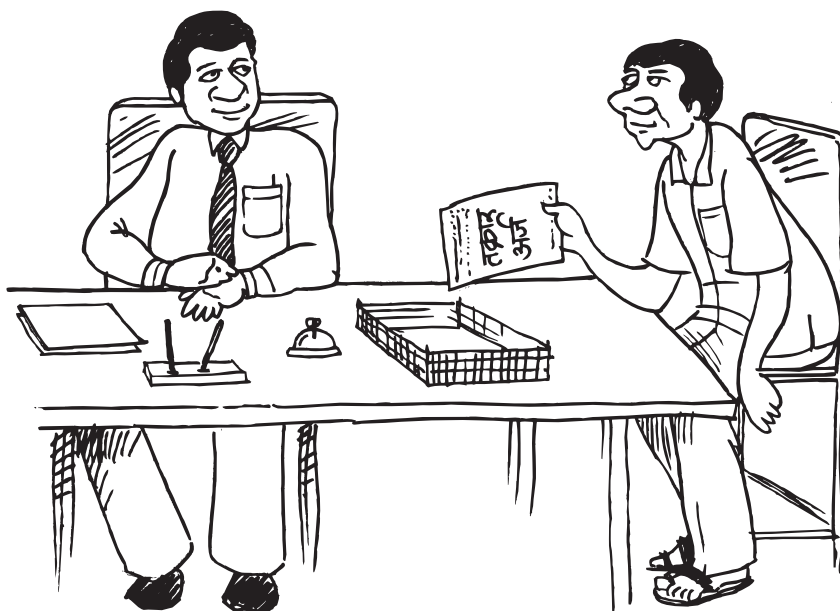
Means of submitting applications and the duration of acknowledgement due

The consumer may personally submit the application to the office of the Cell or submit it by other means like Registered Post, Speed Post or by Courier service, etc. Similarly consumer can also submit the application through email. The necessary documents have to be scanned and attached to the application. However, in case of submitting application via emails as well, a separate hard copy of the application and the related documents needs to be submitted.

The consumer should insist upon the due acknowledgement after submitting the application. The duration within which the consumer should receive the due acknowledgment depends upon the means of submitting (post, register, email) the application. The relationship between submitting mechanism and duration for acknowledgement is indicated in the table below:

Table no. 11: Duration of receiving the acknowledgment due

Means of Submitting the Application	Duration of Acknowledgement due
1. Personally, in the office	Immediately
2. Registered Post, Speed Post, Courier or any other means of submission of documents	Within 5 days of receiving the application
3. By E-mail	Immediately by reply e-mail



8.2.2 Procedure of Grievance Redressal of the Cell

Since it is binding on the Cell to address all the grievances that are reported, it registers all the received applications and issues acknowledgment to all of them. It also conducts the necessary internal enquiry about the grievance. After the enquiry the Cell conveys its decision about the grievance to the consumer. **It is binding on the Cell to convey its decision within 2 months of the date of receiving the grievance application.**

If the consumer does not agree with the decision of the Cell or if there has been no action on the application in the period of 2 months, he/she can approach the “Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum”.

Important Provision

It is mandatory that the consumer has presented the grievance to the Internal Grievance Redressal Cell of the Company before approaching the Consumer Forum. If a consumer is not aware about the Cell and upon his/her enquiry, the local officer of the company also does not inform her about approaching the Cell, then the consumer's grievance submitted to that officer is considered as submission made to the electric company in reference to the grievance and his/her act of directly approaching the Forum is considered valid.

8.3 Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum

As per the regulations of the Commission, it is binding on the Electric Company to establish at least one “Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum” (CGRF) at each Distribution Zone level to ensure independent and speedy redressal of consumer grievances. In accordance with this, the Distribution Companies in Maharashtra have established such forums and their list is given in the table below. The consumer can also get the information about these forums on the Commission's website. (Link for reference http://www.mercindia.org.in/CGR_Forum.htm#mseb)

Table no. 12: Number of Consumer Greivance Redressal Forums

Electricity Distribution Company	Number of Forums
MSEDCL	11
Reliance Energy Ltd.	01
Tata Power Company	01
BEST Company	01
Mula and Pravara	01

Generally the Forum consists of three members out of which two (Chairman and Consumer representative) are external to the company. The tenure of all these members is of three years, and considering the age limit of 67 years, it can be extended for two more years. The Electric

Company appoints the Chairman as well as the Electricity Representative, while the Consumer representative is appointed by the Commission. The eligibility criteria for these members are indicated below for the reference of the consumers.

The consumer should submit the grievance to the concerned Forum. The address and phone number of the concerned Forum is available on the electricity bill of the consumer. Although the Forum is established by the company, it is an independent body for consumer grievance redressal and is not controlled by the electricity company.

Forum Members

- 1. Chairman of the Forum:** Retired senior level judiciary officer or retired government officer or retired Principal of a reputed engineering college, or a retired Professor of Electrical Department of a reputed institution, or retired senior Government Electrical Engineer.
- 2. Electricity Company representative:** Executive Engineer or another officer of similar level
- 3. Consumer Representative:** Representative of a registered Consumer Protection Organization with at least 5 years experience in the department of consumer grievance redressal.

8.3.1 Submitting an application to the Forum

The consumer has to submit the grievance application to the Cell in a prescribed format. The Commission has laid out the application format for approaching the Forum. It is binding on the company to make this format available at all its offices. The format of the application has been given in Annexure (7) of this book for reference.

The provisions regarding the means of submitting the application and the due acknowledgment applicable for approaching the Forum are similar to that of the IGRC. Please refer para 8.2.1 above for the procedure to be followed. However, the consumer has to take certain precautions before submitting the application to the Forum or else the application might be rejected.

Submit your application within 2 years of the date of commencement of the grievance.

Submit the application only in the prescribed format

The consumer should have submitted the grievance earlier to the IGRC or if unaware about the IGRC, then at least to any officer of the company before submitting it to the Forum.

The consumer should attach all the relevant documents along with the application. Similarly if the IGRC has given a decision earlier, the copy of the same should also be attached.

8.3.2 Procedure of Grievance Redressal of the Forum

After the Forum registers the application of the consumer, it immediately sends a copy of it to the Nodal officer of the Electricity Company. The company appoints such an officer to present the company's side and give its explanation regarding the consumer's grievance. It is binding that the Nodal Officer should submit a point wise explanation about the grievance to the Forum and the concerned consumer within 15 days, failing which the Forum is free to pursue further action with whatever available information it has at hand. Further to this, **for speedy redressal of the grievance, the Forum conducts a hearing and listens to both parties.** The consumer as well as the company is given a chance to present their side of the issue. The date and time of this hearing is conveyed to the consumer and the electric company through written communication with enough advance notice.

It is advisable for the consumer or his representative to attend this hearing because generally the Forum does not assign an alternative further date for the hearing. If at any point in time, the Forum does issue a next date for hearing, it has to give a sufficient reason in writing for doing so. If any of the two sides (the consumer or the electric company) remains absent for the hearing, the Forum can take an ex-party decision about the grievance.

If the company has threatened the consumer of disconnecting the power supply or if there is a possibility that the company might disregard the Commission's guidelines and regulations, he can request the Forum to consider his case before the assigned time. If the Forum is convinced of the reason, it can accept the consumer's request.

It is beneficial, although not mandatory, for the consumer to be aware of all the rules and provisions concerning the grievance. The Forum is expected to take into account all the related rules and provisions in relation with the grievance. If the consumer finds it difficult to present her own case, the Forum can help her in doing so. The Forum should never decide on a case on the basis of insufficient data or on the grounds that the consumer could not present her case appropriately. Since the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum has been created for the benefit of the consumers, it is binding on the Forum that it understands the consumer's grievance from all possible angles. As the company is already aware of all the aspects and provisions, it is only logical that the company does not require this kind of assistance or support.

8.3.3 Decision of the Forum

The Forum is expected to take into account all aspects of the issue such as the grievance itself, the point-wise explanation of the company's officer, information presented during the hearing by both parties and in course of action, as well as any other available information before giving its decision. **The Forum has to give its decision within two months of receiving the grievance application.**

Except in places where it is a single-member Forum, the decision about the grievance is taken by majority vote. However, it is binding on the Forum to also document the opinion of the minority. Similarly the Forum has to issue its order along with a written analysis in Marathi or English. The Forum sends the attested copy of the order to the consumer and other concerned parties.

If the decision upholds the consumer's contention, the Forum can issue orders to the company to take the necessary action in order to redress the consumer's grievance within a given duration. Similarly if the consumer has incurred any losses due to the company, the Forum can assess the facts and related circumstances and can order the company to pay an appropriate amount to the consumer as compensation for the same.

If the consumer does not agree with this decision or if no decision is taken within the stipulated time frame, then he/she can approach the Electricity Ombudsman. It is binding on the Forum to mention in its decision, the availability of such a provision.

8.4 Electricity Ombudsman

The system to redress consumer grievances at the State level, next to that of the Forum, is the Electricity Ombudsman. As mentioned above, if the consumer is not satisfied with the decision given by the Forum she can appeal to the Electricity Ombudsman for the redressal of her grievance. Similarly, as mentioned earlier, this facility is available only to the consumer and not to the electric company.

The Electricity Ombudsman is appointed by the State Commission.

The appointment is made from a Retired High Court Judge, Retired Government Secretary or Retired Chief Executive Officer of a Power Sector Company. The tenure of the Electricity Ombudsman can be up to maximum 3 years. If the Ombudsman is less than 70 years old after completing the three years tenure, it can be extended by two years. The office of the Electricity Ombudsman appointed for the entire state of Maharashtra is at Mumbai.

Electricity Ombudsman

Maharashtra State Electricity Regulatory Commission
606 / 6th floor, Keshva Building, Bandra Kurla Complex,
Bandra (east), Mumbai 400 050
Telephone 091-22-26592965/26590339, 30680528
e-mail id: pa@mercombudsman.org.in
Website: <http://mercombudsman.org.in/>

All the orders issued by the Electricity Ombudsman are available on the website of the Commission for easy reference of the consumers (Link for reference: http://mercindia.org.in/Order_Omb.asp)

8.4.1 Submitting an application

The provisions regarding the means of submitting the application and its acknowledgment applicable to the Electricity Ombudsman are similar to that of the IGRC. (For details, refer 8.2.1). The prescribed format for application is given in Annexure (8). The consumer should mention all the necessary information in the application. As stated in the application, three copies of all the relevant documents should be attached along with the application. The consumer must take the following precautions before submitting the application.

The application should be made only in the prescribed format
The consumer must indicate to the Electricity Ombudsman that the Forum has rejected her grievance application or has not acted upon it in the stipulated period of 2 months.
The grievance should be presented before the Ombudsman within 60 days of the decision of the Forum.

8.4.2 Procedure of Grievance Redressal by the Electricity Ombudsman

On receiving the grievance, the Electricity Ombudsman first tries to bring about a compromise between the two parties, namely, the electricity consumer and the electricity company. If such a compromise is made, then the Electricity Ombudsman issues orders to this effect and it is registered in his presence and signatures of both the parties are taken on it.

If a compromise is not made, the Electricity Ombudsman gives a fair chance to both the parties (consumer and company) to present their case during the hearing that he conducts. An appropriate date, place and time for the hearing is decided. It is binding upon the Ombudsman to inform the consumer about the hearing through an advance notice. Although the office of the Electricity Ombudsman is in Mumbai, the hearing can be conducted at any suitable place to facilitate the speedy and appropriate redressal of the grievance.

The consumer can present the grievance before the Electricity Ombudsman during the hearing, or can appoint any other person (except a lawyer) to present the case. **The consumer or her representative should ensure that they attend the hearing.** If any of the parties remain absent for the hearing, the Ombudsman can take an ex-parte decision on the matter. If the Ombudsman postpones the hearing to a future date, it is necessary to provide a sufficient and written justification for the same without which he cannot give a future date for the hearing.

8.4.3 Orders of the Electricity Ombudsman

The Electricity Ombudsman gives orders on the basis of the available information after hearing both the parties. These orders are binding not only on the consumer and the electric company but also on the concerned Forum.

Interim Orders of the Ombudsman

The consumer can request the Ombudsman to issue an interim order before issuing the final decision on the grievance. However, to achieve this, the consumer has to convince the Ombudsman of a possible threat of disconnection or disruption of her power supply by the company or the possibility that the electricity company might disregard the regulations of the Commission. Only after the Electricity Ombudsman is convinced beyond doubt does he issue such interim orders. But before doing so he provides a fair opportunity to the opposite party to present its case.

The Electricity Ombudsman sends a copy of the orders to the concerned consumer and the company as well as to the concerned Forum. If the orders of the Ombudsman have caused a reversal or overruling of the orders of the Forum the Ombudsman can redirect the grievance to the Forum if he finds it appropriate to do so. He can also issue orders about the aspect(s) of the grievance that have to be decided upon.

The Electricity Ombudsman can include the following in the order:

1. Issue wise decisions and its justification
2. Amendment in the undue charges paid by the consumer
3. The amount of compensation to the consumer if has any losses have been incurred
4. The amount of compensation as mentioned in the Standards of Performance of the Electricity Company.
5. Any such Order as deemed relevant considering the given circumstances

8.4.4 Reconsideration of the Orders

Generally the orders of the Electricity Ombudsman are considered to be the final decision on the matter. However, if the concerned person identifies any new issue or evidence on the matter afterwards, he/she can apply to the Electricity Ombudsman for reconsideration of the orders issued earlier. However, such an application must be made within 30 days of the orders issued by the Electricity Ombudsman.

The applicant must mention in the application the reason for not making the new information available earlier. It is necessary to convince the Ombudsman that the applicant was not aware of the information even

after making enough efforts at the earlier stage. If the Ombudsman does not find enough justification for reconsideration of the orders, he can reject the application. However, before doing so he provides an opportunity to the applicant to present her case.

On the other hand, if the Electricity Ombudsman considers it appropriate to accept such an application, he gives a prior intimation to the concerned opposite party before accepting the application. The necessary action is taken by the Electricity Ombudsman only after duly hearing both the sides once again.

POINTS TO REMEMBER.....

- The consumer should make sure that he/she asks for the complaint number after registering her complaint.
- The consumer can use the three-tiered mechanism for redressal of any grievances.
- Except for complaints of power theft and unauthorized power usage, the consumer can get all other complaints redressed through this three tiered mechanism.
- The consumer should first submit his/her complaint to the Internal Grievance Redressal Cell of the electricity company. If it is not resolved through the Cell, can approach the Forum and if not resolved by the Forum then the Electricity Ombudsman.
- The consumer has to submit the grievance application only in the prescribed format and there are no charges to be paid for this.
- The grievance application should be filled completely and the necessary documents should be attached along with it.
- The consumer does not need a lawyer to present the case before the Forum or the Electricity Ombudsman.
- The Cell, Forum and Ombudsman must give their decision on the consumer's grievance within a period of 2 months.
- Apart from the Cell, Forum and Ombudsman, the consumer is free to approach the 'Consumer forum' set under the Consumer Protection Act, for any electricity service related grievance



CHAPTER 9

UNAUTHORIZED POWER USAGE AND POWER THEFT

In course of our discussion on quality of electric supply we have seen that there exist separate provisions regarding unauthorized power usage and power theft. As per the amendment in the Electricity Act (Electricity Amendment Act, 2007, June 16, 2007) these provisions have been made even more stringent. As there is no clear distinction between unauthorized power usage and power theft, there is possibility of certain consumers getting incorrectly trapped under these provisions. In this chapter, let us have a brief look at scope of these provisions.

9.1 Unauthorized Power usage (Electricity Act, section 126)

According to section 126 of the Electricity Act, the following types of power usage by the consumer shall be considered unauthorized:

1. Power usage done by using any kind of unauthorized implement/tool (For e.g. drawing power by inserting a hook (tapping) on the cable or bypassing a Meter, etc.)
2. Deliberate tampering of the Meter (For e.g. slowing the speed of the Meter, damaging the Meter, etc.)
3. Using power for purposes other than the type sanctioned connection (For e.g. using domestic connection for commercial purposes)
4. Extending connection to premises which have not been permitted for its usage (For e.g. lending power from a consumer's premises to the neighbour's premises)

9.1.1 Mechanisms for assessing unauthorized power usage

The electricity company can inspect the consumer's premises through its Special Officers. During such an inspection, if the Assessing Officer

comes across any incident of unauthorised power usage, as listed above, he/she can issue orders for paying an interim penalty through a notice. If the consumer agrees to this amount, he/she has to pay it within 7 days. However, if the consumer has any objections about the amount determined, he/she can state them to the Assessment Officer. **The Officer can issue final orders only after duly hearing the objections raised by the consumer.** It is binding on the Officer to issue the final order within 30 days of the date of the interim order.

If the consumer still has objections about the final amount he can appeal to the appellate authority. The Government of Maharashtra has appointed an independent appellate authority for this purpose. Only one officer has been appointed for the entire state and his office is situated in Mumbai. However, before the appeal, the consumer has to pay half of the penalty amount to the electricity company by cash or cheque. He/she has to attach the receipt of this paid amount to the appeal.

The appellate authority issues a final decision after hearing both the sides. After this order, the consumer has to pay the penalty amount within 30 days. Failing this, the consumer is liable to pay an interest at the rate of 16% per annum on the penalty amount. After 6 months, he can also be charged compound interest.

The amount of penalty is decided after considering the entire period of unauthorized usage. If such period is difficult to determine, the penalty is charged for 12 months prior to the date of inspection. Moreover, the charges for this period are calculated at twice the tariff that is applicable for the category of the concerned consumer. (For e.g. if a consumer uses his domestic supply for a shop or any such other commercial purpose, he/she will be penalized at twice the tariff that is applicable to a commercial consumer).

9.2 Power Theft

If a consumer uses power by any of the means mentioned below, he/she can face disciplinary action as per the provisions and regulations pertaining to Power Theft.

1. Illegal drawal of power from any equipments or property of the distribution company. This includes getting a connection by inserting a hook in the power cable or drawing power from overhead or underground power cables, etc

2. Deliberate manipulation of the Meter: This includes any means used for tampering the meter, like slowing the meter speed or deliberately causing faulty readings from the Meter.
3. Using power for purposes other than the sanctioned connection (For e.g. using domestic connection for commercial purposes)

9.2.1 Measures to be taken regarding Power Theft

If the electricity company suspects power theft or unauthorised power usage through any of the above means, it can inspect the concerned premises through a Special Officer. **This inspection may be carried out by an Investigation Team headed by the Executive Engineer or Deputy Executive Engineer appointed in the concerned Circle.** This Authorized Officer prepares an investigation report after the inspection. The signature and remarks of the consumer or his representative are obtained on such concluding report of the inspection. If the consumer or his representative refuses to sign, this also gets noted in the report and a copy of the same is given to the consumer. It is binding on the electricity company to conduct this investigation during the period after sunrise and before sunset and in presence of an adult person. Similarly, **it is generally required to have two independent witnesses accompanying the Officer during this inspection.**

The Authorized Representative can examine any of the equipments on the premises of the consumer for suspected power theft. Similarly, he/she can also confiscate any tools and/or equipments through which the consumer has conducted the power theft. The Authorized Representative has to mention the list of such confiscated items in the investigation report.

If the Authorized Representative concludes that the consumer is involved in power theft, he/she can immediately disconnect power supply of the consumer. It is mandatory for the company to lodge a due complaint in this regard at the Police Station within 24 hours.

9.2.2 Penalty and Punishment

The penalty as well as the punishment for power theft or illegal power usage is determined based the scale of theft. If the power theft is less than 10 KW, the consumer is initially charged with a penalty. **The penalty amount recovered from the consumer is three times the rate at the**

first instance of power theft, and six times if it is the second instance of power theft.

If the theft is more than 10 KW of electric load the penalty amount recovered from the consumer is three times the rate at the first instance of power theft, and six times if it is the second instance of power theft. However, in this case, for the second instance, the consumer can face an imprisonment of 6 months to 5 years. Similarly, he/she is also considered ineligible to obtain power supply from any electricity company for a period of 3 months to 2 years.

The trial for power theft can be conducted only in the special courts set up by the State government. However, it should be noted that the company cannot use the provisions under power theft for dealing with unauthorized power usage. (Supply Code Regulations 2005, Regulation 8.5)

9.2.3 Compromise Amount

If the consumer confesses to the have committed power theft, he/she can pay a compromise amount. This amount is to be paid on per KW basis, Rs.4000/- for domestic consumers, Rs.2000/- for agricultural consumers and Rs.10,000/- for commercial consumers. On paying this amount, the consumer can be released immediately from imprisonment and no crime can be charged against him/her in any court. However, it is essential to note that any consumer is allowed to pay the compromise amount only once.

Using more than the sanctioned electric load

It should be noted that in cases where the consumer's power usage exceeds or in past has exceeded his/her sanctioned connected load, it does not amount to unauthorized usage or power theft. Often the company takes action against such consumers using the provisions under unauthorized usage or power theft. But according to the directives of the Commission, the company can only charge a penalty to such consumers and this amount is calculated by charging the extra usage at 1 ½ times of the prevailing tariff.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- For unauthorized power usage, the consumer is penalized at a double rate of his/her current tariff and the amount is determined for the entire period of unauthorized use.
- Before imposing the final amount of penalty, the assessing officer should give the consumer a fair chance to present his case.
- The consumer has to pay the penalty within 30 days of the final decision.
- Power Theft is a non-bailable offence. The consumer may face imprisonment for a period of 6 months to 2 years for this.
- A penalty amount at thrice the tariff for the first time and six times the tariff for the second time is recovered as penalty from the consumer who indulges in power theft.
- The consumer can own up his offence of power theft and pay a compromise amount.



CHAPTER 10

CONSUMERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The last chapter described the regulations and mechanisms laid down for consumer oriented electricity service. We also learnt about the consumers' rights in this context. However, rights and responsibilities go hand in hand. They are two sides of the same coin. In this chapter, let us briefly look at the responsibilities of the consumers. Every consumer needs to carry out some responsibilities at an individual as well as social level.

The responsibilities of consumers are as follows:

- Timely and complete bill payment. This can reduce the complaints related to billing and outstanding payments considerably.
- The wiring of house must be done through a licensed electrical contractor and it is necessary to get it checked every five years. This can prevent accidents that occur due to faulty wiring.
- The Meter should be located at a place convenient for the Meter reader to take the reading.
- In cases when the consumer is travelling and the Meter is going to be unavailable for reading, the electricity distribution company should be duly informed in advance. This can avoid power supply being disconnected due to inability to read the meter.
- Security of the Meter is the consumer's responsibility. The consumer needs to take due care to ensure that the installed meter remains secure.
- It is illegal to manipulate the meter in any way.
- The consumer needs to ensure that there is proper earthing of the Meter as well as the internal wiring.
- The connected load should be within the sanctioned load limit. If additional load is required, it needs to be sanctioned by the distribution company. However, higher connected load does not imply power theft or illegal electric consumption.

- Use of the electric connection should be only towards the stated purpose and not for any other purposes. For e.g. domestic supply connection should not be used for commercial purposes as it amounts to unauthorised power usage.
- The connection sanctioned for one location should not be used for providing supply to other locations. For e.g. illegally extending electric supply to anybody else through your own connection.
- Consuming electricity without a metered connection amounts to power theft. If you observe such connections anywhere, please inform the electricity distribution company immediately.
- Use power cautiously and take every measure to conserve electricity.
- Do not damage the property of the electricity distribution company and also prevent such destruction, if witnessed anywhere.
- If you are dissatisfied with the service of the distribution company use legitimate modes of protest. Do not use abusive language or resort to violence under any circumstances and do not damage public property.
- Identify the consumer organizations in your vicinity to seek advice as well as support and contribute in their work.
- Identify the Public Grievances Cell and the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum in your area and utilise their services whenever needed. Inform others whenever necessary or required.
- Participate in the public hearings of the Electricity Regulatory Commission and convey the consumer's opinions to the Commission.
- The consumers also need to understand the difficulties faced by the distribution Company. For e.g. Getting timely approvals from the local governing bodies to dig roads for providing electric connections, political interference in the electricity distribution company's administration, operations, etc.



CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

Despite the fact that electricity is an important and closely linked component of our daily lives, the consumer still has very little idea or information about it. This results in disconnect between the electricity company and the consumers. The gap in communication is evident from several common issues such as over billing, sudden disconnection of power supply, consumers resorting to illegal practices for supply restoration, power theft by all sections of society and the inability of the electricity companies in preventing this in spite of the knowledge etc. This booklet aims at improving the channels of communication between the consumers and the electricity company. The booklet is expected to benefit not only the general public but also the organizations, institutions and individuals working with various urban and rural communities and civil society organisations.

By educating the consumers about various grievance redressal mechanisms and provisions, it is hoped that this booklet will help them to successfully resolve electricity service related issues and complaints. If necessary, the consumers may also form pressure groups to ensure that the electricity company effectively implements the relevant provisions. Occasionally, it may be necessary to engage with the Commission for eliminating inadequacies in regulations and/or gaps in implementation procedures. If the consumer comes across any incidence of theft or unauthorised use of electricity, the same should be informed to the vigilance cell/MSEDCL officer immediately. Similarly in order to avoid disconnection on account meter not being read, it is essential to inform company if the consumer's premise is going to be locked for a long duration. The list of MSEDCL field officers can be found on their website on this link http://mahadiscom.in/diary/shtm/index_distribution.shtm

The consumer should also monitor appropriate repairs and maintenance works at the local level. This will lead to greater participation of the consumers in the operations of the electricity company making it more consumer-friendly. It will also enable the representatives of the consumer community as well as the electricity company to evaluate the legality and correctness of their actions. If such awareness gets created, the booklet will be said to have met its desired objective.



ANNEXURE -1

FORM NO. A-1

To

The Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited,
(Office)

1. I/We here request you to supply electrical energy to the premises owned/occupied by me/us hereinafter described.
2. I/We hereby agree to keep supply and pay for the energy security as may be demanded in accordance with the rates and conditions of supply of the Company in force from time to time and further declare and agree to take supply of energy for the under mentioned purpose for my / our bonafide use from the date of commencement of supply.
3. I/We also undertake to supply within one month from the date the company intimates that it is ready to supply to our premises failing which I/We undertake to pay the company the minimum charges as may be applicable
4. In the event of death of individual/dissolutions of amalgamations of the company I/We hereby nominate to receive or adjust the deposit outstanding in /our name, to Shri/Smt./Sau. _____
5. This requisition is for:- 1- Phase _____ 3-Phase _____ and LT / HT supply for
A) A new service, B) Re-connection, C) An alteration to my existing installation,
D) A temporary service, E) A change of name Shri. _____
6. Description of premises
House No. _____ Land Survey No. _____
Street : _____
District :- Town/Village _____
Owner's Name :- _____
Owner's Address :- _____
7. Electricity Demand & Type: Domestic _____ kW/ HP
Non-Domestic _____ kW/HP
Demand Increase/Decrease HP/kW _____
8. The wiring will be done by:-
Name of the licensed wiring contractor: -
His License No.
His Address :-

9. Date :- _____ (Signature of applicant)
Name of applicant: _____
Occupation: _____
Address: _____

Indicative list of documents: (copy)

- 1) **For New Connection to Domestic Consumer :** Ration card / Voter's card / Photo-pass / Passport / Documents pertaining to occupation of premises (e.g. 7/12 abstract / 8-A format / rent receipt).
- 2) **For New Connection to Industrial Consumer :** Valid Industrial License, NOC from Pollution Control Board & Fire Dept. and Documents pertaining to occupation of premises.
- 3) **For New Connection to Commercial Consumer :** Shop and establishment license and documents pertaining to occupation of premises.
- 4) **Change of Name :** Latest paid bill, Consent letter of the transferor for transfer of connection in the name of transferee; In the absence of consent letter - Agreement/purchase/sale deed with present consumer (transferor) / Latest maintenance receipt in applicants name / share certificate / latest rent receipt in applicants name ; In case of death of present consumer death certificate and NOC of natural legal heirs if applicant is other than spouse of the present consumer. In case of Quarters allotment letter in applicants name.

Note: Please bring original for verification

Documents copies attached are as follows:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Verified with originals Yes/No

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT RECEIPT FOR THE ABOVE APPLICATION

Maharashtra Electricity Distribution Company Ltd. _____ Division _____
Subdivision _____

Application No. _____ Date _____

Demand 1-Phase _____ 3-Phase _____ KW _____ HP _____

Applicants Name & Address _____

Signature

Office seal

ANNEXURE -2

ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION DATA FOR SOME DOMESTIC EQUIPMENT

S. No	Name	Watts	Typical number of hours per Day	Units consumed of operation in 30 days
1	Air Conditioner 1 Tonne	1400	6	252
2	Air Conditioner 1.5 Tonne	1800	6	324
3	Air Cooler	200	6	36
4	Electric Iron - big	1000	1	30
5	Fan - Ceiling: usual (36/48 inches span)	50	10	15
6	Fan -Table (12/16 inch span)	40	10	12
7	Geyser (25/35 Litres)	2000	1	60
8	Geyser Instant	3000	1	90
9	Hot plate	1000	2	60
10	'Zero Watt' bulb (night lamp)	15	8	3.6
11	Bulb	40	4	4.8
12	Bulb	60	4	7.2
13	Bulb	100	4	12.0
14	CFL	5	4	0.6
15	CFL	9	4	1.1
16	CFL	11	4	1.3
17	CFL	25	4	3.0
18	Tube light 2 feet	28	4	3.4
19	Tube light 4 feet	50	4	6
20	Mixer - big	450	1	13.5
21	Mosquito repellent	5	10	1.5
22	Radio/Tape recorder	20	4	2.4
23	Refrigerator - big (300 Litres)	300	10	90
24	Refrigerator - small (165 litres)	225	10	67.5
25	TV B/W	25	6	4.5
26	TV Colour	120	6	22
27	Vacuum cleaner	750	0.5	11
28	Washing Machine Automatic	325	1	10
29	Washing Machine Semi automatic	200	1	6
30	Water pump medium (5 hp)	3730	9	1007
31	Water pump small (1 hp)	746	9	201
32	Water purifier	25	1	0.75
33	Personal Computer	150	6	27

ANNEXURE -3

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR'S COMPLETION REPORT

Application No. _____

Place: _____

To,

Date: _____

The MS&EDCL

_____ (Local Office)

I/we beg to inform you that installation at _____ occupied by _____ has been completed by me / us and is now ready for test.

The details of the installation and test obtained are as follows:

Nature of Demand	No. of Points	Wattage of Points	Total Wattage	Insulation resistance to earth	Remarks
LIGHTING					
Light – General Services					
Light – Fluorescent					
Fans					
Wall Plugs					
DOMESTIC APPLIANCES					
Cookers					
Refrigerator					
Water Heater / Geyser					
Washing Machine					
Air Conditioner / Air cooler					
Wall Plugs					
Other					
MOTORS	No.	BHP / kW (each)	Total BHP / kW		
Industrial					
Pumps					
Other Purposes					
Total					

Insulation test at the point of supply was carried out by me on _____ 200 _ and the result was _____ to earth and _____ between phases.

Supervisor's Signature _____

Licence No. _____

Date _____

Wiring Contractor's Signature _____

Licence No. _____

Address _____

ANNEXURE - 4

APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF NAME FORM-X, Y & Z

FORM ' X '

CONSENT FOR CHANGE OF NAME / OWNERSHIP OF INSTALLATION

1. Full Name, address and profession / Occupation of transferor.
2. Full Name, address and profession / Occupation of transferee.
3. Full Address of premises served by transferor.
4. Electric load involved in kW / HP
Meter No.
5. Nature of factory / establishment with products / Nature.
6. Is the transfer of business through a registered deed or documents, if not, how is it being effected ?
7. Consent of the transferor to transfer the connection.
8. Consent of the transferor to transfer security deposit.

I Shri / Smt. / M/s. _____, hereby give consent to transfer the connection and security deposit in the name of transferee Shri / Smt. / M/s. _____.

Signature of Transferor

Signature of Transferee

FORM ' Y '

UNDERTAKING OT HOLD THE LIABILITY

To,
The _____ Engineer,
MSEDCL, _____

Dear Sir,

In consideration of you agreeing to change the service connection no. _____ in my name, although the said service connection stands in the name of Shri / Smt. / M/s. _____, I hereby undertake to hold the MSEDCL harmless and keep indemnified against all claims in respect of the change of name in the said service connection. I hereby further agree to pay all the arrears **in accordance to Regulation 10.5 of Supply Code** and discharge all the liability of the transferor, if need be.

Yours faithfully,

(Transferee)

Full Name :

Address :

FORM ' Z '

DECLARATION WHERE THE TRANSFEROR IS NOT AVAILABLE

I, _____, son of _____,
age _____ years, residing at _____
_____ do hereby on solemn affirmation declare as under:

That by deed of conveyance dated _____, Shri/Smt./M/s. _____ has / have sold all his/their moveable and immovable properties to me and has / have also agreed that, all the benefits together with liabilities past and future in respect of the supply of electrical energy to him / her / them by the MSEDCL, should be transferred to me. Accordingly, I have agreed to take all the benefits together with past and future liabilities in respect of the supply of Electrical energy by the MSEDCL to the said premises and undertake to pay the same and abide by the terms and conditions of the MSEDCL prevailing from time to time. I hereby undertake and agree to take supply from the MSEDCL on the terms and conditions herein mentioned and further undertake to hold MSEDCL or its authorized representatives harmless and indemnified against all claims in respect of this change in the above referred service connection and hereby agree to pay up all the arrears **in accordance to Regulations 10.5 of Supply Code** and to discharge all the liability of the transferor.

Solemnly declared at _____ on this _____ day of _____.

ANNEXURE - 5

AFFIDAVIT OF THE SUCCESSOR

I _____, son of _____, age _____ years, residing at _____, do hereby solemnly affirm as under:

That an electric connection (consumer no. _____) given by the MSEDCL at _____ stands in the name of Shri / Smt. _____, who was my _____. He / She died on _____. I have produced the death Certificate along with my application form. I declare that I am one of the successors of the said deceased and have inherited the above said premises in question (immovable property) together with liabilities, past and future. I declare that the persons who have signed below are the also heirs of the said deceased and have no objection for transfer of the said electric connection in my name. I am ready to take-over all the past and future liabilities in respect of the said electric connection.

I hereby undertake to execute a fresh agreement in order to take all the benefits together with liabilities, past and future, in respect of the said electric connection given by the MSEDCL and pay for the same and abide by terms and conditions of the MSEDCL prevailing from time to time. I hereby undertake and agree to take supply from the MSEDCL on the terms and conditions herein mentioned and further undertake to hold the MSEDCL or its authorized representatives harmless and indemnified against all claims of any other persons claiming any rights to the said electric connection, howsoever, by reason of you agreeing to the transfer the same to my name and hereby also agree to pay up all the arrears and to discharge all the liabilities of the outgoing consumer.

Solemnly declared at _____ on this _____ day of _____

Signed by Transferee

We consent to the transfer applied for

1.

2.

3.

(To be signed by other heirs of the deceased)

In the presence of:

Name, Address,

Signature

1 _____

2 _____

N. B. :- The above declaration is to be signed before Magistrate.

ANNEXURE - 6

APPLICATION TO INTERNAL GRIEVANCE REDRESAL CELL

Name:
Address:
Tel:
Date:

To,
Executive Engg (Office)
Internal Grievance Redressal Cell
_____ Circle Office
MSDCL,

Subject: Grievance of a Consumer

Dear Sir,

- 1) (Consumer Related Information)
Consumer No. _____ Name of Division office _____
Circle Office: _____ Zone _____ etc.
- 2) (Grievance Related Information)
Detail Explanation of Grievance, attach copies of any relevant documents
(if space is not sufficient please enclose separate sheet)
- 3) Any Information regarding the relevant communication if happened before
with local office or with billing center/sub divisional office/divisional office
on the same grievance
- 4) DECLARATION
(a) I/ We, the consumer /s herein declare that: (i) the information furnished
herein above is true and correct; and (ii) I/ We have not concealed or
misrepresented any fact stated herein above and the documents submitted
herewith.

Yours faithfully

(Signature)

NOMINATION

I/We the above named consumer hereby nominate Shri/Smt.
....., who is not an Advocate and whose address is
....., as my / o u r
REPRESENTATIVE in the proceedings and confirm that any statement, acceptance
or rejection made by him/her shall be binding on me/us. He/She has signed below in my
presence.

ACCEPTED

(Signature of Representative)

(Signature of Consumer)

ANNEXURE - 7

APPLICATION TO FORUM FOR REDRESSAL OF GRIEVANCE

Date _____

1. Name of The Consumer : _____
2. Full Address Of The Consumer _____
Pin Code _____ Phone No. _____
Fax No. _____ Email ID: _____
3. Particulars of Connection and Consumer No. _____
4. Distribution Licensee _____
5. Details of Grievance, Facts Giving Rise To The Grievance
(If space is not sufficient please enclose separate sheet)

6. Date of Original Intimation of Grievance by the consumer to the Distribution Licensee [Internal Grievance Redressal Cell (IGRC)]

7. Remedy Provided by the Distribution Licensee, if any
(If remedy has been provided, please enclose relevant communication from the Distribution Licensee) _____
8. Nature of Relief sought from the Forum _____
(Please enclose any proof to support claim, if any)
9. List Of Documents Enclosed (Please enclose copies of any relevant documents which support the facts giving rise to the Grievance)
10. DECLARATION

(A) I/ We, the consumer /s herein declare that: (i) the information furnished herein above is true and correct; and (ii) I/ We have not concealed or misrepresented any fact stated herein above and the documents submitted herewith.

- (b) The present Grievance has been intimated to the Distribution Licensee in the form and manner and within the time frame prescribed by the Distribution Licensee and I/ We am/are not satisfied by the remedy provided by the Distribution Licensee or no remedy was provided within a period of two (2) months from the date of original intimation.
- (c) The subject matter of the present Grievance has never been submitted to the Forum by me/ or by any one of us or by any of the parties concerned with the subject matter to the best of my/ our knowledge.
- (d) The subject matter of my / our Grievance has not been settled through the Forum in any previous proceedings.
- (e) The subject matter of my / our Grievance has not been decided by any competent authority/court/arbitrator, and is not pending before any such authority / court / arbitrator .

Yours faithfully

(Signature)

(Consumer's name in block letter)

NOMINATION

I/We the above named consumer hereby nominate Shri/Smt....., who is not an Advocate and whose address is, as my/our **REPRESENTATIVE** in the proceedings and confirm that any statement, acceptance or rejection made by him/her shall be binding on me/us.He/She has signed below in my presence.

ACCEPTED

(Signature of Representative)

(Signature of Consumer)

ANNEXURE - 8

REPRESENTATION BEFORE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN

No. _____ of year _____ Date _____ (To be filled up by Office)

To
The Electricity Ombudsman

(Address)

Dear Sir,

SUB: please make a mention of the order of the Forum from which a representation to

the Electricity Ombudsman is being made

Details of the Grievance are as under:

1. Name of The Consumer : _____
2. Full Address Of The Consumer _____
Pin Code _____ Phone No. _____
Fax No. _____ Email ID: _____
3. Name and Full Address of The Distribution Licensee, _____

4. Name and Full Address of The Forum _____

5. Particulars of Connection and Consumer No. _____
6. Date of submission of The Grievance by The Consumer to the Forum _____

(Please enclose three copies of the Grievance)
7. Subject Matter Of the Representation _____
8. Details of The Representation, Facts Giving Rise to The Representation (*If space is not sufficient please enclose separate sheet*) _____

9. Whether the consumer has received the final decision of the Forum ?
(*If yes, please enclose 'three copies' of the Forum's order conveying its final decision*)

10. Nature of Relief Sought From The Electricity Ombudsman_____

(Please enclose 'three copies' of documentary proof, if any, in support of your claim)

11. Nature of Extent Of Monetary Loss, if any, claimed by the consumer (if any) by way of compensation Rs_____

(Please enclose documentary proof, if any, to show that such loss is actual loss caused as a direct consequence of alleged act, omission or commission of the Distribution Licensee)

12. List of Document enclosed (Please enclose '**three copies**' of all the documents which support the facts giving rise to the Representation):

13. Declaration : (a) I/ We , the consumer/s herein declare that: (i) the information furnished herein above is true and correct; and (ii) I/ We have not concealed or misrepresented any fact stated in hereinabove and the documents submitted herewith. (b) The subject matter of my / our representation has never been brought before the Office of the Electricity Ombudsman by me/ or by any one of us or by any of the parties concerned with the subject matter to the best of my/ our knowledge. (c) The subject matter of my / our representation has not been settled through the Office of the Electricity Ombudsman in any previous proceedings. (d) The subject matter of the present representation has not been decided by any competent authority/court/arbitrator, and is not pending before any such authority / court / arbitrator.

Yours faithfully

(Signature)

(Consumer's name in block letter)

NOMINATION

I/We the above named consumer hereby nominate Shri/Smt.....
..... who is not an Advocate and whose address is
.....as my/our **REPRESENTATIVE** in the proceedings and confirm that any statement, acceptance or rejection made by him/her shall be binding on me/us. He/She has signed below in my presence.

ACCEPTED

(Signature of Representative)

(Signature of Consumer)

Important Rules, Regulations and Orders for Electricity Consumers

Electricity Act 2003

The Central Electricity Authority (Installation and Operation of Meters) Regulations, 2006.

“Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and Other Conditions of Supply) Regulations, 2005”

“Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Standards of Performance of Distribution Licensees, Period for Giving Supply and Determination of Compensation) Regulations, 2005”

“Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum & Electricity Ombudsman) Regulations, 2005”

MERC order in the matter of Approval of MSEDCL Schedule of Charges dated September 8, 2006 for Case No 70 of 2005.

MERC Tariff Order in the matter of MSEDCL petition for Approval of Annual Performance Review for FY2007-08 and Tariff for FY 2008-09 dated June 20, 2008 for Case No. 72 of 2007

Some important Internet Websites:

Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC) :
www.mercindia.org.in

Maharashtra Electricity Distribution Company (MSEDCL) :
www.mahadiscom.co.in

About Prayas

Prayas is a registered public trust formed by a group of medical and technical professionals. Since 1994, Prayas has been working in the fields of Health, Energy, Education and Parenting as well as on issues related to resources and livelihood. Prayas works with the aim of extending its professional knowledge and skills to support the interventions and struggles for upliftment of the marginalized groups in society. Prayas's work include research, analysis, training, information dissemination, generating resource material, etc.

The Prayas Energy Group (PEG) works specifically in the area of electricity. It has conducted several research studies as well as projects related to policy level issues of electricity sector. In the recent past, PEG has focused upon sector reform and governance in the power sector. These initiatives include evaluation of the World Bank model in Orissa, Analysis of the Enron Project, policy interventions both at the state as well as central level, etc. For more information about Prayas, please log on to **www.prayaspune.org**. A list of the major publications by Prayas is also available on the website.

The “Electricity Act 2003” came into existence on June 10, 2003. This Act overrides all the pre-existing Acts and brings about some fundamental and pervasive changes in the field of electricity. Additionally, some important consumer-oriented provisions were also made in order to improve the quality of electricity services. Accordingly, the Maharashtra State Electricity Regulation Commission has laid down several guidelines, standards and regulations that the electricity company must abide by. Similarly independent institutions like the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum and the Electricity Ombudsman have been created to ensure proper implementation of these guidelines. These standards and guidelines are a part of regulations that are binding on all the electricity companies and strict implementation of the same is mandatory. The consumers can make use of these provisions and institutions to seek redressal of their grievances.

The booklet provides detailed information about these legal and institutional provisions as well as common problems faced by domestic consumers, such as how to obtain a new connection, how to read an electric bill, what is to be done in case of a wrongly issued bill, how one registers a complaint, etc. It also gives information and discusses various issues and provisions related to metering and billing, and tries to simplify and explain the consumers' rights while dealing with the electricity company as well as the regulations and standards that the company should follow. It could prove useful to individuals working on such issues in rural areas as well as to the voluntary organizations working with the marginalized sections of society. The booklet is expected to serve the purpose of creating awareness in the public about consumer rights and making the electric company's operations more consumer-oriented as well as to increase accountability of the company and improve service delivery.

For private distribution
suggested contribution
Rs. 40/-



आरोग्य, ऊर्जा, शिक्षण आणि पालकत्व
या विषयातील विशेष प्रयत्न

Prayas Energy Group