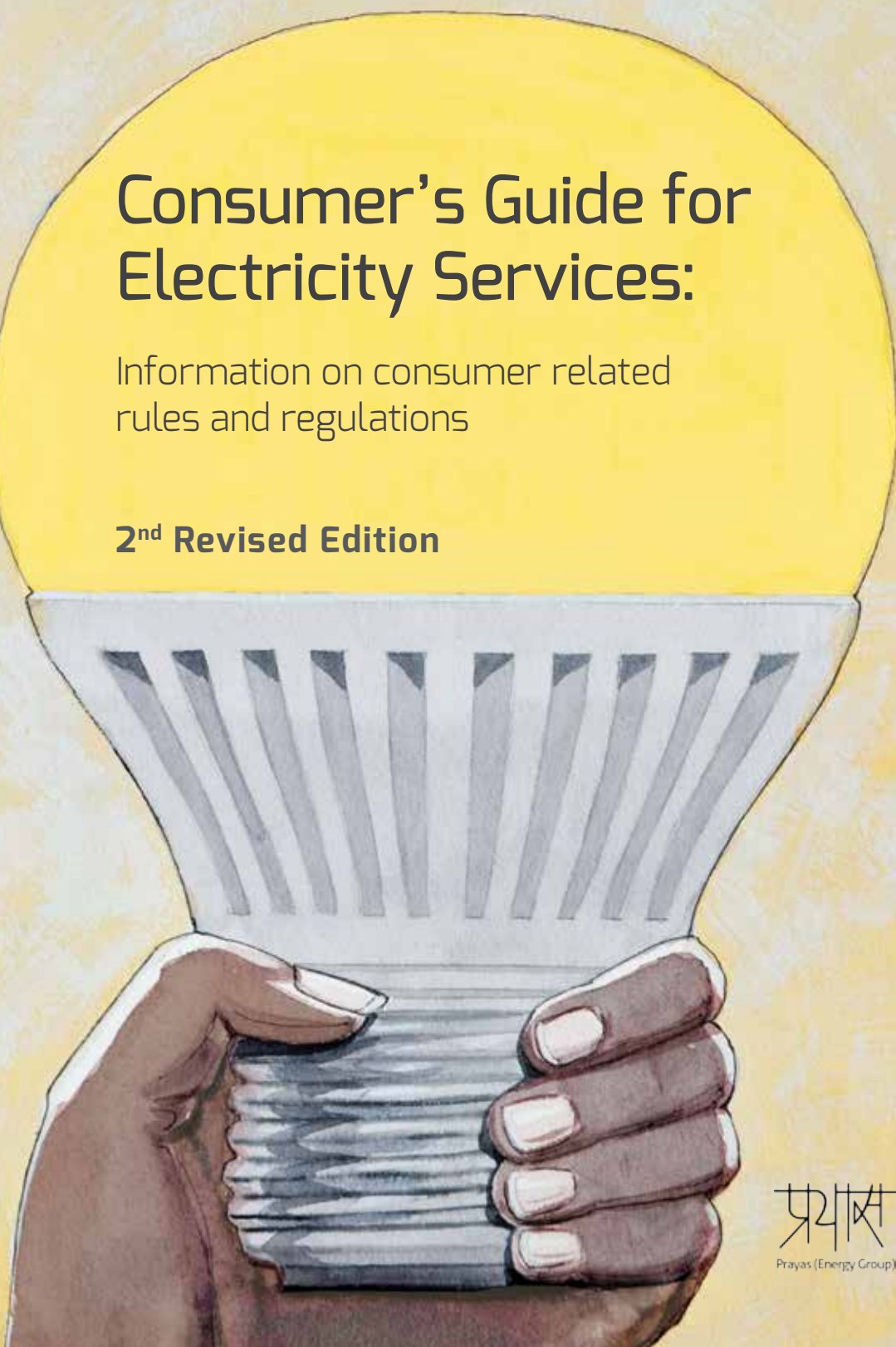


Consumer's Guide for Electricity Services:

Information on consumer related
rules and regulations

2nd Revised Edition



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April 2019

Maria Chirayil | Ashwini Chitnis



Prayas (Energy Group)

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About the booklet

In spite of the pervasive role of electricity in society, there is little awareness among consumers about its system of operation, the acts and regulations governing it, and their rights and responsibilities within the sector. The idea of this booklet emerged from this lack of information or access to it. Small domestic and commercial consumers in the state of Maharashtra are the primary audience of this booklet. Since the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (MSEDCL) is the principal distribution company for Maharashtra (except Mumbai), all references are made with regard to this company, unless stated otherwise.

The primary aim of this booklet is twofold. Firstly, it is an attempt to facilitate better coordination and communication between the consumer and the company. The booklet is also aimed at generating public awareness about consumer rights and bringing in a consumer oriented perspective to the company's operations. It is intended as an introduction to consumer engagement and provides only preliminary information about the grievance redressal mechanism. This booklet does not offer an absolute solution to all consumer grievances. Instead, it provides general information on consumer issues and the framework for grievance redressal which can be used by consumers to address their specific needs.

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1: Overview

1.1 Background

Electricity is one of the most vital services in modern society and is proving to be almost indispensable in all spheres of life. Its use ranges from lighting homes and streets, and running appliances, to pumping water in the farms, enabling communication and entertainment, and running industries and commercial establishments. Availability of electricity and the extent of electrification is often related with the development status of a country. Electricity is also a key input to economic growth which can in turn improve the quality of life.

All of us are somehow connected to electricity, either as consumers or as people affected by its production or use. It is, therefore, necessary to have adequate information and understanding of the various policies, rules, and regulations related to electricity services and the concerned institutions and organisations. This booklet is an effort to provide such information, especially in the area of consumer complaints in one state, namely Maharashtra. In the chapters that follow, we will be looking at the major rules and regulations that govern these processes in greater detail. But before that, let us

note a few points about the institutions that lay down these regulations, their powers and their operational structure. It is also important to understand how these regulations came into force and their evolution thereafter.

The Electricity Act 2003 (henceforth referred to as E Act) was enacted in June 2003. It nullified all the previous legislations related to electricity, causing fundamental and far reaching effects in the sector. Along with the major changes in sector structure and functioning, the E Act also introduced several consumer-oriented provisions aimed at improving the electricity service delivery. As a result of these provisions, the consumers gained certain rights. The E Act strengthened the State Electricity Regulatory Commissions, for better control over the operations of the electricity companies. In addition to laying down the tariff for electricity, the Commission was authorised 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 state Commission has laid down state-specific regulations within the broad framework of this Act.

1.2 Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission

The Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (referred to as “Commission” hereafter) was established in 1999. It consists of three members who are appointed by the state government through a selection committee process. Besides specifying the electricity tariff for consumers, 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 of the Commission are required to be conducted transparently and citizens have the right to participate in it. Although the office of the Commission is in Mumbai, public hearings on important issues are often conducted by the Commission in several parts of the state.

1.3 Fixing electricity tariff

The electricity distribution companies have to get the proposed electricity tariffs approved from the Commission. Earlier this used to be an annual process but since 2016-17, the Commission has set tariff for a period of four years under the multi-year tariff (MYT) regime. The Commission also sets performance norms, for example, distribution loss, billing efficiency etc., for the distribution companies. In order to determine tariff, the Commission reviews and evaluates the performance to decide which costs can be allowed. In addition to costs the companies are also allowed a

certain fixed return on their equity. Based on the costs that are allowed, tariffs are set to recover these costs from consumers. Consumers are classified into various categories based on type and nature of consumption, such as residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial. Within a given consumer category there are slabs based on monthly units consumed and tariff for lower consumption is low and those for higher consumption is high.

The Commission along with authorised consumer representatives conducts a technical validation of a tariff revision proposal. In this, the documents and information furnished by the Company are assessed and scrutinised to evaluate whether adequate information to support the tariff revision proposal has been made available. After such validation, the proposal is published and objections, comments and suggestions are invited from public. The Commission then conducts public hearings in different parts of the state 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 directives 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. Apart from the distribution companies, which cater to retail consumers, the Commission also determines tariff for generation and transmission companies through a similar public process.

Along with tariff orders, the Commission also issues 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 latest updated directive for Schedule of Charges for the Maharashtra State Distribution Company (MSEDCL or the DISCOM) can be found in the 2018 tariff order (case no. 195 of 2017 which was published in September 2018). Thus, any charges levied by the electricity company on any consumers need to be in accordance with this directive.

Besides issuing various orders and directives for regulating the operations of the electricity companies, 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 consumer grievances. Some of the important regulations are as follows:

a. Supply Code and other Conditions of Supply Regulations, 2005

This includes the mandatory procedures, rules and conditions that the electricity company has to fulfil while providing the service. For example, 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 Licensees, Period for Giving Supply and Determination of Compensation Regulations, 2014

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 'Standards of Performance Regulation, 2014', 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 in 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.

These regulations have legal status and it is binding on the Electricity companies to abide by them in letter and spirit. Thus, the consumers can use these regulations to resolve their grievances. In Maharashtra since June 2005, the State Electricity Board has been unbundled into three separate companies namely, Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company Ltd (MSETCL or Mahapareshan), Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Ltd (MSPGCL or Mahanirmiti), and Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution

Company Ltd (MSEDCL or Mahavitaran). The consumer has direct contact only with the Distribution Company. Hence, all references to electricity company in the booklet imply electricity distribution company, i.e. the DISCOM.

By being alert and vigilant about their rights and responsibilities, consumers can definitely help in improving electricity supply and service, not just for themselves, but also for other consumers. However, in order to deal with issues such as rising cost of supply or increasing financial losses of distribution companies, consumers need to participate in the broader decision making processes such as tariff determination, notification of regulations, etc. We discuss a few avenues for such engagement in the last chapter of this booklet.

2 : Getting a connection

Electricity is an essential service in today's society. However, information about the procedures to access this service is not common knowledge. Often the consumer ends up paying high amounts due to lack of information about the exact charges

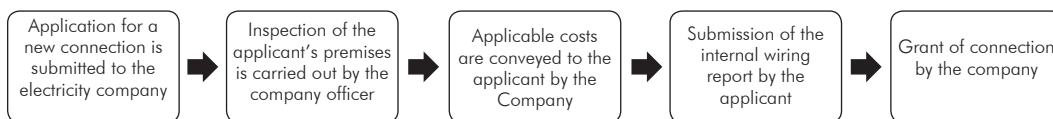
involved in getting a new connection or transferring an existing connection. In this chapter, we will look at the various steps involved in getting and transferring an electricity connection and the various charges associated with it.



2.1 Procedure for getting a new connection

The procedure for getting a new connection for domestic and small commercial consumers is as shown in figure 2.1:

Figure 2.1: Steps involved in getting a new connection



It is to be noted that in order to streamline its internal processes, MSEDCL has started encouraging consumers to file applications for new connection or change of name through web based services. These options are discussed in greater detail in chapter 7.

2.1.1 Application for a new connection

(Regulation 4, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

For a new connection, the applicant has to fill up Form-A1. This form is available free of cost at all the branch offices, divisional offices or consumer centres of the electricity company. It is mandatory that the company make this form is available both in English and in Marathi, at all the above mentioned locations. The company must also make the form available in a downloadable format on its website. The format of this form is attached as annexure 1 for reference. As per the E Act, the applicant for a new connection is also considered to be a consumer of the electricity company. (Section 2 (15), Electricity Act 2003).

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

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

Determining the necessary electric load

In the application, the applicant's need for electric load in terms of kilowatt or horse power must be mentioned. 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 the required electric load. An illustration on how to estimate the electric load requirement for a two room house is provided in box 2.1.

In case of residential consumers, the application for the 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.

Box 2.1: 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 W), two bulbs (electric load 40 W), two fans (electric load 50 W), and one colour television (electric load 120 W).

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

Total electric load:

Two tube lights of 50 W – $(50 \times 2) = 100 \text{ W}$

Two bulbs of 40 W – $(40 \times 2) = 80 \text{ W}$

Two fans of 50 W – $(50 \times 2) = 100 \text{ W}$

One colour TV of 120 W – $(120 \times 1) = 120 \text{ W}$

Therefore, total electric load = $(100 + 80 + 100 + 120) = 400 \text{ W}$

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

Thus, the necessary electric load for a two-room house is 500 W (i.e. 0.5 kW).

For reference of the consumers, a list of household appliances and their average electric load (in kW) is attached as annexure 2.

Necessary documents to be attached to the application

(Regulation 4, Supply Code Regulation 2005)

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 their 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, documents must be attached to establish proof of ownership/occupancy, proof of identity, and, if relevant, proof of belonging to any category. In this regard, for consumers falling in the domestic category, the following documents may be required at the time of processing their application;

- Proof of ownership/occupancy of the premises (any one); occupancy

certificate issued by statutory body/competent authority, ownership document/Form 8/Form 7-12/tax/lease issued by local authority, (in case of tenants) leave & license/lease agreement with property owner's NOC, (in case of quarter) allotment letter of concerned authority, (in case of slum areas) if none of the above documents are available then an affidavit on Rs. 200 stamp paper.

- Identity proof (any one); voter's identification card, government authorised photo id, aadhar card, PAN card, driving licence, passport.
- Documents required for relevant category (if applicable); SC/ST caste certificate, BPL certificate.

For a commercial connection, the applicant needs to attach a copy of the shop licence along with the proof of residence. The role the company plays in the provision of new connections to the consumer is detailed in box 2.2.

Box 2.2: The role of the electric company in provision of new connections

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 their application as well as the reasons for delay, if any. The electricity company is bound to give a written explanation for any such delay (Regulation 4.3 and 4.4, Supply Code Regulations 2005).

Application processing fee

(Schedule of charges approved by the Commission, 12 September 2018)

The applicant has to pay a processing fee when submitting the application. The company charges a nominal amount to the applicant for the internal assessment procedure. The applicant should 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. The scheduled application processing fees to be charged by all the electricity companies in Maharashtra has been given in table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Application registration and processing fee

Type of power supply	Fee (Rs.)
Single phase	100
Three phase	150
Agricultural (low-tension electric load)	150

Source: MERC order in Case No. 195 of 2017, dated September 2018

The consumer does not have to pay the processing fee if the application and payment for the new connection is made online. The completed form, with all the necessary documents and receipt of the fee attached, should be submitted at the concerned divisional office. The concerned officer immediately assesses the application and gives an

acknowledgement. The consumer should insist on the acknowledgement, if the same is not given proactively. This is necessary for any future follow up. The prescribed duration for granting a new connection is calculated from the date of submission of the application, and hence the acknowledgment is essential.

2.1.2 Inspection of the applicant's premises

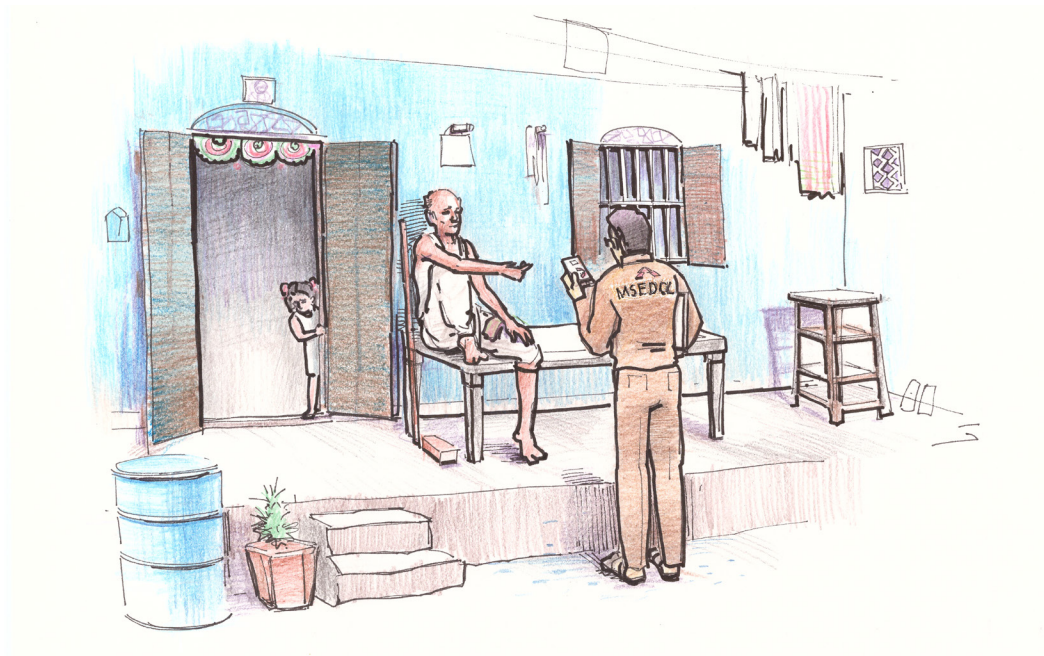
(Regulation 8, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

On receiving the application, an authorised representative of the electricity company inspects the applicant's premises. It is binding on the company to assess the applicant's premises within seven days in urban areas, and ten days in rural areas, on receiving the application. Failing this, the company has to pay a compensation of Rs. 100 per week of delay, to the consumer (Appendix A, Standards of Performance Regulations 2014). The consumer should be informed in advance about the assessment. Accordingly, the applicant or their representative should be present at the given time.

This assessment includes scrutiny of certain technical issues. For example, the presence of a pre-existing company distribution network adjoining the applicant's premises in order to provide the supply, what can be done in the absence of such a network, or if the same is not sufficient, etc. Accordingly, the company representative sanctions the required

electric load. Similarly, they decide 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. Box 2.3 describes prerequisite conditions to be followed by the company representative before entering the consumer's premises.



Box 2.3: Entry into a consumer's premises

While entering a consumer's premises for any reason, the company representative must carry and display a name tag. It is binding on the representative to produce proof of identity and an authorisation letter, if demanded by the consumer. If they fail to do so, the company is liable to pay the consumer compensation of Rs. 50. Barring power thefts and unauthorised power usage; the company must inform the consumer in advance before entering their premises. The company can inspect a consumer's premises only after sunrise and before sunset. Moreover, it is mandated that the inspection be done in presence of an adult male member representative of the applicant.

2.1.3 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 the 'firm quotation'. It consists of the following charges that the applicant is supposed to pay:

- a. Service connection charges (SCC)
- b. 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 fifteen days in urban and twenty 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 thirty days. If the company fails to do so, it has to pay compensation of Rs. 100 per week of delay to the consumer (Appendix A, Standards of Performance Regulations 2014).

The company must levy all charges in accordance with the schedule of charges approved 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 charges, other than those mentioned above.

2.1.4 Submission of 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 of this report is given in annexure 3, for reference. It consists of information regarding various electrical appliances that will be used in the applicant's premises, such as the earthing details. 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, carried out 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 schedule of charges issued by the Commission on 12 September 2018, these charges are Rs. 100 for single phase consumers and Rs. 200 for three phase consumers.

2.1.5 Grant of the 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 the new connection within a stipulated period of time, after payment of the charges. The stipulations under the standards of performance regulations that decide the time frame within which the new connection should be granted are given in table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Period for starting the power supply

Type of connection	Period
If the connection is to be given from the existing network	1 month
If the connection needs the distribution network to be extended or expanded	3 months
If a new substation needs to be established	1 year

Source: Standards of Performance Regulations, MERC, 2014

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 equipment 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 gets it fixed at the premises of the consumer. Additionally, if the company must erect a transformer in the premises of the consumer, the company must do so by leasing out the land from the consumer at the prevailing market rates, as in mentioned in box 2.4.

Box 2.4: Installation of transformers in the consumer's premises

The company may need to erect transformers in the consumer's premises to provide power supply. This is commonly seen in residential colonies and societies. In such an event, the consumer must lease out suitable land within such premises for the period for which supply is given. The terms of such lease of land must be agreed on by both company and the consumer, with regard to the prevailing market rates. If an expiry date to such an agreement has not been previously agreed on, then such an agreement is deemed to expire at the end of two years from the date of notification. After this a fresh agreement can be entered into, with terms and conditions that are agreeable to both the company and the consumer (Regulation 5.5, Supply Code Regulations, 2005).

2.2 Various charges to be paid for a new electricity connection

Having looked at 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, as discussed in section 2.1.3, the applicant 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 (Refer table 2.1). Now let us understand the other two charges in greater details.

2.2.1 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 extra charges. The material required for these services 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 SCC applicable to the consumer is determined from their approved electric load and the type of connection (whether on the surface or underground). The charges fixed by MSEDCL according to the schedule of charges approved by the Commission on 12 September 2018 are listed in table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Service Connection Charge (SCC)

Phase	Electric Load	Supply through overhead cable (Rs.)	Electric Load (kW)	Supply through underground cable (Rs.)
Single Phase	Up to 0.5 kW	1,000	Up to 5 kW	3,100
	0.5 kW to 10 kW	1,500	5 kW to 10 kW	7,150
Three Phase	Up to 16 kW	3,500	Up to 20 kW	13,500
	16 kW to 80 kW	8,500	20 kW to 50 kW	21,000

Source: MERC order in Case No. 195 of 2017, dated September 2018

2.2.2 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 consumed by the consumer during one billing cycle (i.e. 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 specific power consumption is assumed. For domestic consumers, 108 units of electricity consumption per month for connected load of one kilowatt is expected, while for a commercial consumer it is 270 units. The estimated bill amount corresponding to the above mentioned units is the amount a consumer has to pay at the time of getting a new connection, as security deposit. This amount can vary as per the Commission's directive on tariff orders, 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 table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Security deposit for domestic consumers (for a billing cycle of 1 month)

Electric load (kW)	Expected consumption (units/month)	Security deposit (rounded off)	
		Single Phase (Rs.)	Three Phase (Rs.)
1	108	574	794
2	216	1,442	1,662
3	324	2,381	2,601

Source: MERC order in Case No. 195 of 2017, dated September 2018

The total cost for the new connection is determined from the type of connection (residential or non-residential/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 table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Total cost to the consumer for getting a new connection (single phase, overhead connection)

Charges	For 0.5 kW load (Rs.)	For 2 kW load (Rs.)
Form assessment fees	100	100
Service Connection Charges	1,000	1,500
Security Deposit	312	1,441
Total Cost	1,412	3,041

Source: Prayas (Energy Group) analysis based on MERC regulatory documents

The consumer can verify the total cost incurred depending on the type of connection and the sanctioned load. The cost of the meter is not factored in at this

stage, as discussed in box 2.5. Thus, if the company charges an amount more than the above, the consumer can demand to know the reasons for the same.

Box 2.5: 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 when getting a new connection. As per the order issued by the Commission (dated 12 September 2014), 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 (Section 6.2 (a), Regulations on meter, Central Electricity Authority, 17 March 2006). Hence, it is illegal on the 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, they can always exercise the choice of buying it from the company or from the market. Chapter 3, titled 'Meter', explains this in greater detail.

2.3 Transfer of connection

In cases where there has been a change in ownership of property of a consumer, the electric supply connection can be transferred to the new owner. To do this, the prospective consumer has to fill Form-A1 (attached in annexure 1). Then, depending on the reason of transfer, the relevant documents must be submitted along with the form. There is also a nominal form assessment fee that needs to be paid (refer table 2.1).

The consumer should ask for acknowledgement of the submitted form. The electricity company is obligated to

convey its decision within two billing cycles after receiving the application, failing which, as per the Standards of Performance Regulations 2014, 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 their case before the decision is made (Regulation 10, Supply Code Regulations 2005). However, it needs to be mentioned here that the transfer application does not empower the consumer to physically move or relocate their electrical supply connection.

2.3.1 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, they need to fill and submit Form-U along with Form-A1 (attached as annexure 4).

Form-U is the form for change of name, with the address of the premise remaining the same. The details of the old consumer and the new consumer must be provided here, along with the reason for the transfer of connection. Depending on the reason for the change, the consumer must attach one of the following documents;

- occupancy certificate issued by statutory body/competent authority
- ownership document/form 8/form 7-12/tax/lease issued by local authority
- certified copy of corresponding legal document (in case of inheritance/succession/will/ gift deed)
- Certificate of Incorporation issued as per provision of companies Act
- affidavit/gazette notification for himself (in case applicant himself has changed their name)
- legal document supporting leasing and NOC of the owner (in case of premises is let out to the applicant)

2.3.2 Transfer of security deposit and arrears

When the connection is transferred, the security deposit may also be transferred to the new consumer if the previous consumer gives consent. In the absence of such consent, the new consumer must pay the security deposit. The previous consumer also has the option to get the security deposit refunded. For either course of action, the new consumer must submit Form-X, in addition to Form-A1 and Form-U (attached as annexure 4). In case of transfer, Form-X expresses consent of the previous consumer toward the transfer. However, if the previous consumer wants the security deposit amount to be refunded, they must attach the original receipt of the security deposit, or their indemnity bond (if the receipt is lost), to Form-X.

If the previous consumer owes outstanding amounts (also called arrears) to the company, the submitted application will not be processed and intimation will be sent to the new consumer.

Points to note:

- Any person applying for a new connection is also considered to be a consumer of the electricity company.
- All the applications 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 explicitly demand the acknowledgement of the application at all times.
- The consumer can demand a written explanation from the company about the status of their application and the reasons for delay, if any.
- The consumer is not liable to pay any cost for the 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 the charges to be paid at the time of the new connection 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 their visit, before admitting the representative into the premises.
- If there is a change in ownership of property or death of a consumer, the new owner or heir can get the connection transferred to their names.
- For obtaining a new connection the consumer must submit Form-A1 and the supporting documents. For transferring a connection due to change in ownership, Form U needs to be submitted along with Form-A1 and the supporting documents. If these applications are made online, the processing fee is waived.
- The electricity company has to convey its decision within two billing cycles after receiving the application for transfer of connection. Failing this, it is liable to pay a fine of Rs. 100 per week to the consumer.
- In case of a transfer of connection, the previous owner can choose to transfer the security deposit as well or to have the security deposit refunded. But in case the previous owner has pending payments, the application for transfer of connection will not be processed.

3 : Meter

In a typical domestic household, the electricity meter is used to measure units consumed. As per the E Act, it is binding on the electricity company to provide electric supply to the consumer only through a meter (Section 55, Electricity Act 2003). In compliance with this, most consumers in Maharashtra receive electric supply only through their meters, with the exception of a few agricultural consumers. Thus, the electricity meter is an important link, connecting the consumer and the electricity company. Hence, the consumer as well as the company must ensure that the meter is in good condition and can measure power supply accurately. In this chapter we will look at the details of various aspects of metering and the related regulations.

3.1 Ownership and cost of the meter

(Schedule of charges approved by the Commission, 12 September 2018)

The electric meter installed is generally owned by the electricity company (Regulation on installation and operation of meter, Central Electricity Authority, January 2014). The consumer can also avail the services of a prepaid meter, which is further discussed in box 3.1.

As explained in chapter 2, 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 in the premises of the consumer at its own cost. However, the company can demand a security deposit from the consumer for installing the meter in 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 (Regulation 14.1, Supply Code Regulations 2005).

However, if the consumer decides to buy the meter, it is mandatory that the company test the meter. Additionally, if the consumer buys the meter from the company, a declared amount must be paid by the consumer to the company in lieu of the meter. This cost is decided according to the schedule of charges approved by the Commission. As per the Commission's order dated 12 September 2018, the cost of the meter for the company's consumers is mentioned in table 3.1. Even if the consumer buys the meter, the responsibility of providing and 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 3.1: Cost of meter (without box)

Type of Meter	Cost (Rs.)
Single Phase	600
Three Phase	2500
H.T.T.O.D Meter	4000

Source: MERC order in Case No. 195 of 2017, dated September 2018

Note: The amount mentioned in the table above should be paid by the consumer only if they buy the meter from the company.

If the consumer decides to buy the meter from the market, it must be from a seller authorised by the electric company. The consumer can demand a list of such approved manufacturers from the electric company (Regulation 14.1, Supply Code Regulations 2005). But even if the consumer purchases the meter from the market, it is still mandatory to get the device tested by the company.

The consumer can buy the meter and get its ownership at any point of time. However, right to the meter can only be claimed after the power supply is permanently disconnected (Section 6.2, Regulation on meter installation and operation, Central Electricity Authority, January 2014).

Box 3.1: Prepaid meter

Prepaid/pre-payment meters are mentioned in both the supply code regulations and the standards of performance regulations. The use of such meters does away with the need for manual meter reading, data punching, data processing, and the printing, distribution and collection of bills. It is proposed that this results in savings, which will be passed on to consumer as an incentive (Case 76 of 2009, MERC, 2010). However, prepaid meters are still a recent development and methods of adopting it into the existing billing systems have yet to be designed. Given this status, the number of prepaid meters manufactured are limited. They are being implemented on the scale of a pilot project, and their performance is being monitored.

3.2 Meter reading

(Regulation 14.3, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

A 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 that 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.

If the company fails to take at least one reading as per the mentioned period, it has to pay compensation to the consumer. The compensation is Rs. 100 for the first month of delay, and Rs. 200 for the subsequent months. This is further illustrated in box 3.2.



If for any reason (for example; the premise being locked, inability to locate the meter, etc.) 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 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. If the consumer fails to do so, the company can disconnect the power

supply of the consumer within 24 hours. Such a notice should reach the consumer at least seven (working) days prior to the given date of recording. (Regulation 15.3, Supply Code Regulations 2005).

Box 3.2: Compensation for delayed meter reading

Let us suppose that the company 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, 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 since August was the first month of delay.

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 it is demanded by the consumer. Compensation is usually paid by adjusting against the next bill.

Since August 2016, the company has started the practise of accepting meter readings through the Mahavitrans mobile app, as is further discussed in chapter 7. In addition to this, the company informs consumers in advance about visiting their houses for meter reading. The company does so by sending an SMS to the consumer's registered mobile number, with details regarding the date and time of the meter reading. The consumer

can choose the time slot (between 8am to 10am, 10am to noon, 12pm to 3pm and 3pm to 5pm) for the meter reading to be carried out. To further ensure transparency, the meter must be read in the presence of the consumer.

3.3 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 their 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. 350 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. The location of the meter can be changed only after such an approval is received.

The consumer should note that the fee of Rs. 350 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.

3.4 Meter maintenance and testing

The meter may belong to either the electricity company or the consumer, but the responsibility of regular maintenance and test of the meter lies entirely with the electricity company. The company should test the meter of the consumer at least once every five years (Section 18.2, Regulation on meter installation and operation, Central Electricity Authority, January 2014). 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.

If the consumer wishes to verify the accuracy of the meter or has any doubts regarding its functioning, they can get the meter tested. For this, the consumer needs to apply to the company. 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. 200 while for a three phase meter is Rs. 800 (Schedule of charges approved by the Commission, 12 September 2018). The consumer should ask for the acknowledgement receipt of the submitted application.

The company tests the meter in its regional office and gives a copy of the report to the consumer. The consumer can also request the company to get the meter tested from any other authorised laboratory. The company has to test the meter and submit the report to the consumer within four days of receiving the application in class I cities, seven days in urban areas, and within twelve days in rural areas. If the company does not conduct the inspection within this time, it is required to pay Rs. 50 per week of delay. Additionally, if the report indicates that the meter is beyond the limits of accuracy (for example; 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 as per the outcome of the report. The amount is reimbursed to the consumer through the next bill. The company is required to replace these faulty meters within the subsequent billing cycle.

or it must pay Rs. 50 per week of delay (Appendix A, Standards of Performance Regulations 2014).

3.5 Stopped meter

A consumer's meter can break down due to lack of maintenance or other technical problems. A meter is considered to have stopped when it stops measuring energy consumption. In such cases the company sends an "average bill" to the consumer, as is discussed in section 4.7. The bill also records the status of the meter as not working or stopped. If the consumer finds that their meter has stopped, they should inform the electricity company about the same. If the company representative also finds that the meter has stopped, the company can further test such a meter.

While testing, the company must first confirm that the meter has not been deliberately tampered with by the consumer. The company must then replace the meter at its own cost. In case of a stopped meter, the consumer can be billed for up to three months for the period in which the meter has stopped recording, based on the average metered consumption for the preceding twelve months (Regulation 15.4, Supply Code Regulations 2005). As per this regulation, if a stopped meter has been in such condition for several months, the company cannot hold the consumer responsible. Additionally, under these conditions, the company cannot recover bills for more than three months.

3.6 Defective meter

Sometimes a fault in the meter can lead to errors in measurement of power consumption. This error could result in a recording that is either more or less than the actual electricity consumption of the consumer. If the consumer suspects a fault in the meter, they should get it tested. For this purpose, the consumer can make an application as per the procedure mentioned in section 4.6.

If the meter is found to be defective, the company can adjust consumer bill for a maximum of three earlier months. For example, 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 (Regulation 15.4, Supply Code Regulations 2005). 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.

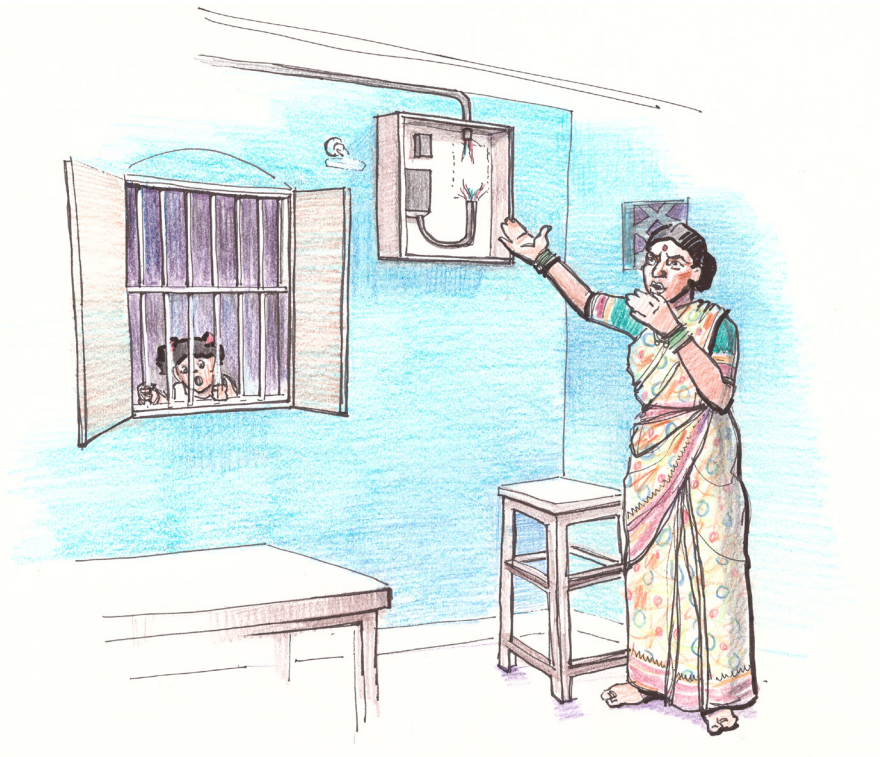
3.7 Meter with broken seal

In order to ensure the safety of the meter and to avoid tampering, the company puts its own seal on all the meters, despite ownership by the company or the consumer. If the consumer finds that the seal on the meter is broken, they

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 section 3.6 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 unauthorised power usage or power theft. But this can be established only after testing the meter and hence, a broken seal alone does not directly imply unauthorised power usage (Regulation 15.4, Supply Code Regulations 2005).

3.8 Burnt meter

Several causes can lead to a burnt meter. For example, more power than the permitted connected load is drawn through the meter, faults in the distribution network, faulty earthing of the meter, etc., can lead to burning of the meter. If the cause is attributable to the company, then the company must replace the burnt meter at its own cost. But if the meter damage is due to tampering, defects in installation, unauthorized load connections, etc., the responsibility of the burnt meter lies with the consumer and hence, they have to pay the company for the new meter (Regulation 7.4, Standards of Performance Regulations 2014).



If the consumer finds that the meter is burnt, they should immediately make a complaint at the local office of the company. The consumer should also attach a copy of the receipt for the cost paid toward 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 to the consumer; within 18 hours in class I cities, 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 the consumer Rs. 50, as compensation for every hour of delay (Appendix A, Standards of Performance Regulations 2014).

3.9 Loss of the Meter

If a consumer's meter is stolen, they have to first lodge a complaint at the local police station. The police station gives a copy of the FIR to the consumer. The consumer is then required to submit a written complaint at the concerned office of the electricity company, with a copy of the FIR and the receipt toward meter purchase attached. If the meter is lost, the consumer must pay for the new meter and hence, the receipt toward the cost of the meter needs to be attached to the complaint submission. 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 note:

- 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 the consumer's premises.
- If the consumer has doubts about the accuracy of the meter, they 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 authorised 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 unauthorised 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.

4 : Electricity bill

A domestic connection can either be a single phase connection or a three phase connection. Electricity is supplied from the company to the consumer through the consumer's main switch board. The connection is composed typically of one red phase wire that carries current, one black neutral wire, and a green wire that is connected from the switch board to the local earth pit. This is called a single phase supply, and is usually found in small homes. Larger residences and commercial connections have three phase supply, in which three single phases are combined. Three phase wires (usually red, yellow and blue) from the company are connected to the switch board and the fourth earth wire connects the switch board to the local earth pit. Total of individual power ratings of all electrical appliances that are connected to this supply is called the connected load of the consumer. However, the consumer's monthly consumption is calculated based on the number of units consumed, which is measured by the meter and recorded in the consumer's bill.

The electricity bill is an important document for financial transactions between the consumer and the company. So a regular, timely, and accurate bill is vital to both the consumer and the company. A better understanding of the bill and its components is also important from the perspective of the consumer, as most consumer complaints are regarding bills. In this chapter we shall discuss the electricity bill format and various issues related to the bill.

4.1 Details in the electricity bill

The consumer receives the bill in English and Marathi. Other than the details regarding the amount the consumer has to pay, the bill also has pertinent information on consumer details, consumption, and complaint registration. The format and constituents of the bill is discussed in this section. The general format of the bill is also available on the electricity company's website

(https://www.mahadiscom.in/consumer/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/LT_BILL.pdf).



4.1.1 Various charges

(Regulation 15.2, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

The bill includes a list of charges that the consumer has to pay, calculated till the date mentioned. However, the format is often complex, with details that are not common knowledge to the consumer. These become a cause for concern when a consumer receives an incorrect or very high bill, and is unable to understand the cause behind it. Hence, it is important to understand the various charges mentioned in the bill.

Fixed charges

Each month, the consumer has to pay a specific fixed amount to the electricity company. This amount needs to be paid even in the absence of power usage. These charges are meant to recover the fixed or capital costs that the electricity company incurs for creating basic infrastructure facilities for supplying electricity to the consumers. These charges are incurred mainly towards installing and maintaining equipment like the electric cable network, transformers, substations etc., and are determined based on the total connected load of the consumer and the type of

connection (single phase or three phase).
The rates for these charges are different

for different consumer categories and are
given in a table behind the bill.

Figure 4.1: Electricity bill for an MSEDCL consumer

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File No: 3-88/300-AM
CB 1.0.1
HSN CODE: 27160000

ग्राहक क्रमांक: 1
Consumer Name: 4
Consumer Address: 21-12-2018
देयक दिनांक: 280.00
देयक रक्कम रु: 10-01-2019
देय दिनांक: 290.00
या तारखे नंतर भरल्यास:

मोबाइल/ईमेल: बिलींग युनिट: 4599/AUNDH SUB-DN/SHIVAJI NAGAR
दर संकेत: 92/LT I Res 3-Phase
पी.सी./चक्र+मार्ग-क्रम/डि.टी.सी.: P2/22/3801/0020/4599380
चालू रिडिंग: 17-12-2018
मिटर क्रमांक: 07601902003

पुरवठा दिनांक: 09-05-2006
मंजूर भार: 7.00 KW
पोल नंबर:
मागील रिडिंग दिनांक: 16-11-2018

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मुख्य अभियंता (वाणिज्य)

मीटर स्थिती: Normal

मास रिडिंग 24819
मागील रिडिंग 24693
युगक अवयव 1.00
युनिट 126
समा. युनिट 0
एकूण वीज वापर 126

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अंतिम तारीख	10-01-2019		Rs. 280.00	या तारखे नंतर भरल्यास	10-01-2019	Rs. 290.00

वैकिकी स्थळप्रत: बिलींग युनिट: 4599 ग्राहक क्रमांक पी.सी. P2 दर: 92 45992 100120190000002800010003112180010

अंतिम तारीख	10-01-2019	Rs. 280.00
या तारखे पर्यंत भरल्यास	31-12-2018	Rs. 270.00
या तारखे नंतर भरल्यास	10-01-2019	Rs. 290.00

Energy charges

The energy charge indicates the cost of power consumed by the consumer, and is determined based on the number of units consumed. The cost that the company incurs on purchasing the necessary electric power for the consumers is recovered through these charges. The rate for initial units is lower, and gradually increases for subsequent units. For this purpose, the units consumed by a consumer in the domestic category are split into different slabs. The energy charge (tariff) for each of the slabs of consumption is different, with higher consumption slabs being charged a progressively increasing tariff. This is called telescopic tariff.

Table 4.1: Energy charges for domestic consumers (effective from 1 September 2018)

Consumption per month of domestic consumers	Energy charge (Rs./unit)
0-100 units	3
101-300 units	6.73
301-500 units	9.75
501-1000 units	10.5
Above 1000 units	11.5

Source: MERC order in Case No. 195 of 2017, dated September 2018

The intention behind this approach is to incentivise lower consumption and penalise higher consumption. As an illustration, the slab wise tariff per unit per

month for domestic consumers as per the orders issued by the Commission on 12 September 2018 is mentioned in table 4.1. Table 4.2 discusses the method of calculating the cost of power consumed by the consumer according to the charges mentioned in table 4.1.

Table 4.2: Method of calculating the cost of power

Power used by consumer (Units/month)	Energy charge (Unit x rate)
75	$75 \times 3 = \text{Rs. } 225$
150	$(100 \times 3) + (50 \times 6.73) = \text{Rs. } 636.5$
350	$(100 \times 3) + (200 \times 6.73) + (50 \times 9.75) = \text{Rs. } 2,133.5$

Source: Prayas (Energy Group) analysis based on MERC regulatory documents

Fuel adjustment charge and wheeling charge

In order to supply power to 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 (for example, increased prices of oil or natural gas in the global markets, variation in estimated demand for power, or shortage in power supply). In such eventualities, the electricity company has to purchase power at a higher or lower price in order to meet the demand. This difference in price maybe positive or negative, and is recovered from the

consumers through the fuel surcharge. For this purpose, the Commission assesses all the documents related to power purchase, from time to time, and independently determines the surcharge rate. Details on the fuel surcharge can be found on the Commission's website (<http://www.mercindia.org.in/FOCA.htm>).

Wheeling charges are the fees charged for the transmission and distribution of electricity through the network of wires. Currently, in Maharashtra, this fee is set at Rs. 1.30 per unit.

Table 4.3: Electricity taxes

Type of Consumer	Electricity Taxes (percentage of total bill)
Domestic	16%
Non-domestic	21%
Industrial	9.3%
Agricultural (excluding agricultural pumps)	9.3%
Agricultural pumps	0%

Source: Notification on Maharashtra Electricity Duty Act, MERC, 2016

Electricity duty

The government of Maharashtra (GoM) levies taxes on the power utilised by the consumer. The directive of the GoM regarding this tax is mentioned behind the bill. Currently, the tax levied on the consumer is in accordance with the GoM notification ELD 2016/CR 252/

Energy 1, issued on 21 October 2016. This amount is calculated as a specific percentage of the bill (which includes the fixed charge, the energy charge, and the fuel surcharge). The electricity duty applicable for various types of consumers is specified in table 4.3.

Electricity sales tax, average billing amount, and interest

The GoM specifies a tax on the sale of electricity, which is to be levied per unit electricity sold by the company to the consumers. This rate is dependent on the area and the category to which the consumer belongs. The rate of tax payable is mentioned in the bill, along with the total amount. In areas where the company (MSEDCL) supplies power, only industrial or commercial consumers are charged the sales tax (GoM notification SRP-20015/CR-48/NRG-1, 21 April 2015). This amount is not payable by domestic consumers in areas serviced by the company.

On instances when the company is unable to take a meter reading, an average bill is provided to the consumer, as discussed in section 4.7. The average billing amount reconciles the amount charged according to the average bill with the actual amount as per the next meter reading. If there is no difference in the reconciliation between the average and actual bill amounts, or if a meter reading has been taken, this parameter amounts to zero in the bill.

The bill also includes the interest payable, which is charged on overdue amounts that are yet to be paid. This is further explained in section 4.5.

Other charges

Apart from the charges mentioned above, any other charges as approved by the Commission are recovered from the consumers through 'other charges'. However, it is binding on the electricity 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, they can request the same from the electricity company. It is binding on the company to provide such clarification to the consumer.

The sum of all the aforementioned charges is listed as the total amount mentioned in the bill.

Arrears or advance payments

If the consumer chooses to pay in advance, the amount is listed as a negative value. Instead, if the consumer has lapsed payments from previous months, it gets listed as an arrear. The arrear or advance is subject to adjustments and interests; after which the total arrear or advance is calculated.

The sum of the total amount and the arrears/advance calculated is the total amount payable by the consumer for a given month.

Prompt payment discount and delayed payment charge

As discussed in section 4.4, timely payment of the billed amount by the consumer is important. To encourage this, a prompt payment discount is offered. Under this provision, the consumer can get a concession of 1% on the bill amount if they pay the bill within seven days from the date the bill is issued or within five days of receiving the bill.

Conversely, the consumer is liable to pay a delayed payment charge equivalent to 2% of the bill amount, if the bill is not paid by the due date (Regulatory Commission Order, 22 May 2013). If the consumer has paid the bill after the due date, it does not get registered in the next bill. Hence, the consumer's next bill amount is inclusive of the amount in 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 'terms and conditions' section of the bill.

Security deposit

(Regulation 11, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

The consumer first uses electricity and pays for it later, through the 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 E Act, the company can demand such a security deposit from the consumer. The amount is mentioned as the security deposit in the bill, towards the end of the table listing the various charges. 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 twelve months to the consumer through the bill.

As discussed in chapter 2, the security deposit amount is equivalent to the average amount of a bill in one billing cycle for an existing consumer. The average bill amount is decided by considering the bills over the last twelve months. If the consumer has been receiving supply for less than twelve 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. For information, refer to table 2.4.

Since the average power consumption of a consumer keeps varying, the company re-estimates the amount of security deposit every twelve 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 thirty 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 thirty 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 calculated security deposit for a newly connected consumer.

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.

The various charges to be paid by the consumer are contingent on the level of electric consumption, which is determined from meter readings. This determination of electric consumption is further discussed in box 4.1.

Box 4.1: Electricity consumption of the consumer

The electricity 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 is multiplied by the multiplying factor to calculate the total consumption of the consumer during this period, which is usually a 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 their monthly consumption pattern. It can also be used to calculate or verify the average power consumption.

BPL consumers

The above charges are determined as per the category of consumer. Thus, based on the power consumption, consumers are classified into different categories such as domestic, non- domestic (commercial), industrial, agricultural, etc. For domestic consumers whose power consumption is exceptionally low, the electricity regulatory commission has created another sub category called BPL (below poverty line) consumers. This category is applicable to domestic consumers who have a sanctioned load not exceeding 0.25kW.

Additionally, the power consumption of consumers within this category must not exceed 360 units per annum, over the previous twelve months. At the end of each year, the eligibility of such consumers is reassessed and if the consumption level is found to be in excess of 360 units over the year, domestic tariff will be applicable. Moreover, the consumer cannot be categorised as a BPL consumer in successive years, irrespective of their future consumption level. Box 4.2 discusses the rates of consumption for this category.

Box 4.2: Rate of consumption for BPL consumers

While deciding the tariff, the Commission gives special consideration to those consumers who have sanctioned load of up to or less than 250 W 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. 20 per month and the energy charges are Rs. 1.06 per unit (as per the orders issued by the Commission to the company on 12 September 2018).

4.1.2 Payment history and recording the amount paid

In recent versions of the bill, the consumer's payment history is also included. The last five bills paid by the consumer is represented graphically; displaying the amount paid and the date on which the payment was made.

The consumer has a few options with regard to the mode of payment of the bill, as seen in section 4.4. If the consumer chooses to make the payment via cheque or cash, the details of the payment must be entered in the format provided at the bottom of the bill. As mentioned in the bill, if the consumer wishes to pay the bill by cheque, the cheque must be drawn in favour of "MSEDCL". Conversely, if they wish to pay by cash, the details of cash denominations must be filled in the column provided behind the bill.

4.1.3 Rate of charges

We have seen that the total amount payable by a consumer is determined by the various charges that are applicable to them. These parameters and their amounts are indicated in the bill. Additionally, the current rates for the charges are mentioned in a table printed on the reverse side of the bill. These charges are fixed by the Commission, and are determined based on the type of consumer (domestic, commercial) and the type of connection (single phase, three phase). From this table, the consumers can tally the various

charges applicable to them. These are monthly charges, i.e. they apply to thirty days of electricity usage.

With the provision of web services, the consumer also has access to a bill calculator which uses the current rates, tariffs, and appliance details to generate an estimated monthly bill, as is further discussed in chapter 7.

4.1.4 Terms and conditions and cheque payment information

The bill also includes certain terms and conditions that the consumer must be aware of. This includes information pertaining to electricity duty calculation, bill payment, discrepancies in the bill, and the provisions of the web self service portal; that has been discussed in various sections of this booklet. In this portion of the bill instructions with regard to bill payment via cheque are also included.

4.1.5 Details of the consumer

A bill issued by the company is toward the supply for one month, which is mentioned on the top of the bill. Other than details on the amount payable, the bill also carries information that identifies each connection and consumer to the company. This includes details such as the bill number, consumer number, name, mobile number, email and postal address. Furthermore, supply specific information such as the billing unit id, meter number, and pole number are

mentioned in the bill. Details such as the processing cycle number (PC) and the distribution transformer id are also used by the company to identify a connection. Thus, the consumer must always mention their consumer number, PC, and billing unit id in all correspondences with the company.

The consumer's sanctioned load, date of procuring connection, and the type of connection are also mentioned in the bill. As mentioned earlier, the power consumption of the consumer and the type of their connection determines the consumer category. The various categories that can be indicated in the bill are listed in table 10.

Table 4.4: Consumer categories as mentioned in the bill

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

Source: Prayas (Energy Group) analysis based on MERC regulatory documents

4.1.6 Meter reading and consumption history

In addition to the meter number, the bill also records the date on which the current meter reading was taken and the date on which the last meter reading was taken. An image of the current meter reading along with the meter status, and the date and time at which the image was taken is also included in the bill. However, from February 2019, the company has stopped printing photos of the meter on the copy of the bill.

The meter reading is used to calculate the consumer's electricity consumption over the month. The bill records the present reading, the previous reading and a multiplication factor (usually one for domestic consumers). The units consumed is calculated from these three parameters and is used to calculate the energy charge. An adjustment unit value is also recorded in the bill to account for adjustment due to theft, faulty meters, etc. The reconciliation between the units calculated and the units adjusted results in the total number of units consumed.

Along with this, the bill also includes a graphical representation of the consumer's consumption history; which depicts the consumer's consumption over the last eleven months, in units. It also compares the monthly consumption in the current year with the same in the previous year. Such data can be used by consumers to evaluate their consumption

pattern and explore ways of conserving electricity, like switching to more efficient appliances, etc.

4.1.7 Bill overview and other features

The date of bill issue and the amount payable is displayed in the facing sheet of the bill, in addition to the detailed break up printed on the reverse side. The due date and the amount inclusive of the delayed payment charges are also included in this section.

For ease of payment, the bill has a QR code which can be scanned with the BHIM app to initiate UPI payment of various charges mentioned in the bill.

In addition to this, with the introduction of the goods and services tax in the country, the bill also has a GST identification number (GSTIN) and the corresponding HSN code for electric energy.

4.1.8 Essential links for grievance redressal

The bill also contains information that can be used by the consumer to register complaints and resolve grievances, if any. Phone numbers to a centralised complaint redressal line, that is available 24x7, are listed on the right side of the bill. The link to the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF), via the company's website, is also mentioned in this section. The consumer can first register their complaints with the local office or the IGRC. If no resolution

is carried out within two months, or if the consumer is not satisfied by the redressal offered by the company, they can then approach the CGRF. These mechanisms are further discussed in chapter 5.

4.2 Billing cycle

(Regulation 15.1, Supply Code, Regulations 2005)

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 all other consumers.

4.3 Misplacing or not receiving the bill

(Regulation 15.5, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

If a consumer misplaces the bill or doesn't receive a bill at all, they can ask for a duplicate copy of the bill from the company. Towards this, a complaint should be made to the company before the receipt of the next bill. The complaint can be lodged verbally via a telephone call or in written form at the local office of the company. A duplicate bill is issued as soon as the consumer's identity is confirmed; or the duplicate bill is delivered within three days

of informing the company. If the consumer asks for information about the bill amount and the due date of payment, it is binding on the electricity company to disclose this information, even if the demand is made via a telephone call.

However, the consumer must remember that not receiving the bill or misplacing it does not grant any concession in the due date for its payment. If the due date has elapsed the consumer is bound to pay the charges for delayed payment.

4.4 Paying the electricity bill

(Regulation 15.5, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

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 fifteen days. 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. 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.

Nowadays, consumers can also pay their bill online, via the company's website or through several mobile applications. Consumers are also offered incentives for adopting this method of payment. This option is further discussed in chapter 7.

As discussed earlier, the consumer can also pay the bill amount in advance. The company issues a receipt to the consumer for the advanced amount. It also pays interest on this amount to the consumer according to the rates fixed by the Reserve Bank of India. Such advanced payment is mentioned in the bill issued to the consumer. The bill indicates the amount deducted from the advance, and the remaining balance, if any. The provision for advance payment allows the consumer to pay a lump sum amount, saving the consumer time that would otherwise have been spent on bill payment each month. It also decreases the risk of disconnection of supply, in the event that the consumer misses a due date and lapses on a bill payment. Moreover, the consumer can receive the prompt payment discount when the advance amount covers the bill. If the consumer has to travel away from home for a couple of months making the meter unavailable for reading, they can inform the company accordingly and pay an advance amount as mentioned above. Although the consumer would not be using power during this period, they are still liable to pay the fixed charges every month.

4.5 Outstanding amount in the bill

(Regulatory Commission Order, 22 May 2013)

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 an outstanding amount. Besides this, the company can also include any other such amounts that the consumer is liable to pay but has not paid, under this category. The consumer also has to pay an interest on such outstanding amounts. The rate of interest applicable to the consumer on their outstanding amounts as per the orders of the Commission is mentioned in the table 4.5. Thus, to avoid these outstanding amounts, 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, they can request the company to accept payment in multiple instalments.

Table 4.5: Interest on outstanding amounts

Period of delay from the due date (in months)	Rate of Interest (%)
Up to 3 months	12%
3 months to 6 months	15%
Payment after 6 months	18%

Source: MERC order in Case No. 195 of 2017, dated September 2018

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

4.6 Disconnecting the power supply

The company can disconnect the power supply of the consumer for two reasons. Either the concerned authorised representative of the company confirms that the consumer is involved in power theft, or the consumer ignores or refuses to pay any amount liable on them. 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 6. 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 fifteen days in advance (Section 56, Electricity Act 2003). This information cannot be mentioned in the bill but has to be given to the consumer

through an independent notice and an acknowledgement of its receipt must also be taken (Section 171, Electricity Act 2003).

4.7 Average bill

(Regulation 15.3, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

Sometimes the electricity company issues an average bill to the consumer. This bill is calculated from the earlier meter readings of the consumer. 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:

- The location of the meter being closed or inaccessible
- Inability to locate the meter
- Unclear reading on the meter
- Change of meter
- Defective meter
- 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 must ensure that

the consumer receives this notice at least seven days in advance. The company cannot consecutively issue an average bill to the consumer more than three times. Moreover, when the consumer's meter is being read accurately the earlier bills need to be amended accordingly.

Nowadays, the consumer also has the facility to submit the meter reading on online platforms, in the event that the company is unable to take the reading, as is discussed in chapter 7.

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 discussed in chapter 3. The consumer can get their complaints related to the average bill resolved as per the provisions mentioned in chapter 5.

4.8 Incorrect or overcharged bill

On receiving an incorrect or unduly high bill, the consumer can make a primary assessment of the reason behind it. Extra power consumption during this period or non-payment of earlier charges could explain a high bill.

An incorrect bill amount can sometimes be the result of application of the wrong tariff by the company, and the consumer is not at fault. In these instances, the company produces supplementary bills with the corrective amounts owed by the consumer for the months applicable.

According to a notification of the company (see annexure 5), the consumer can pay the corrective amount in instalments. The number of instalments over which the consumer can repay the difference is equal to the number of months for which the supplementary bill has been issued.

Sometimes, an incorrect bill could be a result of a 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 an officer of the company.

In such cases, it is important to remember that as per Section 56 of the E Act, it is not binding on the consumer to pay this full amount. Under protest, the consumer can pay the average amount as per the bills over the last six months. If the consumer has paid either the complete bill amount or the average of the last six months' bills, whichever is less, the company cannot disconnect their power supply. The consumer can then get the complaint resolved as per the procedure elaborated in chapter 5.

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 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 twelve 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.
- The electricity company cannot recover any outstanding charges from the consumer after two 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 consecutively issue an average bill to the consumer only upto three times.
- It is not necessary for the consumer to pay the complete due amount of an incorrect bill; they can record their protest and pay the average amount as per the bill of the last six months.

5 : Quality of supply and service

The quality of power supply and service are as important to the consumer as access to it. The electricity company is expected to provide electricity through an efficient and reliable distribution network. Appropriate voltage and uninterrupted supply are the two major components in determining the quality of power supply. The Commission has set certain standards in this regard, that are binding on electricity companies. Failure to meet these standards makes the electricity companies 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 the complaint is filed by the consumer(s), the company must compensate all consumers who are affected by the problem within two months (and not just the one(s) who filed the complaint).

While the standards and regulations set by the Commission govern the distribution companies' supply of electricity, questions regarding the services to ensure quality of supply, such as complaint registration and redressal, still persist. The following sections first discuss the standards and procedures in place to address and

ensure the quality of supply and service. We will also look at the institutions that are tasked with safeguarding the quality of electricity supply.

5.1 Voltage variation

(Regulation 5, Standards of Performance Regulation 2014)

The company has to provide electricity supply to the consumer as per the declared voltage standards specified by the Commission. The declared voltage for single phase consumers receiving low tension supply is 240 volts. The Commission permits a variation of up to $\pm 6\%$ from the declared voltage. This means that the distribution company must provide electricity supply within the limit of 225 to 255 volts to domestic and small commercial consumers. Similarly, for three phase low tension consumers, the voltage variation limit is $\pm 6\%$, and the corresponding voltage range is 390 to 440 volts.

If the consumer feels that the supply they receive is not within the permissible voltage range, they can lodge a complaint about it with the Internal Grievance Redressal Cells (IGRC) of the company.

If the company fails to take appropriate and timely action on the complaint, the consumer can approach the Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum (CGRF). If the supply voltage varies beyond the specified limits, the company has to pay compensation of Rs. 100 for each week of such supply, to the consumer (Appendix A, Standards of Performance Regulation, 2014). For Greater Mumbai and adjoining areas the compensation needs to be paid in the same week, while for other metropolitan areas it needs to be paid at the end of the year. For still other areas, the payment of compensation must be paid within a duration notified separately by the Commission.

Once a voltage variation complaint has been verified by the company, it is required to ensure that the voltage is brought within the permissible limits within two days if the cause is a local issue with the transformer. For other cases, this duration is ten days, provided no network extension is required. However, if resolution of the problem requires the distribution system to be upgraded, the company is allowed 120 days. In certain cases, resolution of voltage variation complaints requires the erection of a new substation. The company is required to complete such construction within one year from receipt of the complaint, and notify the consumer on the time period required to address their concerns.

5.2 Interrupted Power Supply

(Appendix A, Standards of Performance Regulation 2014)

Another important consideration with respect to quality of supply is the number and duration of interruptions in the supply. If the company needs to cut off the power supply for pre-scheduled reasons (like load shedding, regular maintenance, etc.), it has to inform the consumers about the duration of such interruption through a public notification issued in advance. The period of scheduled interruption should not exceed twelve hours on any day and supply should preferably be restored by 6pm (Regulation 6.6, Standards of Performance Regulation 2014).

However, if power supply fails due to causes such as cable complaints, transformer failures, etc., the cause is the inefficiency of the company. In such cases the company is required to compensate not only the consumer who registered the complaint, but also every consumer affected by the supply failure. Additionally, the period of restoration in such events depends on the cause of the failure. The time needed and the corresponding compensation to be paid by the company in the event of various types of interruptions are listed in table 5.1.

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;

they 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 the acknowledgement receipt or a complaint number from the company to support their case.

Table 5.1: Restoration of and compensation for interrupted power supply

Incidence	Standard period of restoration	Amount of compensation (Rs.)
Fuse off call	3 hours (Class I cities) 4 hours (Urban areas) 18 hours (Rural areas)	Rs. 50 per hour of delay
Breakdown in 33kV/22kV/11kV/400V overhead lines	4 hours (Class I cities) 6 hours (Urban areas) 24 hours (Rural areas)	Rs. 50 per hour of delay
Fault in underground cable	8 hours (Class I cities) 18 hours (Urban areas) 48 hours (Rural areas)	Rs. 50 per hour of delay
Distribution transformer failure	18 hours (Class I cities) 24 hours (Urban areas) 48 hours (Rural areas)	Rs. 50 per hour of delay
Scheduled interruption	Should not exceed 12 hours on any day	

Source: Standards of Performance Regulations, MERC, 2014

5.3 Redressal of Consumer Grievances

Like quality supply, the redressal of any complaint related to electricity provision is a service accorded to the consumer. In case any such issue arises, the consumer can register their complaint through a phone call or even through a written application. The consumer now also has the option of registering a complaint online, as discussed in chapter 7.

The consumer can find the phone number to a 24 x 7 grievance redressal centre on their electricity bill. On registering the complaint, the consumer should immediately ask the concerned officer for the complaint number. This proves to be important if any further follow up on the complaint takes place. After registering the complaint at the local office, the company is required to resolve it within a stipulated duration. For the MSEDCL this duration is fixed at fifteen days.

To resolve the complaints appropriately and within the stipulated duration, the Commission has laid down a set of regulations known as the 'Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum and Electricity Ombudsman Regulations 2006'. In case

of any deficiencies or issues in the provision of electricity services the consumer can get their complaint resolved through the three-tiered mechanism as mentioned in these regulations.



Three-tiered mechanism for redressal of consumer grievances

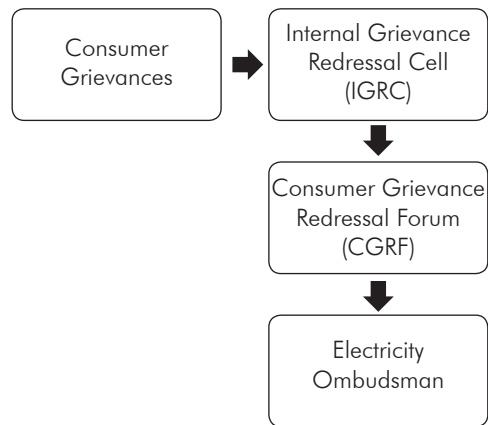
The Commission, through its orders and regulations, has laid down standards and rules to ensure good quality electricity

service that is consumer-oriented. In case the company fails to follow them, the consumers can get their complaints resolved through the three-tiered mechanism.

The consumer should first register their complaint with the concerned Internal Grievance Redressal Cell (IGRC). The company has constituted such internal cells at the circle (revenue district) level to resolve consumer grievances. These cells are required to register the consumer's complaint and notify the consumer about their proposed actions 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 the stipulated duration, the consumer can take their complaint to the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) at the zonal level.

The CGRF, although instituted by the company, is an independent body for grievance redressal. It consists of three members, one of whom should be a representative of a registered voluntary consumer protection organisation. The forum conducts hearings and considers both sides of the complaint. It is required to comprehensively tackle all aspects of the issue and give its decision in two months. If the consumer does not agree with this decision or if the forum fails to give any decision within two months, the consumer can take the complaint further to the electricity ombudsman. The electricity ombudsman is appointed by the Commission. Only a consumer can appeal to the electricity ombudsman against the decision of the forum, the company cannot make such an appeal.

Figure 5.1: Three-tiered mechanism for grievance redressal



The three-tiered mechanism instituted for the redressal of consumer grievances is a statutory body, before which the consumers themselves or their representatives must present their case. Similarly, the hearing conducted before the forum or the ombudsman is open to the public, within the constraints of space available. It is the duty of the forum and the ombudsman to give the consumers' grievances a fair hearing to and deliver an appropriate, comprehensive, and timely decision on it. The responsibility of informing the public about the IGRC and CGRF, however, rests with the electricity company, as is discussed in box 5.1.

The consumer can get all their grievances about the electricity service resolved through this mechanism, with the exception of complaints related to electricity accidents, power theft and unauthorised use of electricity. As

discussed in chapter 6, the consumer has to submit their complaint to the appellate authority regarding the fine imposed for unauthorised power consumption and

power theft; while the powers to investigate electricity related accidents have been given to the electrical inspector.

Box 5.1: Public awareness on IGRC and CGRF

According to the CGRF and Ombudsman Regulation 2006, it is the responsibility of the electricity 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 IGRC and CGRF should be prominently displayed at all the bill payment centres and company offices for easy access to the all the consumers.

5.3.1 Internal Grievance Redressal Cell (IGRC)

The IGRC is an entity instituted internally by the electricity company, for the registration of consumers' complaints/grievances and their timely redressal. It is binding on the company to establish such a cell in each circle office of every revenue area. The electricity company appoints its own officers in the cell and resolves the grievances reported through them. It is binding on the consumer to present its grievance at the IGRC first, before approaching the CGRF.

The MSEDCL has appointed such a cell at each circle office. The cell consists of three members; an executive engineer, accounts officer, and a senior clerk. The

consumer should first inform the cell about their grievance. The address and phone number of the cell assigned to the circle can be obtained from the local office of the company. The list of cells is also available on the website of the Company. (https://www.mahadiscom.in/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/IGRC-Adresses_-Annexure-A.pdf).

Submitting an application to the IGRC

The consumer must submit the grievance application to the IGRC in the format prescribed by the company. This format is available at the local office of the company, and is attached as annexure 6 of this booklet, for reference. In addition to the form, the consumer must attach

copies of all the relevant documents along with the application. If the consumer is not capable of submitting a written application, they can ask for assistance from the IGRC to present their orally stated grievance in a written form. It is binding on the cell to extend all the necessary assistance to such a consumer.

There are various means of submitting applications to the IGRC and the duration within which an acknowledgement is due depends on the means of submission. The consumer may personally submit the application to the office of the IGRC or submit it by other means like registered post, speed post, courier service, etc. Similarly, the consumer can also submit the application through email. The necessary documents have to be scanned and attached to the application. However, even when submitting applications via email, a separate hard copy of the application and the related documents need to be submitted.

The consumer should insist on acknowledgement after submitting the application. The duration within which the consumer should receive due acknowledgment depends on the means of submission (post, register, email), as discussed in table 5.2. The same is applicable for the CGRF and the electricity ombudsman.

Table 5.2: Duration of receiving acknowledgment

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

Source: Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum & Electricity Ombudsman Regulations, MERC, 2006

Procedure followed by IGRC

Since it is binding on the IGRC to address all the grievances that are reported, it registers all the received applications and issues acknowledgments 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 IGRC to convey its decision within two months of receiving the grievance application.

If the consumer does not agree with the decision of the IGRC or if there has been no action on the application in the period of two months, the consumer can approach the CGRF. However, as discussed in box 5.2, there is a provision under which a consumer directly approaching the CGRF is considered valid.

Box 5.2: Important provision for a consumer approaching the CGRF

It is mandatory that the consumer has presented the grievance to the IGRC of the company before approaching the CGRF. If a consumer is not aware about the IGRC, and upon enquiry, the local officer of the company also does not inform them about approaching the IGRC, then the consumer's grievance submitted to that officer is considered as the submission made to the electric company in reference to the grievance and their act of directly approaching the CGRF is considered valid.

5.3.2 Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF)

As per the regulations of the Commission, it is binding on the company to establish at least one CGRF at each distribution zone level to ensure independent and speedy redressal of consumer grievances. In accordance with this, the number of forums established by the distribution companies in Maharashtra is listed in table 5.3. The consumer can also get the information about these forums on the Commission's website (http://www.mercindia.org.in/CGR_Forum.htm#mseb).

Generally, the CGRF consists of three members, of which two (chairman and consumer representative) are not employees of 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 company appoints the chairman as well as the electricity representative, while the consumer representative is appointed by the Commission.

Table 5.3: Number of consumer grievance redressal forums

Electricity Distribution Company	Number of Forums
MSEDCL	16
Tata Power Company	01
Adani Electricity Mumbai Limited	01
BEST Undertaking	01
Mindspace Business Parks Private Limited	01
Gigaplex Estate Private Limited	01

Source: www.mercindia.org.in/CGR_Forum.htm#mseb

The consumer should submit the grievance to the concerned forum. The address and phone number of the concerned forum is available on the website of the Commission. It is also found on the electronic copy of the consumer's bill. 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.

Submitting an application to the CGRF

The consumer must, first, submit the grievance application to the IGRC in a prescribed format, as discussed earlier. The Commission has laid out the application format for approaching the CGRF. 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 booklet for reference.

The provisions regarding the means of submitting the application and the due acknowledgment applicable for approaching the CGRF are similar to that of the IGRC, as discussed in section

5.3.1. However, the consumer has to take certain precautions before submitting the application to the forum or else the application might be rejected;

- The application must be submitted within two years from the date of commencement of the grievance
- The application must be submitted only in the prescribed format
- The grievance must first be submitted to the IGRC, or if unaware about the IGRC, then at least to any officer of the company before submitting it to the forum



- All relevant documents must be attached to the application. Similarly, if the IGRC has taken a decision earlier, the copy of the same should also be attached.

Procedure followed by the CGRF

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 fifteen days, failing which the forum is free to pursue further action with whatever available information it has at hand. Furthermore, for speedy redressal of the grievance, the CGRF 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 electricity company through written communication with enough advance notice.

It is advisable for the consumer or their representative to attend this hearing because 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 given notice to the consumer about disconnecting the power supply or if there is a possibility that the company might disregard the Commission's guidelines or regulations, they can request the forum to consider their 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 relevant rules and provisions concerning the grievance. If the consumer finds it difficult to present their own case, the forum can help in doing so. Since the CGRF was instituted for the benefit of the consumers, it is binding on the forum that the consumer's grievance is understood from all perspectives. As the company is already aware of all the aspects and provisions, such support is not extended to the company.

Decision of the CGRF

The forum is expected to take in to 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, 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. An attested copy of the order is sent 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. Additionally, if the consumer has incurred any loss due to the company, the forum can order the company to pay an appropriate amount to the consumer as compensation for the same, after assessment of the facts and related circumstances.

If the consumer does not agree with this decision, or if no decision is taken within the stipulated time frame, then the consumer can approach the electricity ombudsman. It is binding on the forum to mention in its decision, the availability of such a provision.

5.3.3 Electricity Ombudsman

The system to redress consumer grievances at the state level, after approaching the CGRF, is the electricity ombudsman. If the consumer is not satisfied with the decision taken by the CGRF, they can appeal to the electricity ombudsman for the redressal of the grievance. As mentioned earlier, this facility is available only to the consumer and not to the company.

The electricity ombudsman is appointed by the Commission. Usually, a retired high court judge, a retired government secretary or a retired chief executive officer of a power sector company is appointed to the position. The tenure of the electricity ombudsman can run for a maximum of three years. If the ombudsman is less than seventy years old at the end of the three-year tenure, it can be extended by two years. For the state of Maharashtra, there are two ombudsmen, with offices in Mumbai and Nagpur. All the orders issued by the electricity ombudsmen are available on the website of the ombudsman for easy reference of the consumers (<http://mercombudsman.org.in/orders.php>).

Electricity Ombudsman (Mumbai)
Office of the Electricity Ombudsman,
(Mumbai)

606, Keshva, 6th Floor,
Bandra - Kurla Complex, (BKC)
Bandra (E), Mumbai- 400051
Maharashtra State.

Phone : 022- 26592965 / 26590339 /
9920017800

Electricity Ombudsman (Nagpur)
Office of the Electricity Ombudsman
(Nagpur)

Plot no. 12, Shrikrupa, Vijaynagar
Chhaoni, Nagpur- 440 013
Phone : 0712 2022198

E-mail : secretary@mercombudsman.org.in
electricityombudsmanmumbai@gmail.com

Web Site: www.mercombudsman.org.in

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, as discussed in section 5.3.1. The prescribed format for the application is given in annexure 8. The consumer should mention all the necessary information in the application. As stated, 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 in the prescribed format

- The consumer must indicate to the electricity ombudsman that the CGRF has rejected their grievance application or has not acted upon it in the stipulated period of two months
- The grievance should be presented before the ombudsman within sixty days of the decision of the CGRF

Procedure followed 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 their presence and signatures of both the parties are taken on it.

If a compromise is not possible, the electricity ombudsman gives both the parties (consumer and company) a fair chance to present their case during a hearing. An appropriate date, place, and time for the hearing are decided. It is binding on the ombudsman to inform the consumer about the hearing through an advance notice. Although the office of the electricity ombudsman is in Mumbai and Nagpur, 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 to present the case. The consumer or the representative should ensure that they attend the hearing. If any of the parties remain absent for the hearing, the ombudsman can take an ex-party 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.

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 electricity company but also on the concerned CGRF. Box 5.3 discusses interim orders passed by the ombudsman.

Box 5.3: 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 the urgency and need for such an order. The reasons could include, a possible threat of disconnection or disruption of supply by the company or the possibility that the electricity company might disregard the regulations of the Commission. The opposite party is also allowed a fair opportunity to present their case. Only after hearing both the parties does the electricity ombudsman issue such interim orders.

The electricity ombudsman sends a copy of the orders to the concerned consumer, company, and the CGRF. 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 required. The ombudsman can also issue orders regarding aspects of the grievance that were yet to be settled.

- Amendment in the undue charges paid by the consumer
- The amount of compensation to the consumer, if any losses have been incurred (in accordance with the rates mentioned in the standards of performance of the company)
- Any such order as deemed relevant, considering the given circumstances

The electricity ombudsman can include the following in the order:

- Issue wise decisions and their justification

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 consumer identifies any new issue or evidence on the matter afterwards, they can apply to the electricity ombudsman for reconsideration of the orders issued earlier. However, such an application must be made within thirty days of the orders issued by the electricity ombudsman.

In the application, the applicant must mention 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, the application can be rejected. However, before doing so the applicant is presented an opportunity to present their case.

On the other hand, if the electricity ombudsman considers it appropriate to accept such an application, the concerned opposing party is given prior intimation before the application is accepted. The ombudsman takes the required action only after duly hearing both the sides once again.

5.4 Complaints regarding electrical accidents and safety

According to the Statistical Year Book of India 2018, the second highest number of deaths due to electrocution in the country is recorded in Maharashtra. Several of these accidents were attributed to negligence.

In case of electricity accidents related to generation, transmission, or distribution, the E Act empowers the central and state governments to notify rules and procedures to be followed for reporting of accidents and providing compensation for the victims. The responsibility of undertaking inquiry and identifying corrective and preventive measures rests with the office of the electricity inspector. Similarly, the Commission is empowered to formulate regulations for licensees specifying provisions related to safety of people, animals and equipment.

While the Commission has not notified any specific safety related regulations, the Central Electricity Authority has prepared regulations on safety and electric supply. All companies are expected to follow these. For the purpose of reporting of an electrical accident, the Ministry of power has published a form, called Form-A. This form is included in this booklet, as annexure 9. As per this notification, reporting of the accident to an electrical inspector can be done either by the consumer or by any staff member of the company not below the rank of Junior Engineer using the format specified in Form-A. The Electrical Inspector must be intimated of an electrical accident within 24-48 hours of its occurrence. The region-wise contact information of all the Electrical Inspectors in Maharashtra is available on the GoM website, under the 'contact us' section (http://www.cei.maharashtra.gov.in/e_index.html).

The consumer can also report electrical accidents form.

As per the company's administrative circulars, monetary compensation is provided in cases of fatal and non-fatal accidents to humans as well as animals. In case of non-fatal accidents to humans, a compensation of Rs. 2.5 lakhs is provided. For fatal accidents to humans, the compensation amount is Rs. 4 lakhs, irrespective of age and earning capacity

of the deceased. Persons affected by such accidents can also claim immediate financial assistance to the effect of Rs. 20,000 for fatal accidents, and Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000 for non-fatal accidents. Financial assistance of Rs. 2,000 is provided in cases of fatal accidents to animals. (MSEDCL Administrative Circular No. 533 dated 9 March 2016 and MSEDCL Administrative Circular No. 192 dated 20 November 2008).

Points to note:

- 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 ± 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.
- The consumer should ask for the complaint number after registering their complaint.
- The consumer can use the three-tiered mechanism for redressal of all grievances, except for complaints of power theft and unauthorised power usage.
- The consumer should first submit their complaint to the Internal Grievance Redressal Cell (IGRC) of the electricity company. If it is not resolved through the IGRC, the consumer can approach the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) and if the complaint is not resolved by the CGRF then the electricity ombudsman can be approached.
- 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 CGRF or the electricity ombudsman.
- The cell, forum and ombudsman must give their decision on the consumer's grievance within a period of two months.

6 : Unauthorised power usage and power theft

In the course of our discussions on the quality of electric supply and billing, we have seen that there exist separate provisions regarding unauthorised power usage and power theft. As per the amendment in the E Act, these provisions have been made even more stringent (Electricity Amendment Act, 16 June 2007). This chapter further discusses these provisions.

6.1 Unauthorised power usage

(Section 126, Electricity Act 2003)

According to the E Act, the following types of power usage by the consumer shall be considered unauthorised:

- Power usage done by using any kind of unauthorised implement/ tool (for example, drawing power by inserting a hook (tapping) on the cable or bypassing a meter, etc.)
- Deliberate tampering of the Meter (for example, slowing the speed of the meter, damaging the meter, etc.)
- Using power for purposes other than those for which the connection has been sanctioned (for example, using domestic

connection for commercial purposes)

- Extending the connection to premises which have not been permitted for its usage (for example, lending power from a consumer's premises to the neighbour's premises)

6.1.1 Mechanisms for assessing unauthorised power usage

If the electricity company suspects theft, it can send assessing officers to inspect the consumer's premises. During such an inspection, if the assessing officer comes across any incident of unauthorised power usage, as listed above, they can issue orders towards the payment of an interim penalty through a notice. If the consumer agrees to this amount, it must be paid in seven days.

However, if the consumer objects to this amount, they can state their objections before 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 thirty days of the date of the interim order.

If the consumer still has objections about the final amount they can appeal to the appellate authority. The GoM has appointed an independent appellate authority at each zonal level for this purpose (MSEDCL Commercial Circular 157, 9 February 2012). However, before the appeal, the consumer has to pay half of the penalty amount to the electricity company by cash or cheque. The receipt of this payment must be attached 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 thirty days. Failing this, the consumer is liable to pay an interest at the rate of 16% per annum on the penalty amount. After six months, the consumer can also be charged compound interest.

The amount of penalty is decided after considering the entire period of unauthorised usage. If such period is difficult to determine, the penalty is charged for twelve 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 example, if a consumer uses their domestic supply for a shop or any other such commercial purpose, they will be penalised at twice the tariff that is applicable to a commercial consumer.

6.2 Power theft

(Section 135, Electricity Act 2003)

If a consumer uses power by any of the means mentioned below, they can face disciplinary action as per the provisions and regulations pertaining to power theft;

- Drawing power illegally from any equipment 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.
- 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.
- Using power for purposes other than the sanctioned connection; for example, using domestic connection for commercial purposes.

As there is no clear distinction between unauthorised power usage and power theft, there is a possibility of misinterpretation of this clause and imposition of an inappropriate penalty for such offences. However, power usage in excess of the consumer's sanctioned load does not constitute unauthorised usage or power theft as is discussed in box 6.1.

Box 6.1 Using more than the sanctioned electric load

It should be noted that in cases where the consumer's power usage exceeds, or in the past has exceeded, their sanctioned connected load, it does not amount to unauthorised usage or power theft. Often the company takes action against such consumers using the provisions under unauthorised 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 1.5 times the prevailing tariff.

6.2.1 Measures to be taken regarding power theft

If the electricity company suspects power theft or unauthorised power usage through any of the above means, an officer can be appointed to inspect the concerned premises. 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 authorised officer prepares an investigation report after the inspection. The signature and remarks of the consumer or their representative are obtained on the concluding report of such an inspection. If the consumer or their 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. Similarly, it is generally required to have two independent witnesses accompanying the officer during this inspection.

The authorised representative can examine any equipment on the premises of the consumer for suspected power theft. Similarly, they can also confiscate any tools and equipment through which the consumer has conducted the power theft. The authorised representative has to mention the list of such confiscated items in the investigation report.

If the authorised representative concludes that the consumer is involved in power theft, they 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.

6.3 Penalty and punishment

The penalty as well as the punishment for power theft or illegal power usage is determined based on 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 six months to five years. Similarly, they are also considered ineligible to obtain power from any electricity company for a period of three months to two 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 unauthorised power usage. (Regulation 8.5, Supply Code Regulations 2005)

6.3.1 Compromise amount

(Section 152, Electricity Act 2003)

If the consumer has committed the offense and confesses to the crime, the consumer must pay a fine for power theft. This amount is Rs. 4,000/kW for domestic consumers, Rs. 2,000/kW for agricultural consumers, and Rs. 10,000/kW for commercial consumers. On paying this amount, the consumer can be released immediately from imprisonment and no proceedings shall be continued against them in any court. However, any consumer is granted permission to compound their offences only once.

Points to note:

- For unauthorised power usage, the consumer is penalised at a double rate of their current tariff and the amount is determined for the entire period of unauthorised use.
- Before imposing the final amount of penalty, the assessing officer should give the consumer a fair chance to present their case.
- The consumer has to pay the penalty within thirty days of the final decision.
- Power theft is a non-bail able offence. The consumer may face imprisonment for a period of six months to two 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 their offence of power theft and pay a compromise amount.

7 : Web services

The previous chapters discussed provisions available to the consumer with regard to their interaction with the electricity company, and the procedures to do so. With recent advancements, web services have been introduced as a parallel mode to facilitate these interactions. The consumer can communicate with the electricity company online through the platforms of the company's website and the Mahavitrان mobile app. The

website and the app are available in both English and Marathi versions. Moreover, a consumer need not have a registered account on either platform to be able to carry out some of the tasks, however, having valid login id and password gives the consumer access to more options. The method of carrying out tasks such as bill payment, complaint registration, power theft reporting, etc., on these platforms are discussed in this chapter.

Figure 7.1: The company web site's web self service home page

MAHAVITRAN
Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd.

Web Self Service Home

Language

Web Self Service

Web Self Service Home

Home

New User Registration

Login

Forgot Login Name/Password?

View/Pay Bill

Consumption Calculator

Energy Bill Calculator

New Connection Request

Register your Complaint

View HT Consumer Info

Track Status, Upload Documents & Pay Charges

Welcome to Web Self Service (WSS) facility of MSEDCL. It is a self service solution, to manage your various consumer numbers online and services you availed from us through this website. Once registered, you can view and pay your bills, raise and track service requests. Now empower yourself by simply registering as per the direction provided on the website and start availing the services provided by us.

Announcements

- Prepaid consumers shall use Vending station application only (<http://prepaidmeter.mahadiscom.in>), for prepaid recharge token through online payment. Such consumers shall not pay through WSS portal

Web Self Services Registration

All consumers are required to open an account in the WSS portal. To register, simply select the **New User Registration** menu on the left side, fill up the required profile information and choose a username and password of your choice. After successful registration, an email will be sent to your profile email-id and you can start using your login credential immediately and avail services.

Bills and Payments

You can View and Pay your latest bill from 'My Account' option. Other options available are:

- View earlier bills and download your bill details
- Track your payment trends through the Payments History screen
- View Consumer Information as registered in MSEDCL billing system
- Additional Security Deposit Payment is possible Online. Please avail the facility to pay the Additional Security Deposit.

Online payment FAQ
(Before you continue please read our [Terms & Conditions](#) which include our [Privacy and Security Statements](#))

Service Requests

Customer Care

- For power failure complaints please contact our customer care center at **1912, 1800-233-3435, 1800-102-3435**
- For queries related to your online payment transactions, please email helpdesk_pg@mahadiscom.in
- For Application for ED Exemption please [click here](#)

+ View CFC Numbers
+ View Load Shedding Protocol

Know Your Relevant Documents

- New Connection/Change Load/Change Demand
- Change Of Name

External Links

- MERC
- CGRF
- CERC
- Ministry of Power

Policies

- Standards of Performance
- Conditions of Supply for MSEDCL
- Electricity Supply Code and Other Conditions of Supply
- Electricity Consumer Rights

7.1 Getting a new connection

(<https://wss.mahadiscom.in/wss/wss?uiActionName=getNewConnectionRequest>)

The electricity company's website has a consumer portal, which takes the consumer to the web self-service page (<https://wss.mahadiscom.in/wss/wss>). On this page, among other options listed, the consumer can choose to file a 'new connection request'. This selection opens up a digital A-1 application form. The consumer must provide some general information, along with specific application details, like the address at which the supply is required, billing details, the requested load, and the contract demand.

The form also provides an inbuilt load calculator, for the convenience of the consumer. The number of appliances the consumer intends to use must be entered in the indicated column of the calculator, and with preset loads for each appliance, the total requested load per day is estimated in kilowatt (kW). On the basis of this value, the contract demand in kilo volt ampere (kVA) is also automatically estimated. Each question in the form can be answered descriptively or selected from a drop down menu. After entering all the relevant details in the fields, the consumer must click the save/submit button to create the new connection request.

In addition to filling the form, the consumer is required to upload the relevant documents and submit the required

payment via the link provided in the instruction box. The documents that must be uploaded are listed on the website, and are included as part of annexure 1 of this booklet. The same portal that is used to upload the documents and make the payment can be used to check the status of the submitted application. This facility is available to the consumer, even if the application was not submitted via the online platform. The portal carries out the required search using the application number, consumer number, or the service request id that must be entered in the indicated space.

The Mahavitrans mobile app does not have provisions to initiate a new connection request. However, the status of a submitted application can be checked on the app by entering either the application id or the consumer number. The app also has a bill calculator, which provides the consumer with an estimated bill amount. On selecting the tariff category (LT-I(B): Residential), phase, and appliance details the consumer's consumption is estimated. Using this value and applying the most recent tariff rates, the app generates an estimated monthly bill which the consumer can use as reference when applying for a new connection.

This provision is accessible to consumers with or without logging into the website and the app. The consumer also has some provisions with regard to meters on these web platforms, as is discussed in box 7.1.

Box 7.1: Provisions with regard to meters

As seen in previous sections, an accurate and timely bill is dependent on the proper recording of the meter reading. However, in certain situations (elaborated in chapter 4) the company is unable to procure the reading. In such situations, the consumer now has the facility to submit the meter reading through the website and the app.

Another online facility provided is the recharge of prepaid meters via the consumer portal on the company's website. The portal takes the consumer to a separate platform, the vending station solution (<http://prepaidmeter.mahadiscom.in/>), which allows the consumer to recharge their prepaid meter. Using their consumer number, a consumer can generate a meter recharge token online and carry out payments through debit or credit cards.

7.2 Bill payments

(<https://wss.mahadiscom.in/wss/wss?uiActionName=getViewPayBill>)

The web self service page also has a provision for the consumer to 'view/pay bill'. This option takes the consumer to a page with the 'view my dues' tab. The consumer must select the consumer type from the drop down menu (LT consumer), and enter the consumer number and billing unit (both of which is present on the bill). On submitting this information, the consumer can pay the bill amount, if any. Alternatively, the consumer can log in to their account, select the applicable connection, and make the payment via the payment portal. The company has also allowed a partial payment facility for the consumers. A printable receipt is generated after successful payment of the bill.

The consumer can view an electronic version of their bill on signing in. Unlike the hardcopy of their bill, this version includes the contact information of the closest IGRC and the corresponding CGRF. Paying the bill digitally on or before the prompt payment date rewards the consumer with an amount, in addition to the prompt payment discount. The consumer can also opt to 'go green' via the website, which means that the consumer can choose to receive only e-bills and forego the option of receiving a hardcopy of the bill. On activating the go green facility, the consumer will receive a discount of Rs. 10 per bill. Additionally, the consumer can get detailed information on their consumption and payment history on this platform.

The mobile app, which is advertised with the tagline 'pay from anywhere', has all

these provisions as well. If the consumer has not logged into the app, they can view and pay their current bill, and view their

billing and payment history, by entering their consumer number.



In addition to having the option of paying their bill through the website and the app, the consumer can also pay their bills by linking their consumer number to their bank account on their net banking platform. Once the company approves

the link, the consumer receives intimation from the bank for bill payment, from the next billing cycle onwards. Other than the net banking platform, there are also several other banking and money transfer apps such as PayTM, PhonePe,

Google Pay, etc. which allow consumers to register MSEDCL as a “biller” and to make payments using the consumer number.

7.3 Reporting grievances

The website provides the consumer with all the details pertaining to grievance registration and redressal on the consumer portal (<https://www.mahadiscom.in/consumer-grievances-redressal-forum/>). However, to register a complaint, the consumer must access the web self service platform.

Unlike the online provisions discussed earlier, in order to file a grievance online, the consumer must be a registered user on the company’s website. Once the consumer has registered and entered their log in credentials and selected the applicable connection, the consumer can choose to register a new service request.

The consumer is required to select the service request type (complaint or enquiry) and the sub type from a drop down menu, and enter the details of the request. Even though electric accidents do not fall in the jurisdiction of the company, the consumer is given an option to report them under the ‘new service request’ tab, as is further discussed in box 7.2.

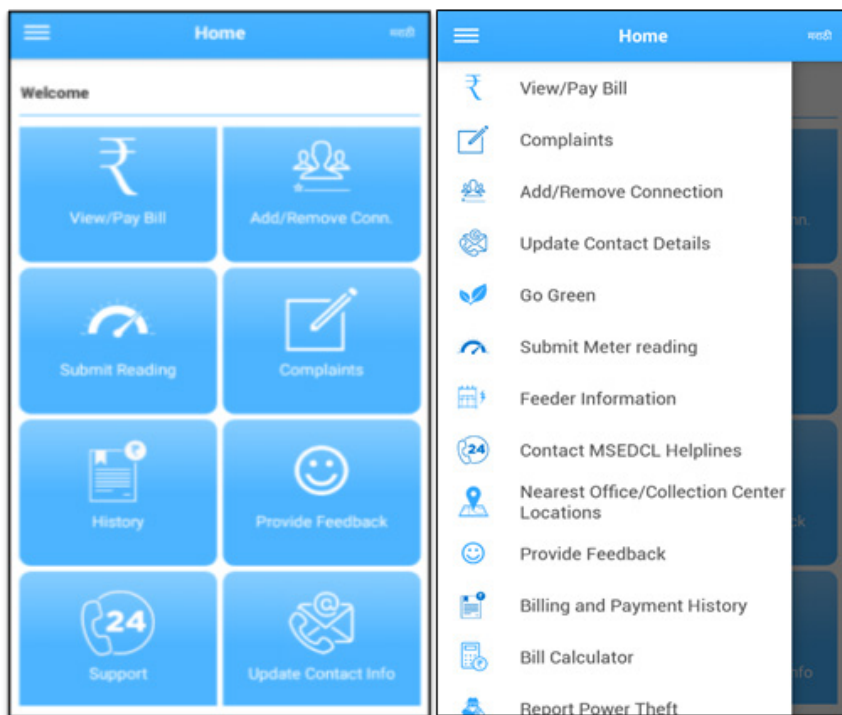
Similarly, a registered consumer can submit grievances and accidents on the app through the ‘complaints’ tab. While this provision is available only to registered consumers, power theft can be reported on the app without logging in. The consumer can provide details like the name and address of the suspect, the mode of theft and a description of the same. There is also an option to upload photographic evidence of the theft. The identity of the person reporting the theft is protected, when the reporting is carried out on this platform.

Box 7.2: Reporting electric accidents

In the eventuality of an electric accident, the consumer can report the same on the website by selecting ‘complaint’ as the service request type while registering a service request. The consumer can report fatal accidents (human and animal), non-fatal accidents, and any other type of accidents, under the accident service request sub type. The mobile app also lets the consumer report accidents in the complaints section. On both the platforms, this service is available only to registered consumers.

7.4 Other provisions

Figure 7.2: Mahavitran app's homepage



7.4.1 Update contact details

(<https://consumerinfo.mahadiscom.in/>)

The consumer can update their contact details and link it to their consumer id, on the website. From the consumer portal, the consumer has the option to 'register/update contact details'; which gives the consumer access to update information, and to subscribe to services

like receiving alerts via SMS or email. While not mandatory, this platform also gives consumers the option to link their electricity connection to their aadhar. The same facility can be accessed on the mobile app as well, under the 'update contact info/details' tab. In addition to this, a registered consumer can link all their existent connections to one account, on both the platforms.

7.4.2 Application for change and status tracking

A consumer can request a change in load/demand, a change in name, and a correction of address on the website, through the consumer's registered account. After submitting such a request, the consumer can track the status of the same on the website, under the 'track status' or 'request status' tabs. This provision can also be used to track the status of new connection and re-connection requests. An application for change in load and change in name can be submitted on the app as well.

7.4.3 Provision of important information

Other than the web self service platform, the consumer portal also gives the consumer access to pertinent information. The portal has a 'knowledge centre' tab which contains the conditions of supply for the company, tariff details, the bill format and estimated consumption, information regarding safety and energy conservation, and other such details. The portal also gives the consumer access to operational data, such as the time and duration emergency load shedding, information regarding scheduled outages, and the company's peak demand and availability. Additionally, application forms, acts and regulations, and circulars are available on the portal in a downloadable format.

On the app, a consumer can view their feeder information, with details like the collection efficiency, billing efficiency, and distribution and collection loss. In this section, the consumer is also informed of any planned outages their feeder is scheduled for, over the next thirty days. The app also informs the consumer of the location and helpline number of the nearest company offices and collection centres.

7.4.4 Consumer feedback

Both the website and the app have a facility for the consumer to provide feedback. The website records consumer details (for example, name, address, consumer number, etc.) and lets the consumer leave their feedback in the form of a comment. The app, on the other hand, records the consumer number, and has a star rating scale for various parameters (for example, quality of supply, attendance of complaints, receipt of bill in time, etc.) in addition to recording the consumer's comments.

These web services are intended to make the consumer's transactions with the company more convenient. However, the implementation of these services are still a work in progress. Given this disjunction, this facility could potentially be very useful with regard to maintaining quality of service.

Points to note:

- The electricity company has a website and an app, which is accessible in English and Marathi to the consumers.
- Consumers can apply for a new connection, and track its status, on the electricity company's website.
- Consumers can pay their bill digitally on multiple platforms, in addition to the company's website and app.
- The consumer can choose the 'go green' facility to discontinue the receipt of a physical bill, and instead only receive an e-bill.
- If the consumer has a registered account on the website and the app, they can register complaints and accidents on the selected platform.
- Consumers can also update contact details, apply for change in load/name/address and track the status of these applications, access technical and operational data, and leave feedback on these online platforms.

8 : Consumer engagement

Thus far, the chapters in this booklet have dealt with individual consumer concerns and the avenues to resolve the same. This chapter, however, describes other processes and avenues for the consumer to engage with broader sector level issues. While there are rules and regulations in place to facilitate efficient functioning of the power sector, consumers and citizens also have a role in shaping it. They can take proactive actions to not only ensure that the quality of supply and service is improved and maintained, but also to reduce overall cost of electricity and to improve planning.

A few processes and issues, through which consumers can engage with the electricity sector, are discussed below. The objective is to encourage individuals to go from being consumers of the company to agents of change within the community. However, given the vast nature of this topic, this chapter is only intended to be a brief introduction to such broader engagement. There are several other publications of Prayas that cover this topic in greater detail, such as 'Demanding electricity service: a guide for the community activist' and 'Know your power: a citizen's primer on the

electricity sector', amongst others. Some of the other relevant resources are listed on the last page of this booklet.

8.1 Tariff revision process

The Commission is responsible for deciding costs for the operations of the company and setting the tariff for the consumers. It undertakes a public process for doing so. In Maharashtra, the tariff revision process for all the electricity companies is undertaken on a multi-year basis. This means that the Commission sets the tariffs for a period of time (usually, three to five years) instead of doing it on an annual basis. At the end of the multi-year time period (also called the control period), the Commission evaluates the actual performance and costs with regard to what was approved at the beginning of the control period, and revises the costs and tariffs accordingly. Figure 8.1 illustrates the process carried out for the determination of a distribution company's tariff.

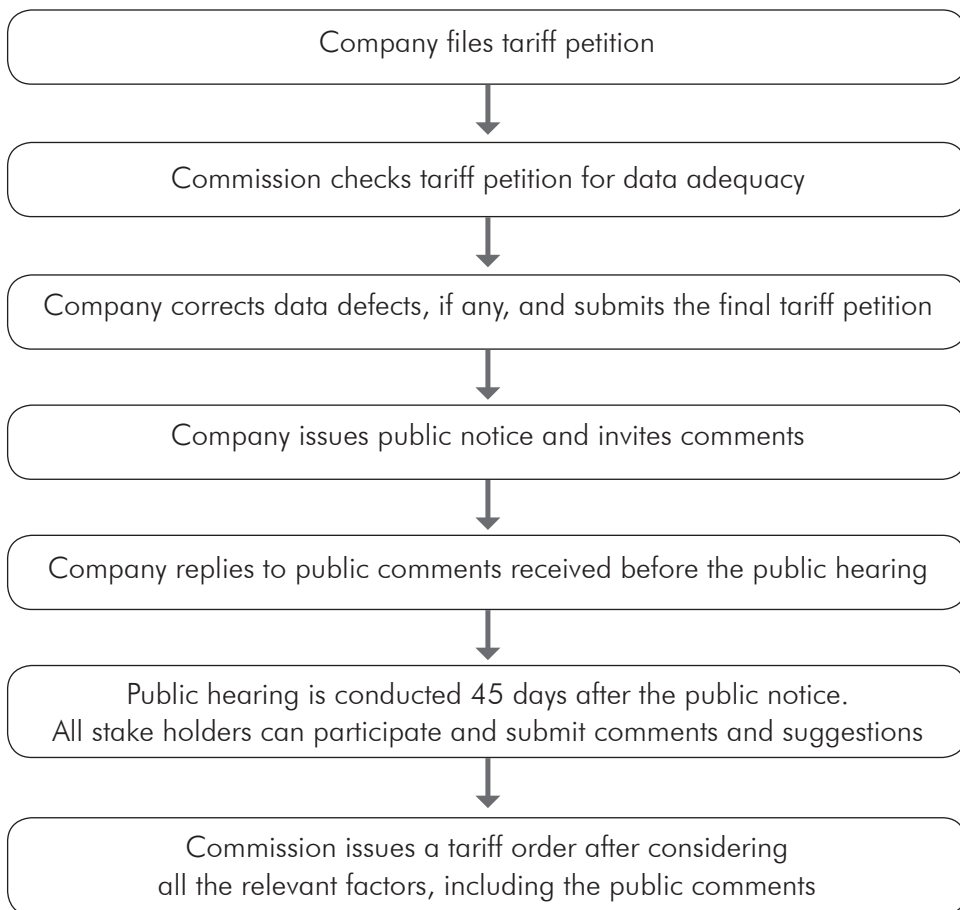
As is seen in figure 8.1, once a company's tariff petition is accepted by the Commission, the company is required to issue a public notice, and a

public hearing is conducted 45 days after the notice is published. For MSEDCL, the Commission undertakes the public hearing at six different locations in the state, thus making it easier for consumers to participate.

Since the mandatory process of public hearings for tariff revisions occurs

periodically and at multiple locations throughout the state, it is an easily accessible platform for the consumer to raise broader issues regarding the company's performance and planning. For this purpose, they can also demand necessary data regarding performance of the company and provide inputs that can help in improving its operations.

Figure 8.1: Indicative steps in a tariff determination process



Note: Based on practice prevalent in MERC.

8.2 Revision of regulations

Other than the tariff process, there are several other procedures for which public participation is possible. These include grant or cancellation of licenses and revision or notification of regulations. However, there may not be a fixed timeframe for these processes, and they are often called for depending on the urgency of an issue and based on the Commission's decisions. Given the nature of these processes, they are not carried out routinely, and the consumer needs to be alert to utilise these public hearings to their full extent.

The regulations mentioned in this booklet, such as the Standards of Performance Regulation, the Supply Code Regulations, and the CGRF and Ombudsman Regulations, may also undergo revision. For example, the Standards of Performance Regulation was revised in 2014. When such a revision is called for, the Commission often publishes a draft background paper, followed by the draft regulations on which comments are sought from the public. This is followed by a public hearing in which people can submit their comments and suggestions in person. In case of some regulations, the Commission even publishes what is called statement of reasons which documents the major comments and suggestions from the public and the Commission's response to the same.

8.3 Filing a petition/appeal

The avenues discussed previously are of a public nature, and hence, are initiated by either the Commission or the electricity companies. Many cases are filed before the Commission regarding non-compliance of CGRF or Ombudsman orders by consumers. Similarly, if consumers do not agree with any of the decisions of the Commission or feel that a certain issue is not getting due attention, they have the option of filing petitions or appeals. Sometimes, it is sufficient to simply highlight these issues and to bring them to the Commission's notice, which can then act on it suo moto (i.e. on its own), if necessary.

Appeals against orders of the Commission can be filed before the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity or APTEL. The APTEL is empowered to hold the Commission responsible for its duties and responsibilities. Additionally, electricity sector issues that fall outside the jurisdiction of the APTEL can also be brought before the state's high court. For example, delay in appointments, non-compliance with due regulatory process, etc. It needs to be noted that in matters such as say tariff determination, the jurisdiction of Commission or APTEL is very clear and such cases are unlikely to be entertained by other courts. Appeals against the judgements of the APTEL or High Court can be filed before the Supreme Court.

In order to hold the companies and the Commission accountable for their duties and responsibilities, consumer should use all such avenues and processes. Some

issues that can be taken up by consumers through such processes are discussed in box 8.1.

Box 8.1: Issues that can be taken up by consumers

Participation in tariff revision related public hearings is important to raise concerns of common consumers. These processes can be used to demand better clarity and action regarding tariff related issues like power purchase cost, capital expenditure, tariff design, and technical and financial losses of the company. Issues related to supply and service quality can also be highlighted at this forum, for example; inefficient metering, unmetered consumption, theft, incorrect billing, electrical accidents, failure to meet the defined standards of performance, upkeep of electrical infrastructure, etc. Other than functioning efficiently, the company is also supposed to publish data regarding some aspects of its operation. Public hearings can be a forum to demand such and other relevant data regarding the company's operation and performance.

8.4 Other options

Other than the options listed above, the consumer can engage with the sector through other means as well. A few such avenues are listed below:

- The Right to Information (RTI) act: The RTI act is a useful tool in holding public authorities such as state generation, transmission, and distribution companies accountable. Under this act, public entities are required to instate public information officers and appellate authorities to ensure that the information requested of the entity through a RTI is adequately disclosed. While this facility allows for access of data that is relevant to the consumer's

concerns, it is also time and effort intensive.

The RTI act also has a provision for proactive disclosure, under which public entities are mandated to annually release information in a preset format, through its websites or publications. This includes basic details of the organisation and duties of the various offices and employees, procedure for decision making, details of advisory committees and public information officers, and arrangements for public consultation with regard to policy implementation. However, this information is often not updated regularly and is not presented in an easy to understand format.

- Consumer courts: The consumer has the right to approach consumer courts to resolve any disputes regarding the sale and consumption of power. Any consumer related issue falls under the jurisdiction of these courts and the consumer is not limited by the provisions of grievance redressal under the E Act.
- Greater engagement of consumers will result in more consumer friendly operation of the company, while increasing its accountability. It can contribute to better supply and service to the consumers and more efficient functioning of the sector's institutions, making it beneficial for everyone concerned.

Organisations and individuals active in the state electricity sector:

In Maharashtra, there are several individuals and organisations who have been providing support to consumers in redressing their electricity related grievances. The following list includes organisations and individuals who have engaged with the Commission and in the past have been acknowledged as consumer representatives.

Sl. No.	Name of individual/organisation	Contact details
1.	Mr. Venkatesh M. Nirmal	N.P. Kadam, Krishna Niwas, Near Hanuman Temple, Deep Nagar, Purna Road, Nanded 431605 Phone No.: 09222280999
2.	Shri Banait Sharadchandra Prakashchandra	20, Sahas Colony, Pratap Nagar, Behind Durga Mandir, Pratap Nagar, Nagpur 440022 Phone No.: 09370587435
3.	Mrs. Ostwal Anita Indra	Ostwal Hospital, Doctors Colony, Near bus stand, Parbhani 431401
4.	Shri Jagdish/Kiran Vishnupant Paturkar	KIRAN Topenagar, Pavanaskar Layout, Amravati 444602
5.	Adv. Siddharth Balkrishna Varma	Flat No. 3, Patwardhan Apartment, Near Poddar House, Patil Lane 3, College Road, Nashik- 05 Phone No.: 09766440000
6.	Shri Sridhar Vasant Vyawahare	C/o Vaibhav Placements 1, Shivam Apartment, Mahatma Nagar, Trimbak Road, Nashik 422007 Phone No.: 09422259095

7.	Shri Ashish Subash Chandarana	Flat No. 302, Satguru Villa Apartment, Sahakar Nagar, Gorokshan Road, Akola 444004 Phone No.: 09372123960
8.	Shri Hemant Arunchandra Kapadia	25, Shantiniketan Colony, Near Shani Mandir, Aurangabad 431001 Phone No.: 09422205441 Email: hemantkapadia00@hotmail.com
9.	Shri Avinash Vinayak Prabhune	113, Suvarnavedh, Pandurang Gawande Layout, Ranapratap Nagar, Nagpur 440022 Phone No.: 09049800158 Email: aviprabhune@gmail.com
10.	Shri Sham Dashrath Patil	26, Ashoknagar, Jamunagiri Road, Dhule 424001 Phone No.: 08329306029
11.	Shri Suhas R Khandekar	Shreedham, Rahate Colony, Jail Road, Nagpur 440022 Phone No.: 09822468741
12.	Dr. Ramakant D Patel	S.No. 474/1, Plot No. 1, Pratap Nagar, Near Mahavir Society, Malegaon, Dhule 424001
13.	Shri Sunil David Sonawane	1326, Mary Cottage, Shrirampur, Ahmednagar 413709 Phone No.: 09822878507 Email - sonawane_sd@rediffmail.com
14.	Dr. Barhate Gorakh Haribhau	Opp. Dr. Bhalghat Hospital, Dist. Bank Colony, Ward No. 7, Shrirampur, Ahmednagar 413709 Email - ghbarhate@rediffmail.com
15.	Shri Praneta Ravindra Desale	At Post Dahivel, Tal. Sakri, Dist. Dhule 424304 Phone No.: 09767636703 Email - desalepr@rediffmail.com
16.	Dr. Anil Gunderao Anikhindi	J-404, Om Datta Chile Park, Vishwakarma Project, Pratibhanagar, Kolhapur 416008 Phone No.: 09371438160 Email - anilcost@gmail.com
17.	Dr. Ashok Pendse	701 Venus Residency, Bhandari Lane, Next to Lokmanya School, Mahim (W) Mumbai 400016 Phone No.: 09821112029 Email- ashokpendse@gmail.com

18.	Mumbai Grahak Panchayat	Grahak Bhavan, Sant Dynaneshwar Marg, Behind Cooper Hospital, Vile Parle (West), Mumbai 400056 Phone No.: 02226281839 E-mail: seb@vsnl.com
19.	Thane Belapur Industries Association	Plot No. P-14, MIDC, Rabale Village, PO Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai 400701 Phone No.: 09821112029 (Dr. Ashok Pendse) E-mail: tbia@vsnl.com
20.	Vidarbha Industries Association	1st Floor, Udyog Bhawan, Civil Lines, Nagpur 440001 Phone No.: 09765494321 (Shri R B Goenka) E-mail: rkengga@gmail.com
21.	Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture	Oricon House, 6 floor, 12 K Dubash Marg, Fort, Mumbai 400001 Phone No.: 09821731281 (Shri Anil Gachake)
22.	Institutional Consumer representatives of the Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture (CMIA)	Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture, Bajaj Bhavan, P-2, MIDC Area, Station Road, Aurangabad 431005 Phone No.: 09158898076 (Shri Prasad Kokil) Email - info@cmia-aurangabad.com
23.	Maharashtra Veej Grahak Sanghtana	16/581, behind Momin Mill Stores, Infront of Shahu High School Ichalkaranji 416115 Phone No.: 09823072249 E-mail: prataphogade@yahoo.co.in

Annexure 1:

Form-A1

https://www.mahadiscom.in/consumer/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/A1_FORM_RCI.pdf

Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd.

(A Govt. of Maharashtra undertaking)

CIN: U40109MH20055GC153645



A-1 Form for Power Supply for Residential / Commercial / Industrial Purpose

You can fill this form online also. Please visit www.mahadiscom.in

(Processing fee will be waived if application and payment is made online)

Date of Application: ____

To,
The Engineer,
Section /Sub-Division/ Circle Office,

Dear Sir / Madam,

I hereby submit this application for new connection for supply of electrical energy at the premises mentioned below

A. Details of Applicant

1) Applicants Name (IN BLOCK LETTERS)	First name	Name of Father/Husband	Surname
2) Email Id:	(Phone No)	(Mobile)	
3) Aadhar Card No.(Optional)			

B. Details of Premises

1) Address of Premises			
House / Flat / Gala / Survey No.	Society Name:		
Street / Landmark:	Village:		
Taluka / City & District:	Pin Code:		
2) Type of premises	Self Owned <input type="checkbox"/>	Rented <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupier / Other <input type="checkbox"/>
3) Name & address of the Owner :(If not self owned)			
4) Nearest Consumer No for reference: (Please Specify)			

C. Power Supply Requirement

Type of Supply	Residential / Commercial / Industrial		
Single Phase (LT) <input type="checkbox"/>	Three Phase (LT) <input type="checkbox"/>	HT <input type="checkbox"/>	Connected Load(KW)*: Contract Demand (KVA):

(* Please refer overleaf to calculate required load.)

D. Applicants Classification (for new connection of residential only)

a) General <input type="checkbox"/>	b) SC/ST <input type="checkbox"/>	c) BPL <input type="checkbox"/>
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E. Document attached

1) Occupancy/Ownership proof:
2) Identity Proof:
3) Test report of Consumer's premises from Govt. Authorized contractor (to be submitted before the release of connection):

Declaration:

I hereby declare that

I will abide by the provisions of Electricity Act 2003 and Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and other conditions of Supply) Regulation 2005.I will further abide by rules & regulations issued by regulatory bodies & MSEDCL from time to time.. I will pay the electricity bill as per prevailing MSEDCL Tariff. If the premises is declared unauthorized then at the time of vacation by competent authority, MSEDCL will have liberty to remove the electric connection immediately.

The above information is true and if any false information is observed, I / we will be responsible for the consequence thereof.

Signature of Applicant

For Office Use:	Application No.:	Acknowledgement Receipt	Signature & Office Stamp
	Applicant Name:		(Representative MSEDCL)
	Application Received Date:		

F. Documents Required (Please Tick ☒ which is applicable)

a. Proof of Ownership or Occupancy of Premises (Any one of the following)	b. Identity Proof (Any one of the following)	c. Documents required for relevant category (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/> Occupancy Certificate issued by Statutory body / Competent Authority <input type="checkbox"/> Ownership Document/form 8 / Form 7-12 / tax / lease issued by Local Authority <input type="checkbox"/> In case of tenant Leave & License / Lease agreement with Property Owner's NOC <input type="checkbox"/> In case of Quarter, Allotment letter of its authority. <input type="checkbox"/> In case of Slum Area, if none of the above documents is available then affidavit on Rs. 200/- stamp paper.	<input type="checkbox"/> Voter's identification Card <input type="checkbox"/> Collector/Govt. Authorized Photo ID <input type="checkbox"/> Aadhar Card <input type="checkbox"/> PAN Card <input type="checkbox"/> Driving License <input type="checkbox"/> Passport	<input type="checkbox"/> SC / ST Caste Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> BPL Certificate

Remark:

- 1) Required Statutory & regulatory permission is to be submitted.
- 2) For industrial connection purpose following additional documents required :
 - a) Industrial Registration / DIC Certificate .
 - b) Separate sheet for Load profile.

G. Calculation of Load Requirement:

Appliances*	(a) load (watts)	(b) No of Appliances	Total(Watts) (a x b)
LED	9 /12		
Tube Light	40		
Table fan / ceiling Fan	80		
Colour Television	120		
Refrigerator (Small)	225		
Exhaust Fan	150		
Computer	150		
Washing Machine	500		
Cooler (Medium size)	170		
AC (1.5 ton) / Room Heater (Blower Type)	1800		
Pump motor (1 HP)	740		
Geyser (Storage)	2000		
Others			
Total			

Note: For Service Connection & Other Charges please refer Circular No.CE/Dist.)/D-IV/C.No.195 of 2017/ SOC/23862 Dt. 08.10.2018

MAHARASHTRA STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LTD.
SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

(As per Hon'ble Commission's order in case No 195 of 2017 dtd.12th September 2018)

ANNEXURE 1		
SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES FOR NEW OVERHEAD CONNECTION		
Sr. No.	CATEGORY	Approved by MERC (In Rs.)
1	L.T. Supply	
	Single Phase.	
a	For Load up to 0.5 KW	1,000
b	For Load above 0.5 KW and up to 10 KW	1,500
	Three Phase	
a	Motive Power up to 21 HP or other loads up to 16 KW	3,500
b	Motive Power up to 21 HP but up to 107 HP or other loads above 16 KW but up to 80 KW.	8,500
c	Motive Power above 107 HP but up to 201 HP or other loads above 80 KW but up to 150 KW.	13,000
2	H.T. Supply	
a	H.T. Supply up to 500 KVA.	21,500 +30 /- per KVA for excess load above 500 KVA.
Note	i) In case MSDDL permits an applicant to carry out the works through a Licensed Electrical Contractor (LEC), a rate of 1.30% of the normative charges will be applicable towards supervision charges	
	ii) In case of extension of load, the normative charges will be applicable on the total load (existing as well as additional load demanded) as per the load slabs indicated above	
	iii) GST will be levied extra as per applicable rates.	

ANNEXURE 2		
SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES FOR NEW UNDERGROUND CONNECTION		
Sr. No.	CATEGORY	Approved by MERC (In Rs.)
1	L.T. Supply	Rs.
	Single Phase.	
a	For Load up to 5 KW	3,100
b	For Load above 5 KW and up to 10 KW	7,150
	Three Phase	
a	Motive Power up to 27 HP or other loads up to 20 KW	13,500
b	Motive Power up to 27 HP but up to 67 HP or other loads above 20 KW but up to 50 KW.	21,000
c	Motive Power above 67 HP but up to 134 HP or other loads above 50 KW but up to 100 KW.	43,000
d	Motive Power above 134 HP but up to 201 HP or other loads above 100 KW but up to 150 KW.	66,500
2	H.T. Supply	
a	H.T. Supply up to 500 KVA.	2,21,000
b	H.T. Supply above 500 KVA.	2,30,000
Note	i) The road opening charges vary from area to area hence will be levied on actual basis.	
	ii) In case MSDDL permits an applicant to carry out the works through a a Licensed Electrical Contractor (LEC), a rate of 1.30% of the normative charges will be applicable towards supervision charges.	
	iii) In case of extension of load, the normative charges will be applicable on the total load (existing as well as additional load demanded) as per the load slabs indicated above.	
	iv) GST will be levied extra as per applicable rates.	

5.

ANNEXURE 3		
APPLICATION, REGISTRATION AND PROCESSING CHARGES for New connections/ Change of name/ Reduction or Enhancement of Load/ Shifting of service/ Temporary connection		
Sr. No.	CATEGORY	Approved by MERC (In Rs.)
1	Single phase	100
2	Three phase	150
3	HT supply up to 33 kV	2,400
4	EHV Supply	4,800
Note	i) GST will be levied extra as per applicable rates.	

Annexure 2:

Electricity consumption data for some domestic appliances

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 test report (Form-D1)

<https://www.mahadiscom.in/consumer/application-form-d-1/>

महाराष्ट्र राज्य विद्युत मंडळ							
अहवाल क्रमांक :				फॉर्म डी - १			
विद्युत कंत्राटदाराने द्यायच्या संच मांडणीचा चाचणी अहवाल पूर्तता प्रमाणपत्र							
अर्ज क्र. :				दिनांक :			
द्वारा म. रा. वि. मंडळ				वीज मागणीचा प्रकार			
स्थानिक कार्यालय				घरगुती () व्यवसायिक ()			
				कारखाना () शेतीसाठी ()			
				तात्पुरत ()			
मी/आम्ही आपणास कळवितो की,							
या जागेतील प्रत्यक्ष कब्जेदार							
यांचेकडे विद्युत संच मांडणीचे काम मी / आम्ही भारतीय विद्युत नियम १९६५ नुसार पूर्ण केले असून त्यांचा तपशील व चाचणी अहवाल खालील प्रमाणे आहे.							
वीज मागणी	राध्याच्या भार		नवीन मागणी		एकूण वीज भार		तपशील (जरूर तर स्वतंत्र कागद जोडायचा)
१. दिवे	पॉईंट्स	वॅट्स	पॉईंट्स	वॅट्स	पॉईंट्स	वॅट्स	
२. पंखे							
३. ३ पिन							
४. घरगुती उपकरणे							
अ)							
ब)							
क)							
ड)							
	संख्या	अश्व शक्ती	संख्या	अश्व शक्ती	वेगळ्या अश्व शक्ती	एकूण भार	
५. कारखाना/उद्योग							
यासाठी यंत्र							
६. शेतीसाठी पंप							
७. इतर उपयोग							
मी/आम्ही वरील वीज संच मांडणीची चाचणी दिनांक				रोजी घेतली असून फेज व अर्थ यामध्ये			
मे ओ आहे, तसेच दोन फेजमध्ये / फेज व न्यूट्रलमध्ये				मे ओ आहे. ग्राहकाचे			
आर्थिक व जमीन यामध्ये विरोध				ओहम आहे.			
मी / आम्ही शपथपूर्वक निवेदन करतो की, पर्यवेक्षकाने प्रमाणपत्र व कंत्राटदाराचे अनुज्ञाप्रीचा अद्यायत नुतनीकरण करून घेतले आहे.							
पर्यवेक्षकाची सही				विद्युत कंत्राटदाराची सही			
प्रमाणपत्र क्र. रु.				अनुज्ञाती क्र.			

Annexure 4:

Form-U and Form-X

https://www.mahadiscom.in/consumer/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/4.U-Form-change-of-name_21112017.pdf

Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd.
(A Govt. of Maharashtra undertaking)
CIN: U40109MH20055GC153645



"U" FORM FOR CHANGE OF NAME

(Address of the premises shall remain same)

You can fill this form online also. Please visit www.mahadiscom.in
(Processing fee will be waived if application and payment is made online)

Date of Application: _____

To,
The Office In Charge,
Sub-Division/ Circle Office

Dear Sir / Madam,

I hereby submit this application for Change of Name of connection as mentioned below.

1) Details of Old Consumer

1)	Applicants Name (IN BLOCK LETTERS)	First name	Name of Father/Husband	Surname
2)	Consumer No.:	(Mobile No)		

2) Details of New Consumer

1)	Applicants Name (IN BLOCK LETTERS)	First name	Name of Father/Husband	Surname
2)	Email Id:	(Phone No)	(Mobile No)	
3)	Aadhar Card No.(Optional):			

3) Reason for Change of Name : _____

4) Document enclosed (Please specify) _____ (Please see Annexure "A")

Note: 1. For transfer of Security Deposit, old consumer should give consent, in absence of such consent incoming consumer will pay security deposit.

2. If old consumer wants refund of Security Deposit then fill up form "X".

3. In case of arrears, this application will not be processed and intimation will be sent to new consumer.

Declaration:

I hereby declare that

I will abide by the provisions of Electricity Act 2003 and Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and other conditions of Supply) Regulation 2005. I will further abide by rules & regulations issued by regulatory bodies & MSEDCL from time to time. I will pay the electricity bill as per prevailing MSEDCL Tariff. If the premises is declared unauthorized then at the time of vacation by competent authority, MSEDCL will have liberty to remove the electric connection immediately.

The above information is true and if any false information is observed, I / we will be responsible for the consequence thereof.

Note: You can upload signed copy of this form & relevant document for change of name, on MSEDCL website OR by using Mobile App.

Signature of Applicant

For Office Use:	Application No.:	 MAHAVITARAN Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd.	Signature & Office Stamp (Representative MSEDCL)
	Applicant Name:		
	Application Received Date:		

Annexure “A”

Document required (please tick):

Any one of the relevant document:-

- a. Occupancy Certificate issued by statutory body / Competent Authority.
- b. Ownership Document/form 8 / Form 7-12 / tax / lease issued by Local Authority
- c. Certified copy of Corresponding Legal Document (In case of inheritance / succession / will/ Gift Deed)
- d. Certificate of Incorporation issued as per provision of companies Act 1956.
- e. Affidavit / Gazette Notification for himself (In case applicant himself has changed his name)
- f. Legal document supporting letting and NOC of the owner. (In case of premises is let out to the applicant)

FORM “X”

a) Transfer of Security Deposit

I, Shri / Smt. / M/s. _____, hereby give consent for transfer of Security Deposit held against my consumer no. _____ in the name of transferee Shri / Smt. / M/s. _____.

Signature of Old Consumer

OR

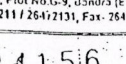
b) Refund of Security Deposit

I, Shri / Smt. / M/s. _____, hereby give consent to transfer the connection in the name of transferee Shri / Smt. / M/s. _____. I request to refund the security deposit held against my consumer no. _____ to me. For refund of security deposit Original Receipt is enclosed. OR my Original Receipt of S.D. is lost, I am enclosing indemnity bond. The Account details for ECS are as below.

- Name of Account Holder:
- Name of Bank & Branch:
- Bank A/c no.:
- IFSC no.:
- Original Receipt no.:

Signature of Old Consumer

Company's circular on grant of instalments for payment of supplementary bills raised, when the consumer is not at fault



MAHARASHTRA STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION CO. LTD.
 Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd.
 Prakashgad, Plot No. G-9, Dandara (East), Mumbai - 400 051
 P: 26474753, (O) 26474211 / 26472131, Fax: 26472366, Website: www.mahadiscom.in

No. PR - 3/ Tariff /

To
The Chief Engineer,
MSMEDCL,
All O&M Zones.

24156

2009

MAHARASHTRA STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION CO. LTD.

CHIEF ENGINEER, MSMEDCL

Date: **18 JUL 2009**

Sub: Grant of installments for payment of supplementary bills raised due to corrective action by MSMEDCL where consumer is not at fault.

It is observed in number of cases referred to Head Office where due to application of wrong tariff a supplementary bill covering the past period was required to be issued to the consumers. As the consumer could not pay the amount in lump-sum, the matter was submitted before the Competent Authority for grant of installments. The Competent Authority has allowed the consumers to pay the supplementary bill amount in installments without DPC and interest charges incidental to the installments considering the fact that these supplementary bills were issued by MSMEDCL due to its own re-categorization (Corrective action) and the consumer is not at fault.

Following guidelines are issued regarding grant of installments:


1. The number of installment to be granted shall be equal to the number of months for which the supplementary bills are issued (e.g. if the differential amount is billed for 10 months, then the consumer will be given 10 installments so as to recover the full amount in 10 months period).
2. These installments should be granted without levy of interest of DPC.
3. However, if any installment is not paid in time along with the regular bill, apart from the provision of disconnection as per EA 2003, it will also attract DPC and interest as per rules.
4. An undertaking should be taken from the consumer for agreeing to above conditions.
5. Post dated cheques should be taken from the consumer for the installments.

The Competent Authority has further approved that in all such cases where the supplementary bills are raised due to corrective action and where consumer is not at fault, above guidelines shall be followed for grant of installments.

In such cases as DPC and interest is not to be levied, this will amount to relaxation in Conditions of Supply where financial implication is involved. The Competent Authority has accorded approval to relax this condition only in above cases and field officers i.e. C.E.s and S.E.s depending upon HT and LT connection, respectively, can decide the cases with intimation to Chief Engineer (Commercial) giving following details:

1. The type of mistake made by the meter reader/ billing clerk/ officer.
2. The persons on whom the responsibility is fixed.
3. The financial implications involved in individual case.

All field officers are directed to note the above and take prompt action in such cases to avoid consumers' grievances.


Director (Operation)

Copy s. w. r. to:

The Managing Director, MSEDCL, Mumbai.

Copy f. w. c. to:

The Director (Finance), MSEDCL, Mumbai.

Copy to:

- 1) The Executive Director – I/ II/ III, MSEDCL, Kalyan/ Pune/ Nagpur.
- 2) The Executive Director (CP), MSEDCL, Mumbai.
- 3) The Chief Engineer (Commercial), MSEDCL, Mumbai
- 4) The Superintending Engineer, MSEDCL, All O&M Circles

Annexure 6:

Application to Internal Grievance Redressal Cell

Application to Internal Grievance Redressal Cell

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Date:

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

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/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 7:

Application to Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum

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

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)

Annexure 9:

Form-A for reporting of electrical accidents

http://www.cea.nic.in/reports/others/ps/pce2/cei/notification_information_accident.pdf

Form A Form for reporting electrical accidents

1. Date and time of accident.
2. Place of accident.
(Village/Town, Tehsil/Thana, District and State).
3. System and voltage of supply (Whether Extra High Voltage (EHV)/High Voltage (HV)/Low Voltage (LV) Line, sub-station/generation station/consumer's installations/service lines/other installations).
4. Designation of the Officer-in-charge of the generating company/licensee in whose jurisdiction the accident occurred.
5. Name of owner/user of energy in whose premises the accident occurred.
6. Details of victim(s):

(a) Human

Sl.No	Name	Father's Name	Sex of victim	Full Postal address	Approximate age	Fatal/non-fatal
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(b) Animal

Sl.No.	Description of animal(s)	Number(s)	Name(s) of owner(s)	Address(es) of owner(s)	Fatal/non-fatal
1	2	3	4	5	6

7. In case the victim(s) is/are employee(s) of supplier:-

- (a) designation of such person(s);
 - (b) brief description of the job undertaken, if any;
 - (c) whether such person/persons was/were allowed to work on the job.
8. In case the victim(s) is/are employee(s) of a licensed contractor, -
- (a) did the victim(s) possess any electric workmen's permit(s), supervisor's certificate of competency?
If yes, give number and date of issue and the name of issuing authority;
 - (b) name and designation of the person who assigned the duties of the victim(s).
9. In case of accident in the system of the generating company/licensee, was the permit to work (PTW) taken?
10. (a) Describe fully the nature and extent of injuries, e.g. , fatal/disablement (permanent or temporary) of any portion of the body or burns or other injuries.
(b) In case of fatal accident, was the post mortem performed?
11. Detailed causes leading to the accident.
(To be given in a separate sheet annexed to this form).
12. Action taken regarding first aid, medical attendance etc. immediately after the occurrence of the accident (give details).
13. Whether the District Magistrate and Police Station concerned have been informed of the accident (if so, give details).
14. Steps taken to preserve the evidence in connection with the accident to extent possible.
15. Name and designation(s) of the person(s) assisting, supervising the person(s) killed or injured.
16. What safety equipments were given to or used by the person(s) who met with this accident (e.g. rubber gloves, rubber mats, safety belts and ladders etc.)?

17. Whether isolating switches and other sectionalizing devices were employed to deaden the sections for working on the same? Whether working section was earthed at the site of work?

18. Whether the work on the live lines was undertaken by authorised person(s)? If so, the name and the designation of such person(s) may be given.

19. Whether artificial resuscitation treatment was given to the person(s) who met with the electric accident? If yes, how long was it continued before its abandonment?

20. Names and designations of persons present at, and witnessed, the accident.

21. Any other information/remarks.

Place:

Time:

Date:

Signature

Name

Designation

Address of the person
reporting

Important Rules, Regulations, and Orders for the Electricity Consumer

- Electricity Act, 2003
- Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Standards of Performance of Distribution Licensees, Period for Giving Supply and Determination of Compensation) Regulations, 2014
- Conditions of Supply Based on the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code & Other Conditions of Supply) Regulations, 2005
- Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and Other Conditions of Supply) Regulations, 2005
- Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission Case No. 195 of 2017 (Mid-Term Review Petition of Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited for Truing-up of Aggregate Revenue Requirement (ARR) of FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17, Provisional Truing-up of ARR of FY 2017-18 and Revised Projections of ARR for FY 2018-19 and FY 2019-20)
- Electricity Consumers' Rights Statement (Synopsis of rights available under the Electricity Act 2003 to consumers of electricity)

Important Web links

- Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC): www.mercindia.org.in
- Maharashtra Electricity Distribution Company (MSEDCL): www.mahadiscom.co.in
- Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum: <https://www.mahadiscom.in/consumer-grievances-redressal-forum/>

Relevant resources

- Electricity Supply Monitoring Initiative (ESMI): <http://prayaspune.org/peg/resources/electricity-supply-monitoring-initiative-esmi.html>
- A short video on the common complaints faced by the small consumers and the method of addressing these complaints, 2019: <http://prayaspune.org/peg/resources/consumer-information.html>
- Know Your Power: A Citizens' Primer on the Electricity Sector, 2019: <http://prayaspune.org/peg/publications/item/410-know-your-power-a-citizens-primer-on-the-electricity-sector.html>
- A joint statement: Urgent Actions for better electricity service delivery, 2018: <http://prayaspune.org/peg/publications/item/387>

- simpleE-Check: Simple Calculators for Electricity Sector Analysis, 2019: <http://prayaspune.org/peg/resources/simple-check-simple-calculators-for-electricity-sector-analysis.html>
- Demanding Electricity Service: A Guide for the Community Activist, 2015: <http://prayaspune.org/peg/publications/item/300>
- 10 Questions to ask about Electricity Tariffs, 2014: <http://prayaspune.org/peg/publications/item/272>
- Electricity for All: Ten Ideas towards Turning Rhetoric into Reality - A Discussion Paper, 2010: <http://prayaspune.org/peg/publications/item/84>
- Awareness and Action for Better Electricity Service - An agenda for the community, 2008: <http://prayaspune.org/peg/publications/item/64>

The Electricity Act of 2003 overrode all pre-existing Acts and brought about fundamental changes in the electricity sector. The Act included important consumer oriented provisions in order to improve the quality of electricity supply and service. Accordingly, the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC) has laid down 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. Consumers can make use of these provisions and institutions to seek redressal of their grievances.

This booklet provides detailed information about these legal and institutional provisions, while also addressing some of the common problems faced by domestic consumers. This includes issues such as obtaining a new connection, reading an electricity bill, responding to metering and billing issues, registering a complaint, etc. It also describes consumer's rights while interacting 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 and to organisations working with the marginalised sections of society. This booklet is aimed at creating public awareness about consumer rights and making the electricity company's operations more consumer oriented, while increasing accountability of the company and improving service delivery.