

# How do I Access Free Basic Municipal Services?



Free basic municipal services are services provided at no charge by the Government to poor households. The services currently include water and electricity. These services are provided by municipalities and include a minimum amount of electricity, water and sanitation that is sufficient to cater for the basic needs of a poor household.

Only indigent households qualify for free basic services. Municipalities subject all applications to means tests to determine whether households meet the criteria set by the municipality to qualify for indigent status. Municipalities determine their own categories of subsidies. In some municipalities, households qualify for 100% subsidies while other qualify for less than 100% depending on the criteria set.

- **Free basic water**

Free basic water consists of at least a basic amount of 6 kl (6 000 l) of water per month per household. This amount may differ among municipalities and you should contact your municipality directly to find out exactly what the free basic water service is that they provide. You are required to pay for water that is used over and above the free supply.

- **Free basic electricity**

Free basic electricity of 50kWh per household per month for a grid-energy system (connected through the national electrification programme) is provided. This amount of electricity will be enough to provide basic lighting, basic water heating using a kettle, basic ironing and a small black and white TV and radio. Users who have pre-paid electricity meters will be able to see when the free electricity is used up and will have to buy more electricity at their own expense. Users with conventional or credit meters will not be able to see easily

when they have used up their units. They will be charged for additional use at the end of each month. Consumers who do not have access to grid electricity could be provided with non-grid electricity by their municipalities. You should contact your [municipality](#) to find out the type of alternative sources of energy provided.

- **Free basic sewerage and sanitation**

Sewerage and sanitation as well as solid waste management are subsidised up to R50 per month or 100% subsidy to indigent households.

To have electricity and water connected in your home or business premises, contact the [municipality](#) of the area in which you have a new home or business. In certain areas, the national supplier, [Eskom](#), supplies electricity directly.