

Headline	Turning on energy-saving ways		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	04 Dec 2013	Language	English
Circulation	298,821	Readership	1,839,000
Section	Nation	Page No	1,6
ArticleSize	436 cm ²	Journalist	N/A
PR Value	RM 60,913		



Turning on energy-saving ways

Consumers looking at green tech to cut costs

PETALING JAYA: Consumers are feeling the pinch and are starting to rethink how to save energy after the Government announced the average 15.89% increase in electricity charges.

Prudent use of electricity is among the essential measures that consumers could take to lessen the burden of their already rising cost of living.

IT specialist Ivan Chua said the power tariff rise was too sudden.

"If the Government had to increase the power tariff, I would not mind if it was done gradually. A sudden hike will only make life harder for us as the prices of other goods such as sugar and petrol have increased recently as well," he said.

Housewife Roanna Wong said simple methods such as turning the lights off after use and pulling unused plugs out of the socket would make a difference to the electricity bill.

"Even though the cost of electricity is rising, we have to learn and adapt to the situation.

"A lot of energy-saving techniques like reducing the use of air-conditioners only require a little discipline and sacrifice," she said.

Betty Tan, a mother of two, said consumers would have to consider buying energy-saving bulbs and appliances that utilise green technology.

A sales executive at a LED lighting store, who only wanted to be known as Haseeb, said more customers were buying energy-efficient LED light bulbs at his shop in Tropicana Mall here.

"Using LED light bulbs will save up to 75% in energy usage. LED light bulbs only use 4V-8V of electricity compared with fluorescent bulbs

that use 36V-42V and filament bulbs that use more than 100V," said the 23-year-old.

MG Electrical store sales supervisor Chua Eng Ka expected business to be slow due to rising electricity costs.

"Consumers are getting interested in inverter technology to reduce energy consumption. Refrigerators and air conditioners using inverter technology will save 40% to 80% in energy use," he said.

On Monday, the Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry announced a 4.99 sen per kWh (14.89%) increase in the average power tariff in peninsular Malaysia and 5 sen/kWh (16.9%) in Sabah and Labuan effective Jan 1.

There will be no increase imposed on consumers who use electricity at a rate of, or lower than, 300kWh a month.

Meanwhile, ministry secretary-general Datuk Loo Took Gee said the hike should not be a reason for food-based industries to raise prices of their products and services.

He said they were among those with the smallest energy usage.

"Electric component only contributes about 1.8% to the consumer price index (CPI), so for each RM100 spent, the cost of electric component is only RM1.80," she said at the Parliament lobby yesterday.

At a Good Agriculture Practices certificate presentation in Putrajaya, Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob concurred, saying that electricity was not extensively used in most farming activities, hence prices of farm products should not be increased.

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