

Managing property properly

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Generators in Sectional Title Complexes



By all accounts, load shedding is here to stay. While many will make do with candles, torches and solar lamps, there are others who may want to sidestep the inconvenience of load shedding completely and install a generator at home. If you live in a sectional title complex, you might be barred from doing so.

My interest in the matter was piqued recently when the managing agent of our complex issued a letter stating that generators are strictly prohibited due to the noise and pollution they cause. Evidently one of the residents had expressed an interest in installing a generator and this was the response.

Although I sympathise with the resident who wanted to install the generator, I was quite pleased that their application had been turned down. Generally speaking, generators are noisy and emit carbon monoxide which, being colourless, odorless, tasteless and initially non-irritating is very difficult to detect and can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.

So, while generators may be an option for those who own large properties in areas where neighbours won't be disturbed or exposed to the fumes, it's a very different story in sectional title complexes where neighbours typically live just a few meters apart.

What the law says

The installation of generators is dealt with under the Sectional Titles Act. According to annexure 9 of the Act which refers to the storage of inflammatory material and other dangerous acts, an owner or occupier shall not store any material, or do or permit or allow to be done, any other dangerous act in the building or on the common property which will or may increase the rate of the premium payable by the body corporate on any insurance policy.

Section 44 (1) (e) of the Sectional Titles Act also states that an owner shall not use his section or exclusive use area, or permit it to be used, in such a manner or for such purpose as shall cause a nuisance to any occupier of a section.

Alternatives to generators

Those who live in sectional title complexes and rightfully want to have power during outages need not despair though. There are safe and silent alternatives to generators such as inverters. There are a variety of inverters available on the market which range in capability and price. Should you be in a position where you can install a generator at home, make sure that it is installed far away and downwind from any buildings and never use it in partly enclosed areas such as garages, patios, sheds or carports.

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