



PRESS RELEASE

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Coast vandals target transformer fuses for hallucinatory effects

Kenya Power is fighting a new wave of transformer vandalism at the Coast Region involving drug addicts.

The vice is taking a new shape, especially in Mombasa, where the suspects are going for magnesium oxide, a powdery substance contained in the transformer fuses which has hallucinatory effects when inhaled.

This is a break from the tradition where vandals have been destroying transformers to steal transformer oil, copper windings and fuses.

“We have recorded 20 incidents of transformer fuses vandalism in some parts of Mvita, Mishomoroni, Bombolulu, Changanwe and Nyali areas within Mombasa County. At times, this magnesium oxide is mixed with cocaine or tobacco to derive hallucinatory effects,” said Hezekiah Mwalwala, Kenya Power’s Regional Manager for Coast.

This comes as incidences of transformer vandalism have been on the decline from as high as 37 incidents in a month to an average of 15 witnessed between January and April this year.

Vandalism of electricity distribution equipment is among the leading causes of power outages, undermining the quality of power supply to customers in addition to reduced productivity by industries.

Kenya Power has increased surveillance on vulnerable transformers and enhanced coordination with community policing authorities within the affected localities.

The Company is also placing transformers above high voltage lines beyond reach by the vandals.

In the last four months, a total of 174 people have been arrested for electricity theft and vandalism and charged in various courts across the country, boosting the fight against vandalism.

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