

# Energy cost concerns

Muharraq Municipal Council backs review of electricity meter split rules

● Residents complain about higher bills

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

A review of electricity meter rules, tougher action on abandoned houses and approval for a 24-hour gym were among the decisions agreed by the Muharraq Municipal Council this week.

Members backed a proposal by Sixth Constituency representative Fadhil Al Oud to revisit the requirements for separating electricity meters for the third tariff bracket, after residents lodged complaints about higher bills.

“Many homes have more than one family living under one roof, and that has pushed electricity bills up in a way that has become a financial burden,” he told the

council.

**Requirements**

Al Oud said the existing requirements were shaped around the support citizens receive, but argued the rules need another look as demand rises in the hotter months.

“The coming summer will add to the pressure because air-conditioning use goes up as temperatures rise,” he said.

He also sought to address concerns that meter separation could be used for rental purposes, suggesting limits to reduce misuse.

“It can be restricted to first-degree relatives, such as a father and son or brothers,” he said.

**Warning**

On derelict and unsafe properties, council member Abdulkader Mahmoud said Muharraq Municipality seals abandoned buildings using wooden boards



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- FADHIL AL OUD, SIXTH CONSTITUENCY REPRESENTATIVE

and other materials to protect residents, but warned the method is easy to breach.

ing the use of brickwork to close entrances more firmly, alongside stricter checks on derelict sites.

The council also discussed a reply from the Undersecretary for Agricultural Affairs and Animal Wealth, Engineer Asim Abdullatif, on plans to retender stray-dog management services after calls to pause contract steps with the firm handling the issue.

**Approach**

He said the ministry was preparing a wider approach that goes beyond capture alone.

“We are working on a comprehensive approach that does not focus only on catching, but also on health classification, veterinary care and rehabilitation for the dogs that are collected,” he said.

Separately, Brigadier Mohammed Al Darraj, deputy director of the General Directorate of Traffic, confirmed the timings for restricting truck movements on Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Bridge in Al Hidd during peak periods: from 6.30 am to 8 am in the morning, and from 2 pm to 3 pm in the afternoon.

**Schedule**

Responding to a council call to extend the restriction by an extra hour in both periods, he said the current schedule was sufficient.

“We see the set hours as sufficient and do not see a need at present to change or extend them,” he said.

Members also approved licensing a health club in Block 254 in Qalali to operate 24 hours a day, subject to conditions including avoiding disturbance to nearby residents, providing parking where possible to limit congestion, and ensuring the venue offers needed services in an area without similar options.

## Repair and insulation requests rise in Muharraq

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Applications for home repairs and insulation work in Muharraq have risen in recent months, with the municipal council’s restoration project placing priority on waterproofing and thermal barriers to improve housing conditions, its head has said.

Saleh BuHazzaa, the Muharraq Municipal Council’s deputy chairman, said residents were submitting more requests under the Cities and Villages Development Project, covering repair works, home extensions and the installation of insulation.

“We have seen a marked rise in the number of applications from citizens for restoration, housing additions, and thermal and waterproof insulation,” BuHazzaa said.

He said the rise in applications pointed to growing awareness among households about building safety and the need to tackle damp and water leaks before they cause further damage.

BuHazzaa added that reducing heat inside homes was also driving demand for insulation.

The project is being delivered in coordination with the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture and specialist technical bodies, he said, with requests assessed against planning rules and approved technical standards.



Residents were submitting more requests under the Cities and Villages Development Project, covering repair works, home extensions and the installation of insulation.

He added that procedures were being pushed through more quickly for cases tied to building safety or urgent housing needs.

“Waterproofing and thermal insulation have become essential, because they help extend the life of the building, reduce energy consumption and limit the recurring problems some homes face,” he said.

BuHazzaa urged residents and contractors to follow approved plans and technical specifications to ensure work is carried out to the required standard.

## Timkat celebration



The Hamere Noah St. Kidane Mihret Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church community in Bahrain celebrated Timkat (Ethiopian Epiphany) yesterday at St. Christopher’s Cathedral. Timkat, inscribed by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, commemorates the Baptism of Jesus Christ in the Jordan River. The vibrant ceremony led by the Hamere Noah St. Kidane Mihret Parish Council featured traditional spiritual chants, colorful processions, and the ceremonial blessing of water. The event was attended by community members and esteemed guests. This annual celebration stands as a symbol of unity, faith, and the preservation of ancient Ethiopian traditions within the Kingdom of Bahrain.