



KANTON AARGAU

STATE CHANCELLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

Electricity and gas shortage – Cantonal measures to be partially lifted in mid-April

The Government Council thanks the population, municipalities and businesses for their energy-saving contributions and calls on them to continue to use energy sparingly.

Thanks to mild weather, assured availability of foreign production capacities and energy imports as well as sufficient storage levels, the canton of Aargau will also be spared an electricity and gas shortage this winter. The Government Council thanks the population, municipalities and the economy for their energy-saving contributions to avoid a shortage. Certain measures enacted by the Government Council last autumn for cantonal properties (including lowering room temperatures, dispensing with outdoor lighting in castles and cultural buildings) will be repealed on 15 April 2023 in accordance with federal government recommendations. At the same time, the Government Council points out that in view of the winter of 2023/24 and the following winters as well as climate change, the careful use of energy remains urgently necessary.

"Thanks to various positive circumstances and developments, there has fortunately not been an electricity and gas shortage this winter," notes Government Councillor Stephan Attiger. "The most important factors are the mild weather, the availability of foreign energy plants, namely the French nuclear power plants, the still functioning energy imports as well as the sufficient filling levels of the Swiss reservoirs and European gas stocks," says the head of the Department of Construction, Transport and Environment (CTE).

"The measures decided upon and preparations made by the federal government, cantons, energy suppliers and other institutions and bodies were important and correct in view of the looming risks," emphasises Energy Director Attiger.

Thanks to close, efficient and constructive cooperation between the federal government, the cantons and the energy supply companies, it was possible to establish a coordinated crisis management system within a reasonable period of time in order to manage or mitigate the consequences of an electricity and gas shortage in the event of a less favourable constellation.

Repeal of certain cantonal measures –

Need to save energy remains

As recommended by the federal government, the reduction in room temperatures will be lifted on 15 April 2023. The air and water temperatures in the Telli indoor swimming pool in Aarau, which is operated by the canton, will also be raised to normal values again on this date. In addition, the lights in castles and cultural buildings are to be switched on again from 15 April 2023. The Government Council thanks the employees of the cantonal administration for bearing the loss of comfort associated with the cooler room temperatures.

Government Councillor Stephan Attiger points out that the careful use of energy resources is still urgently needed in general: "For the winter of 2023/24, there are again increased risks of an energy shortage. On the one hand because of the sparse precipitation (rain and snow) this winter, on the other hand because of the political and technical factors in connection with the Ukraine war, which are difficult to influence and assess, but also because of the possible supply bottlenecks in connection with climate change."

The Government Council therefore continues to adhere to the other measures and recommendations for public sector properties adopted in mid-September 2022. These include, among others, the decommissioning of comfort-oriented room air-conditioning systems, reduced hot water preparation or the ban on plug-in electrical appliances for heating or comfort cooling of rooms.

Measures may again be necessary for winter 2023/24 – use warmer season

The Government Council assumes that measures to prevent an electricity and gas shortage may again be necessary for the winter of 2023/24. In this context, it is very important to sensitise the population, municipalities, business and other consumers to this challenge and to continue to motivate them to use energy carefully and efficiently. The energy saved in the summer months helps to conserve storage facilities for gas and hydropower and thus reduce supply risks. If

necessary, the canton of Aargau will again launch a cantonal campaign as part of the Energy Saving Alliance.

The Government Council calls on municipalities, businesses and the population to use the warmer season to prepare for possible energy supply bottlenecks in the winter of 2023/24 and the following winters, or to take appropriate precautions.

Thanks to the population, municipalities and the economy for their energy-saving contributions

The voluntary savings in energy consumption made by the population, municipalities, businesses and other consumers make a valuable contribution to preventing electricity and gas shortages and minimising risks. The Government Council would like to thank all those involved for their commitment and dedication.

Last year, Aargau was the first canton to join the national Energy Saving Alliance and launched a cantonal energy-saving fox campaign as part of this. Nine Aargau personalities inspired the population to use energy resources sparingly with personal energy-saving tips. The Government Council thanks them for their support.

With the measures taken in the canton of Aargau and the energy-saving behaviour of the population, the public sector, the economy and other consumers, it is estimated that energy savings in the order of five percent electricity and more than twenty percent gas could be achieved in the period from autumn 2022 to spring 2023.

Careful use of energy should become part of everyday life

This careful use of energy should now become part of our everyday life. Why not keep the new habits you have trained? Turning off the light when leaving a room, using cold water to rinse your hands for a short time, wearing an extra layer of clothes or climbing stairs instead of using the lift help to use energy carefully without sacrificing comfort.

Thanks to a new mindfulness, everyone can contribute to being as well prepared as possible for the coming winter. Investments in simple applications such as a power strip that can be switched off, LED lamps and shower sprays are also worthwhile financially.

Maintenance of the cantonal crisis management

The task force on security of supply set up by the Government Council to deal with an electricity and gas shortage will continue its work at an adjusted pace until further notice under the leadership of Maurus Büsser, Secretary General of the Department of Construction, Transport and Environment, and State Secretary Joana Filippi. The concepts drawn up for the system-relevant consumers in the canton or the cantonal administration and for maintaining crisis management

and the ability to govern will be further developed or brought to a conclusion. The information and communication services will also be continued and supplemented on an ongoing basis in line with the development of the situation.

The Government Council, cantonal administration and cantonal crisis bodies were confronted with overlapping crises last year. The expiring coronavirus pandemic was overshadowed by the challenges of the Ukraine war (influx of refugees) and the looming electricity and gas shortage. In cantonal crisis management, important lessons from the coronavirus pandemic were implemented, particularly in the cooperation between the Government Council, departments, existing crisis management bodies and topic-related ad hoc organisations and committees.

Intensive cooperation with municipalities and the economy

A valuable lesson learned from the coronavirus pandemic regarding cantonal crisis management concerns the rapid and regular inclusion of important stakeholders and interest groups – in the case of the electricity and gas shortage, in particular municipalities, regional management bodies (RFO), the economy and energy supply companies (EVU). They were regularly informed and consulted in specially created dialogue forums (round table, coordination committees, etc.).

Since the end of August 2022, the canton has been exchanging views on the topic of supply security with the business associations (AIHK and AGV) and the employee associations (ArbeitAargau) in the "Dialog Wirtschaft". Daniel Lang, Head of the Office for Economy and Labour of the Department of National Economy and Home Affairs (DNH), chairs this exchange body. This cooperation with the business community has proven its worth, as Government Councillor Dieter Egli, Head of the DNH, confirms: "The 'Dialogue with the Business Community' is enormously valuable. We inform the business community at an early stage, involve them in consultations with the federal government and take their concerns on board." Egli continues: "It is important that this cooperation continues in the future."

The high energy prices as well as the first-time experience from last year that the security of energy supply could also be at risk in Switzerland continue to challenge the companies. The last exchange of the "Dialogue Economy" took place in mid-March 2023. The association and cantonal representatives will meet again no later than when the forecasts for energy supply in the winter of 2023/2024 become more meaningful.

Aargau has fulfilled its responsibility as an energy canton

In connection with the electricity and gas shortage, Aargau has assumed its special responsibility as an energy canton and has also successfully contributed its expertise and know-how in the areas of energy policy, energy supply and energy technology at the national level. For example, various proposals, indications, amendments and suggestions and so on submitted by it in national consultations were taken up and implemented; these include, among others, the creation of an emergency power unit pooling or the examination of a Swiss trade in quotas.

The canton of Aargau has also actively supported and promoted the construction of a reserve power plant in Birr. The Government Council was and is also very concerned that the interests of those affected locally are taken into account in the realisation of this project, which is very important for national energy supply security.

Information on electricity and gas shortage

The website www.ag.ch/mangellage provides comprehensive information on electricity and gas shortages. Tips on the topics of energy saving, efficiency and production are also available there.

For individual questions and information on these topics, energieberatungAARGAU is available free of charge at energieberatung@ag.ch or by telephone: 062 835 45 40.

Further information for media professionals:

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