

STATE CHANCELLERY

government communication

Peter Buri

Government spokesperson
Government building, 5001 Aarau
Telephone direct 062 835 12 03
Telephone central 062 835 12 06
Mobile 079 216 29 80
peter.buri@ag.ch www.ag.ch/sk

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PRESS RELEASE

Risk of electricity and gas shortage reduced compared to previous year, but still exists

Government Council refrains from taking drastic energy-saving measures for autumn and winter 2023/24 and maintains structures for cantonal crisis management

The risk of an electricity and gas shortage in the autumn and winter of 2023/24 has decreased significantly compared to the previous year, but still exists – Switzerland and Aargau will still have to prepare for future electricity and gas shortages. Based on this risk assessment, the Government Council has decided not to take any drastic energy-saving measures for autumn and winter 2023/24. Among other things, the canton is not calling for Christmas lights to be switched off this year either. The general recommendations on the resource-conserving use of energy will continue to apply.

The risk of an electricity and gas shortage in autumn and winter 2023/24 has decreased compared to the previous year. The conditions for the security of supply of electricity and gas are better than a year ago. Gas storage facilities in Europe have higher storage levels than last year and the availability of French nuclear power plants has improved. In Switzerland, reservoir levels are higher than in the previous year, the federal government has contractually secured a hydropower reserve and three reserve power plants are available, one of which is in Birr.

However, a combination of unfavourable factors could rapidly increase the risk of an electricity and gas shortage in the autumn and winter of 2023/24. If the situation deteriorates, for example in the event of an above-average cold winter, unplanned outages of power plant capacities in Switzerland and abroad as well as gas infrastructure or geopolitical upheavals with an impact on the gas supply, the Government Council will once again examine measures to further reduce energy consumption in consultation with the federal government and the energy industry.

In addition, medium and longer-term developments such as ageing nuclear power plants in Switzerland and abroad, the coal phase-out in Germany and dependence on fossil fuels mean that Switzerland and Aargau will have to continue to prepare for shortages in the coming years.

No drastic energy-saving measures

The Government Council has assessed the situation and, based on the risk assessment for autumn and winter 2023/24 – in relation to an electricity and gas shortage – has decided not to take any

drastic energy-saving measures. Among other things, the canton is not issuing a call to dispense with Christmas lights this year either.

However, it recommends checking how a maximum Christmas atmosphere can be achieved with the lowest possible energy consumption – for example by limiting the time or setting local focal points. The general recommendations on the resource-saving use of energy also apply; in particular for measures that do not entail any significant loss of comfort and also save money, especially in times of high energy prices. Corresponding tips can be found on the websites of the federal government and the canton (see link below).

At www.ag.ch/mangellage you can also find the municipality guide with information on preparing and implementing measures, which the canton developed last autumn in collaboration with the Aargau Municipal Councillors' Association. In addition, a broad-based campaign on the subject of energy saving and the efficient use of energy is currently underway. The campaign, launched by the Energy Consultancy of the Department of Construction, Transport and Environment, makes no direct reference to the electricity and gas shortage; the aim is to motivate the population to save energy where it can be done easily and without sacrificing comfort.

As a major energy consumer, the canton itself endeavours to optimise the energy efficiency of its properties as far as possible and also regularly raises awareness among employees about the careful use of energy resources. It will make further technical investments and motivate employees to save energy with internal campaigns.

Security of supply task force remains active on a reduced scale

The Cantonal Security of Supply Task Force, in which all departments, the State Chancellery and the Cantonal Command Staff (CCS) are represented, has been systematically and comprehensively addressing the potential impact of an electricity and gas shortage on the Canton of Aargau since it was set up by the Government Council in August 2022.

The planning includes business continuity management, the management of properties in the event of contingencies and network shutdowns, as well as a concept for maintaining the cantonal crisis management and Government Council's ability to act and communicate. Under the leadership of the Department of Construction, Transport and Environment and the State Chancellery, the task force analysed the relevant challenges, issues and problems and developed the planning basis for cantonal crisis management for the Government Council. The cantonal business associations and employee organisations, the municipalities and their regional management bodies (RFOs), energy supply companies and other important stakeholders, for example from the healthcare and education sectors, were also involved.

The Security of Supply Task Force has largely completed its planning and preparatory work. It is continuing its work on a reduced scale until further notice and is preparing situation analyses for the Government Council. The structures for dealing with an electricity and gas shortage are being maintained to such an extent that cantonal crisis management can be reactivated quickly in the event of a deterioration in the risk assessment.

Information on the Internet: www.ag.ch/mangellage

Further information for media professionals:

*Peter Buri, government spokesperson, State Chancellery
Phone 079 216 29 80*