

You can do something!!!

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By Patrick Kulati

I have a T-shirt with a quote by Walt Disney, the founder of the Walt Disney Company that says "*if you dream it, you can do it*". This is quite a remarkable statement by a remarkable man. However, I don't believe it. I don't think it's true, at least not all the time. Well, I live in Cape Town and I don't know how many times I have dreamt of a predictable weather or season. If you are like me, you are probably not sure whether we are in still in winter or whether we've migrated to summer. Today the sun is bright and happy and tomorrow the clouds are grumpy and shed torrents of tears.

I have also dreamt that I won't have to wake up to news about energy related accidents happening somewhere in our country. But bad things continue to happen. Recently, our staff found and took pictures of illegal stoves being sold at Queen Street in Durban at exorbitant prices. The shop owners are ripping the poor off, milking them of hard earned money and selling them illegal stoves. The papers are awash with stories showing an increase in fires.

Dreams! Dreams! Dreams!

Having said that, I guess it does not hurt to dream. Allow me to dream, even if it's against my better judgment.

- I dream of seeing the issue of Household Energy Safety in the agenda of the ANC congress in two weeks time in Polokwane.
- I dream of a time where this issue would feature prominently on the President's State of the Nation Address.
- I dream of a country where no child drinks paraffin.
- I dream of a time when paraffin will no longer be sold in unpackaged and unlabelled containers.
- I dream of a country where no one is burned due to energy related fire accidents.
- I dream of a country where no faulty energy appliances are sold to the poor.
- I dream of a country where no shop owners sell illegal appliances to people
- I dream of a country where no dangling electric cables crisscross the skies of some of our communities.
- I dream of communities where no one is electrocuted.
- I dream of a country where the motive in the energy sector is premised on safety.
- I dream of a country where employers and unions of paraffin-using people actively participate in seeking safety energy solutions for their workers.
- I dream of a time when the **declaration** by the users paraffin and victims of energy related accidents would be attended urgently and directly by Department of Minerals and Energy.
- I dream of a country where the destruction caused by energy related fires is not taken as a normal occurrence.
- I dream of hospitals where all burns units are closed

We can all do something

We can all do something about promoting energy safety in our homes. Politicians can develop proper policies, bureaucrats can ensure that they are properly implemented, users and consumers can exercise more caution and prevent accidents. Petroleum industry companies can ensure that paraffin is labeled and

packaged at source and the supply chain issues are addressed. Appliance manufactures can manufacture and distribute appliances that meet and exceed the safety standards. The media can highlight the issues and put them to the public arena more.

The summer season is upon us. We all know that the summer period is a period when the numbers of accidents increase. There is a group of people who I believe can do much more to assist in this regard. Employers of paraffin users can do something now to promote safety education. The actual users themselves can exercise more caution and care. Our website has more information about how energy related injuries can be prevented and/or dealt with.