

**Complaints.** According to ERA, complaints ranging from delayed connections to long overdue reconnection among others have been placed against Umeme.

BY ISMAIL MUSA LADU  
iledu@ug.nationmedia.com

**KAMPALA.** Umeme, the country's main electricity distribution company, has been put on notice by the electricity sector regulator after it emerged that the agency has tendencies of delaying connections beyond the accepted deadlines.

According to the Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA), once a consumer completes payment for a new connection, the distribution company (Umeme) has no more than 10 days to install power connections.

And for those seeking reconnection, upon completion of their payment, they ought to be reconnected within 48 hours or two days.

It has however come to the knowledge of the sector regulator that this is not always the case.

For a while now, complaints ranging from delayed connections to long overdue reconnection among other accusations being leveled against Umeme are no longer a secret.

#### Timelines

"For a new consumer, you have a right to complain to the sector regulator after 10 days elapse without you being connected," ERA's chief executive officer, Eng Ziria Tibalwa Waako, said on Tuesday in Kampala.

Eng Tibalwa who was speaking at the media training organised by the institution she spearheads, said: "And once a consumer seeking for reconnection clears the liabilities, he or she must be reconnected within 48 hours."

In a firm warning to Umeme Company Limited, the largest energy distributor, distributing 97 per cent of all electricity used in the country, Eng Tibalwa, said: "Beyond 10 days if those seeking new connections have not been connected and consumers seeking reconnection have not been reconnected within 48 hours, blow the whistle and we will act swiftly."

She added: "Just make sure your receipts are in order because we will

# Umeme warned over delayed connections



#### ABOUT ERA

ERA is a statutory body established in 2000 in accordance with the Electricity Act 1999 (Chapter 145 Laws of Uganda) to regulate the generation, transmission, distribution, sale, export and import of electrical energy in Uganda, and to guide the liberalisation of the electricity industry, manage licensing, rates, safety and other matters concerning the industry.

**At work** Umeme technicians carry out maintenance works in Kampala recently. The Electricity Regulatory Authority has warned Umeme against delayed power connections. FILE PHOTO

deal with situation accordingly. We have a duty to protect the consumers. Once you have cleared all your payments it is unacceptable for you to keep waiting."

#### Umeme speaks out

The Umeme spokesperson, Mr Stephen Ilungole, in an interview said: "There could be delays here and there but largely we do the connections and reconnection within the timelines."

He added: "The other problem

could be that some consumer prefer to engage the kamyufu, (technicians known to be notorious for illegal connections) instead of using the channels. So in case of delays Umeme will be cited as the problem. There are also issues to do with improper work but we will always try to do work within the timelines."

During the training, it also emerged that the power distribution company should pick up calls within 30 seconds for anything beyond that is a breach of contract.