

Dewa signs six water and power deals worth Dh12b

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Dubai: Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (Dewa) recently announced signing of six mega projects worth a total of Dh12 billion in power generation and water desalination as demand rises.

Dubai has seen a significant rise in utility requirements. The emirate's power consumption in 2007 was 24,756 gigawatts compared to 21,475 in 2006 and the number of consumers was 403,669 compared to 339,900 in 2006. Water consumption in 2007 was 72,588 million imperial gallons per day (MIGD), compared to 64,961 MIGD in 2006, with the number of consumers at 331,318 compared to 279,247 in 2006.

Some of the projects undertaken by Dewa, signed with leading national and international companies, will be finished in 2009, while the rest will be completed by 2010.

Meanwhile, a statistical study recently released by the Federal Electricity and Water Authority (Fewa) has revealed that in Fujairah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Ras Al Khaimah, 588.72 million gallons of water and 756.24 gigawatts of power were consumed in 2007.

A previous study highlighted the sharp rise in the number of electricity consumers last year, put at 331,518, compared to 279,246 in 2006, seeing an increase of 19 per cent.

Alternatively, a substitute to traditional energy is being pursued by the UAE government. "The growing interest in alternative energy sources is a big step forward that should be supported by the introduction of relevant legislation," said Dr Abdullah Al Amiri, chairman of the Emirates Energy Award Committee, an offshoot of the Dubai Quality Group.

"We should take all necessary measures to protect the environment and forestall further deterioration of the earth resulting from the detrimental effects of global warming," he added.

Al Amiri also mentioned that Dubai is making a concerted effort by implementing initiatives such as the current waste recycling projects, which are design-ed to turn waste into energy resources.

Fewa has approved a draft law that is now with the Federal National Council, adding an amendment to Article 23 under which private investors will be permitted to establish power and water plants in areas supervised by Fewa, with the water and power tariffs to be supervised by Fewa.

The amendment has, however, triggered some reservations, for it is likely to lead to further power and water price increases.