

# Green NWU instals solar plants

**CORNELIA HITGE**

North-West University (NWU) implemented a plan to build solar plants on each of the three NWU campuses, as load shedding has become an increasing issue. NWU constantly struggles when it comes to its utility budget, as diesel for the emergency generators is costly. Hendrik Esterhuizen, director of Engineering Compliance at the NWU's Facilities department, said in a report to News@NWU last year that NWU is constantly looking for ways to reduce the cost and usage of electricity.

The NWU was looking for a way to achieve sustainable, green energy to address the load-shedding-induced challenges the campuses face. Building solar plants on each of the campuses is a long-term sustainable solution.

NWU spokesperson Louis Jacobs confirmed that the solar plant on the Vanderbijlpark campus is practically ready to run, with minor details that require completion. He added that a site was set up on the Potchefstroom campus and they were busy offloading all supplies. Willem Erasmus is the project manager and said in a report to News@NWU last year that all

plants should be completed by April 2024.

“The importance of this project is that we are not only looking at relieving the ongoing and immediate energy supply challenges brought on by load shedding. We also, more importantly, want to address issues of environmental sustainability – especially in reducing the NWU’s carbon footprint,” says Ntokozo Kunene, chief director of Facilities.



The solar panels were moved from trucks into shipping containers. Photo: Cornelia Hitge.



Ntokozo Kunene, chief director of Facilities, Prof. Bismark Tyobeka, principal and vice-chancellor of the NWU, Toni de Canha from Adenco Construction, Abdullah Jeevah from ADQ Engineering, and Hendrik Esterhuizen, director of Engineering Compliance, are all part of projects to achieve a greener, more sustainable NWU. Photo: News@NWU