

Heatwave leads to power cuts

The recent heatwave across large areas of Europe has led to a surge in demand for electricity. In Italy, electricity companies have ordered power cuts, and businesses throughout the country have experienced blackouts.

1 Which of the following are common energy sources in your country?

| | | | | | |
|---------------|------|-------------|----------------|------|-----|
| nuclear power | wind | solar power | hydro-electric | coal | gas |
|---------------|------|-------------|----------------|------|-----|

2 Make some three-part collocations using the following words, for example, *increased energy consumption*. (Several combinations are possible).

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| renewable | electricity | campaign |
| increased | prevention | consumption |
| boom in | energy | usage |
| waste | power | source |

3 Read the article and underline which three-part collocations in 2 are used.

Power cuts as electricity demand soars

Following the recent heatwave, Italian electricity firms have ordered the first country-wide power cuts for 20 years. June saw a boom in electricity consumption as temperatures soared to well over 30 degrees Celsius. Florence recorded highs of 36 degrees.

Electricity demand increased by 2.8% compared to the same period last year. Some power plants have been forced to run up to 50% below capacity due to a lack of cooling water. The unexpected surge in demand was caused by air conditioning and fridges being

turned up. The resulting blackouts affected the whole country as traffic lights were switched off, and many people were stuck in lifts. Business has been affected throughout the country.

Italy does not meet domestic power needs from its own power stations and imports several thousand megawatts from other countries, such as France, every day. Concern over the lack of available energy has led the Italian government to stress the importance of a waste prevention campaign. Apart from the development of new power plants, the government will invest in renewable energy sources.

The Italian industry minister has urged people to cut back on their use of energy.

4 Find words in the article meaning:

- a quickly increased (paragraph 1)
- b not enough (paragraph 2)
- c sudden increase (paragraph 2)
- d reduce (paragraph 5)

5 Discuss the following questions in small groups and report your ideas to the class.

- What good or bad 'energy habits' have you observed in your own country/company?
- Should companies be penalised (e.g. taxed) for not using energy efficiently?
- Do you think that there could be more renewable energy sources used in your country/company?