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Kwinana industries “cope reasonably” with gas cuts

Kwinana Industrial Area faces up to two months of gas shortages, but most companies have alternate supplies.

“It’s a mixed situation,” said Kwinana Industries Council director Chris Oughton.

“Some are unaffected, some switch to diesel and others simply have to wait,” he said.

“This disruption to Western Australia’s gas supply has highlighted our energy vulnerability: dependence on gas from a limited number of sources,” he said. Industry is now working with government and suppliers to work out a coping strategy.

Meantime, the individual companies have to make the best plans they can.

“Some, like Alcoa, are forced to use diesel; others, like Wesfarmers LPG have to reduce operations; while companies like Hismelt and BHP Billiton Nickel West are fortunate enough to be unaffected,” he said.

“KIC is working with the state-wide workgroup which has the task of creating a management plan for this shortage.

“The most recent forecast we have from Apache is about two months: they have to undertake some major reconstruction work.”

Until full supply is resumed, KIC joined other groups in calling on all energy users to watch their consumption rates.

“The less energy we use, the less gas is consumed: this eases the problem,” Mr Oughton said.