

# METRO

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### PHCN explains role in the electrocution of student

*From Lawrence Njoku, Enugu*

**THE** Power Holding Company of Nigeria Plc (PHCN), Enugu Distribution Zone, on Monday explained the circumstances surrounding the electrocution of Mr. Uchenna Eke, a third year Medical/ Surgery student of Imo State University.

It said the late Eke's electrocution had nothing to do with the installation of the pre-paid meters at his residence.

Eke, who was residing at No. 19, Ibiam Street, Uwani,, Enugu, met his death last week when he touched a wire said to have been left uncovered by PHCN contractors installing the pre-paid meter system in the area.

His death had since then sparked off a row between the residents of the area and the company.

They accused the electricity provider of causing the death of Eke by exposing live wire.

They claimed that the contractor was unable to "thoroughly do a neat job".

But a statement by the PHCN's Principal Manager, Public Affairs, Enugu Zone, Mr. Esemé Udoh, Monday evening denied the report on the incident, stressing that when the report was forwarded to the company, it immediately launched an investigation to determine the truth of the matter.

He stated that tests conducted by the electricity company, in the presence of the police revealed that "the electric current leakage occurred through an illegal electrification of a fence by operators of a laundry company which share the same premises with the deceased's family.

"The leakage was responsible for the electrocution when Uchenna touched the metals on the fence at No. 19, Ibiam Street, which had no earthing arrangement that could have reduced the impact of the electric shock," he explained.

The PHCN image maker said while the company sympathises with the deceased's family since life was sacred, "PHCN was not responsible for the electrocution as operators handling the installation of the pre-payment metering exercise in the zone were competent and had been installing the meters for over the past one year without such complaint."

Udoh, however, assured customers of the safety of their lives and

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property during and after installation of the pre-payment meters on premises now in progress in the entire South-east geopolitical zone.

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