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CALLING ALL RESIDENTS TO HELP CURB ILLEGAL DUMPING

The Garden Route District Municipality is calling on residents to help curb the vice of illegal dumping across the district.

In a news release today, it puts the spotlight on the incidence of illegal dumping and littering, saying it is an ongoing problem in all nine provinces of South Africa, including the Garden Route.

With the lockdown and essential workers testing positive for Covid-19, many municipalities around the country now have a backlog in their efforts to remove waste, and illegal dumping sites are on the increase.

These sites serve as a breeding ground for mosquitos and vermin such as rodents and cockroaches that can cause life-threatening diseases.

“Although the management of the illegal dumping of waste doesn’t fall under the ambit of GRDM, society as a whole has a collective responsibility to keep the environment clean in the same manner that they maintain cleanliness in their homes and yards.

“The ill-conceived notion that littering creates employment for cleaners simply degrades our public areas and health,” said the executive mayor, Memory Booysen.

“I used to be the mayor of Bitou Municipality where we experienced the same issue. People illegally dumped waste and littered while government was blamed for not cleaning up the environment,” he said. “Municipalities never illegally dump waste in neighbourhoods,” he added.

Clive Africa, GRDM Executive Manager for Community Services, said municipalities need the public to help combat illegal dumping by reporting perpetrators. “These criminal activities by individuals or organised groups negatively impact the lives of particularly the elderly and children, as they often come into contact with dangerous and contaminated medical waste, including items that may be contaminated with the Covid-19 coronavirus,” he said.

Local municipalities do their utmost to inform and educate residents regarding illegal dumping and using the available waste removal services. The cost of removing and cleaning of illegal dumping is exorbitant. This money could be better used to deliver other desperately required services in the communities. Local municipalities also issue fines of up to R1 000 to those found guilty of illegally dumping waste.

Communications manager of George Municipality, Chantel Edwards-Klose, said that George Municipality has recorded more than 200 illegal dumping spots within its municipal area. “Our municipality has run illegal dumping awareness campaigns at a number of schools and implemented extensive awareness efforts on radio and social media over the years,” she said.

“Trespassers know that what they are doing is illegal, which makes it even sadder that they have no pride in their surroundings or concern for the well-being of their neighbours.

“It is so disheartening to our officials to clean up an area, at great expense, and go back a week later to find it filled with dumped refuse again.”

Illegal dumping and littering constitute an environmental crime

All contraventions of environmental legislation constitute a criminal offense. Environmental crimes include, but are not limited to, the following:

Environmental pollution;

Criminal activities relating to damaging of natural resources and habitats;

Illegal disposal, handling and management of waste;

Damaging and destroying natural resources, habitats and biodiversity;

Criminal activities associated with endangered and indigenous species of fauna and flora;

Harming the health of humans by causing a range of diseases.

While disinfecting areas within the region firefighters and environmental health practitioners from GRDM found tissues, builders' rubble, cardboard, chemical substances, baby nappies, plastic bags, sanitary pads and condoms.

"Community members say that they are annoyed by the surge of illegal dumping in front of their homes and in the streets during lockdown," said Deon Stoffels, GRDM station officer: Fire and Safety Training, who coordinates the Covid-19 disinfection task team.

How the public can address the issue of littering and illegal dumping



Talk to the person directly.

Security camera footage or photo evidence can be provided to the municipality or police of when and where it occurred and who did it.

Report those orchestrating dumping activities to the authorities.

Report those who are dumping waste by providing their names, vehicle registration details or addresses.

Educate and be a good example to the children in your communities.

Illegal dumping hotspots in the Garden Route

Apart from open spaces, there are specific areas within each municipal boundary where illegal dumping happens more often than others. Remember, the illegal dumping of waste poses a threat not only to the environment, but the health and well-being of communities too.



Hessequa: Theronville, Aloeridge, Môrestond and Kwanokuthula. Residents from the Hessequa municipal area can report the illegal dumping of waste to 028 713 8020 or e-mail info@hessequa.gov.za.

Mossel Bay: Heiderand, KwaNonqaba, Alsapark, Highwaypark, Groot-Brakrivier, Hartenbos, Sonskynvallei, D'Almeida, JCC, Klein-Brakrivier, Glentana, Reebok, Fraaituitsig, Tarka, Ruiterbos and Friemersheim. Residents from the Mossel Bay municipal area can report the illegal dumping of waste to 044 606 5143 or 044 606 5000, SMS your complaint to 44802 or e-mail admin@mosselbay.gov.za.

George: Thembalethu, Protea Park, Le Vallia, Rosemoor, Conville, Maraiskamp, Parkdene, Rosedale, Syferfontein, New Dawn Park, Seaview, Blanco, Touwsranten, Wilderness Heights informal

settlement and Kleinkrantz informal settlement. Report those illegally dumping waste to 044 801 6350 or e-mail sprins@george.gov.za.

Knysna: Dam-se-Bos, Nekkies, Khayaletu, Concordia, Jood se Kamp, Smutsville, Karatara and Rheenendal. Residents from the Knysna municipal area can report the illegal dumping of waste to 044 302 6405, e-mail rloxton@knysna.gov.za or WhatsApp to 081 556 3974.

Bitou: New Horizons, Kwanokuthula, Bossiesgif, Qolweni, Pine Trees, Green Valley, Harkerville, Kranshoek and Kurland. Residents from the Bitou municipal area can report the illegal dumping of waste to CustomerCare@bitou.gov.za or call 044 501 3174/5.

Greater Oudtshoorn: Bridgton and Bongoletu where illegal dumping is rife. Residents from the Greater Oudtshoorn municipal area can report the illegal dumping of waste to 044 203 7800.

Kannaland: Informal settlements, Royal Heights and Protea Park. Residents from the Kannaland municipal area can report the illegal dumping of waste to 078 409 9064.