THE GREEN COLUMN

In order to reduce our wasteto-landfill volumes Knysna Municipality employs a multi-bag system for disposal of household refuse.

Clear bags are available free of charge to all residents for the disposal of recyclable waste, which is collected and taken to a recycling facility. The following groups of wastes can be disposed/deposited in these bags:

- Dry paper and cardboard products
- Clean/minus plastic products
- Clean/minus textiles
- Clean/minus glass

Only blue bags purchased from the Customer Care Centre may be used for garden refuse. The purchase price covers the cost of transportation to a composting site.

Black bags may be used for all other household waste intended for landfill disposal.

Please help us to protect our environment by reducing, reusing & recycling. For enquiries contact 044 302 6405.

WORKING TOGETHER TO ENSURE WATER SECURITY

The water situation in the greater Knysna Municipal area has reached critical levels, with reserves of this precious resource dwindling day by day. Knysna Executive Mayor Georinne Wolmarans said: “Knysna is on high alert. We appeal to all residents of the greater Knysna area to make a conscious effort to conserve water and cut consumption to ensure that we get through this thristy time.”

The situation is dire, with the Akkerkloof Dam (the main reserve facility for Knysna) and the Glebe Dam both at critically low levels. “Each and every one of us needs to think twice about how we use water,” she said. “The reality is that we need to cut our consumption in half to meet sustainable targets and make our reserves last longer.”

The consumption target for the greater Knysna area, which has been widely published, is 8 megalitres per day. We are currently using significantly more – 12.8 megalitres per day. Sedgefield’s target is 1.9 megalitres, while the current consumption stands at 2.4 megalitres.

“Unless all our residents work together we run the risk that our taps will run dry within the next couple of months,” said Wolmarans. “We have reached the point where we need to implement drastic measures to avoid a serious disaster situation.”

The municipality is considering a range of steps to address the issue, including:
- the implementation of punitive tariffs to curb wasteful usage;
- the roll-out of a water awareness campaign aimed to inform, educate and motivate;
- strict enforcement of water restriction measures such as the installation of meters with a water management device that limits water supply to properties; and
- a water leak repair programme.

If we fail to reduce consumption, the municipality will have to institute water ‘shedding’ and rationing.

“It has become clear we cannot rely on rainfall to save us. We are doing everything we can to address the state of affairs, but each and every one of us can do our part at home as well,” she said.

Tips to reduce water consumption at home:
- Take a short shower instead of a bath.
- Only flush the toilet when absolutely necessary (preferably using a dual-flush system).
- Set your appliances to economy mode (such as washing machines and dishwashers).
- Water your garden only at dusk (18:00 to 19:00) on designated days (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for houses with even numbers, and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for houses with odd numbers).
- Use grey water (run-off from the washing machine, sink, bathtub, etc.) in the garden if possible.
- Don’t brush your teeth, wash the dishes or shave with the tap running.
- Wash your car with a bucket and not the hose.
- Don’t top-up the swimming pool for the time-being.

Other, more extensive measures can also be considered like installing catchment tanks to store rain water, drilling a borehole or converting your dam to a water treatment plant.

“We are confident that if we come together as a community, we can prevent the drought that has devastated the rest of South Africa from affecting our beautiful town,” Wolmarans concluded. “It is only by working together toward this common goal that we can attain success. Let’s show the rest of the Garden Route – and the country – how it is done.”

Please report any misuse of water to 044 302 6331. For water saving tips visit the municipality’s website http://www.knysna.gov.za/be-water-wise.

THE MAYOR’S PEN

From the Mayor’s Pen

The #FeastOfFast student movement took a new direction, the last few weeks. Student protests began focussing on languages at local universities and, more specifically, Afrikaans. The closure of some of our main universities due to student unrest was a sad turn of events. At the same time a group of students at the University of Pretoria, or Tuk, started a group promoting peace across racial lines and religions. They wanted to show that violence is never the answer. This initiative quickly spread to other universities and the group numbered more than the politically violent groups on the various campus’. This movement was not about religion or race, but about the unification of all South Africans.

Politicians became involved in talks with all stakeholders and amicable agreements were soon reached, once again showing the power of sitting around a table discussing problems rather than resorting to violence and intimidation.

We are all South Africans, no matter what our colour or belief system, and we will not be able to build the country we want with this. The history of this country is one of the history of conflict and violence. Our history must remind us of mistakes made in the past – and persuade us not to make them again. We cannot change the past, but we can only build our future.

Human Rights Day on 21 March is a reminder of what the new South Africa represents. Everyone has a right to life, equality and human dignity. All persons have a right to citizenship and security. Persons and groups are entitled to freedom of assembly, association, belief and opinion, and expression. The Bill of Rights also specifies the rights of persons belonging to cultural, national or linguistic communities.

It is up to us to live according to this Bill of Rights, to embrace it and to use it to inform our actions and decisions.

It is a time to reach out, to get to know the different cultures that constitute the rainbow nation. When you understand why people feel the way they do, there is a much better chance of coming together, to embrace it and to use it to inform our actions and decisions.

Also, showcasing our wonderful diversity are the religious holidays coming up. Roman Catholics are in the middle of Lent, which is a period of introspection. The Easter period is coming up at the end of the month for all Christians and our Jewish community is celebrating Purim. All of us are different, yet the same in many ways. I wish you all a blessed time, a time to celebrate and rejoice in your diversity. And when you celebrate Human Rights Day, celebrate our Bill of Rights and the freedom it gives us.

NEW DELEGATIONS TO SPEED UP SERVICE DELIVERY

Earlier this year Council approved a new system of delegations to accommodate the new planning system under the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) and to aid in speeding up service delivery.

Section 80 Committees which include Community Services, Finance, Governance and Economic Development and Planning Development and Infrastructure have been granted certain powers to make decisions that can be immediately implemented.

This will shorten the decision making process for certain burning issues and pressing matters that need to be addressed urgently.

Knysna Executive Mayor, Georinne Wolmarans said, “The delegation of powers has a profound effect on the speed, cost and the manner in which services are delivered. This resolution is a step in the right direction to ensure that we fast-track delivery of services and will assist in our vision of building a town where people prosper.”

MARKET DAYS COME TO A ROARING CLOSE IN SMUTSVILLE

The Economic Development Department held market day projects between October 2015 and March 2016. The purpose of these projects was to encourage and motivate the community and small entrepreneurs in the previously disadvantaged areas to participate and showcase their businesses. The market days were held in Nekkies, Rhenondah, Joode-se-kamp, Hollandse and Smutsville.

They suggested that the Market Days become monthly events in all the towns and that the coordinators were responsible for registering people to register for the Market Day and assisting on the day. There were first-aiders at all market days, a jumping castle for the kids and DJs to entertain the kids and customers.

The Market Days were a success! A total of 66 entrepreneurs participated and they sold most of their products and made a profit. The Economic Development Department is planning to host a big Market Day in Knysna and Sedgefield for all the participants. The information will be communicated to ward councillors and entrepreneurs.

ECONOMY

Market Days

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 March</td>
<td>Ordinary Council Meeting</td>
<td>09:00</td>
<td>Market Day in Nekkies</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 March</td>
<td>Ward Committee, Ward 6</td>
<td>13:00</td>
<td>Market Day in Rhenondah</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 April</td>
<td>Governance &amp; Economic Development Committee</td>
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<td>Market Day in Joode-se-kamp</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 April</td>
<td>Finance Committee</td>
<td>09:00</td>
<td>Market Day in Hollandse</td>
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We also want to thank the coordinators who were responsible for putting up posters, recruiting people to register for the Market Day and assisting on the day. We would like to congratulate them on a job well done.

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WEB CONNECT

Knysna Municipality Facebook: www.facebook.com/knysnamunicipality
Websites: www.knysna.gov.za