



## **MEDIA RELEASE 1**

**Embargo:** Immediate

**DATE:** 9 June, 2017

**Knysna Fire Update – 20:30**

### **FIRE STATUS**

The fires within Greater Knysna are contained. Flare ups are being dealt with as they occur. Currently, Elandskraal is being waterbombed by National Airforce helicopters and remains a focus of attention. However, precautionary waterbombing measures are further taking place in strategic areas around Knysna.

With the local fires contained, some members of the Working on Fire crew are lending their assistance in the Plettenberg Bay and Tsitsikamma areas.

The Knysna Municipal Fire Chief, Clinton Manuel stressed that residents that have been evacuated should not return to their homes until the areas have been declared safe by the Fire Chief. This is likely to occur once the fires have been completely quelled. Some 20 areas within Greater Knysna have been evacuated, these displaced families are being fed and sheltered in at the following halls:

Ward 2- Sedgefield Town Hall  
Ward 4 - Chris Nissen Primary  
Ward 5 - Brenton Hall  
Ward 7 - Khayaletu Hall  
Ward 9 - Vineyard Church  
Ward 10 - Methodist Church

The SANDF Medical Triage has set up a temporary medical clinic at Loerie Park. Their personnel are receiving assistance from the Knysna Provincial Hospital staff. This hospital's patients and staff were evacuated on Wednesday evening to prevent further medical complications caused by possible smoke installation. The building has not been affected by the fires.

Should residents require any medical attention, we ask them to make their way to Loerie Park where they will be assisted.

The Knysna police appealed to the affected families and residents to contact the South African Police Service to report any missing or unaccounted persons at 044 3026687 or 08600 10111.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

These fires have seen Knysna's water infrastructure stretched to its capacity. Knysna was placed on Level 3 Water Restrictions during March and now, with the damage caused by the fires to the existing infrastructure, Knysna's water situation is in crisis. The heat created by these fires have caused many pipes to burst and increased water leaks. Residents are requested to report leaks and damage to the water system to 044 302 6300 during office hours or 044 302 8911 after hours. An increase of water meter theft has created even more water losses in the area.

The water supply to the Knysna CBD is particularly under pressure. Knysna residents are asked to limit their usage to 400 litres per day and with Knysna's Fire Station under significant pressure, we ask residents to travel to Sedgefield to collect their 400 free litres if needed from the Sedgefield Fire Station. Residents are requested to take their own containers when they collect their daily 400 litre quota. Some residents have noticed the brown colour of the water. This is purely aesthetic and is still safe for use.

Donated bottled water is available for collection from the following points in Knysna:

The Methodist Church

Vineyard Church

Brenton Hall

Besides the water issues, Knysna is experiencing electrical power outage in certain areas. Eskom is currently working on restoring power. Due to the severity of the fires that have destroyed kilometres of cables and poles, this restoration of power is taking time.

**ENDS**

---

**Knysna Municipality Communications Department**  
P O Box 21, Knysna. 6570. Western Cape. South Africa  
Tel +27 (0)44 302 6300 (switchboard) or 302 6471 (direct)  
Fax +27 (0)86 215 4818 e-mail [communications@knysna.gov.za](mailto:communications@knysna.gov.za)