



MEDIA RELEASE

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EMBARGO: Immediate

Knysna best at Air Quality Management in Western Cape

During the award ceremony of the Western Cape Government Greenest Municipality Competition, hosted by the Provincial Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning: Anton Bredell, Knysna Municipality walked away as victors of the Air Quality Management category.

The Greenest Municipality Competition rewards innovative municipalities who support the Green Economy through initiatives including the reduction of greenhouse emissions.

The criteria evaluated for the Greenest Municipality Competition includes waste management, climate change response, biodiversity & coastal management, water management and conservation, air quality management, leadership, compliance, institutional arrangements and public participation.

“I am absolutely thrilled that Knysna won the Air Quality Management category this year. As mayor and a mother, I want nothing more than to leave the legacy of a healthy ecosystem and communities and by winning this category I believe Knysna is well on its way,” said Knysna Executive Mayor, Eleanore Bouw-Spies.

The Knysna Municipality is one of the first Local Municipality's to appoint a designated Air Quality Officer. “The fact that we attend almost 90 per cent of all the Provincial and Regional Air Quality and Noise Management meeting quarterly has certainly paid off,” said Knysna Acting Municipal Manager, Bevan Ellman.

Phase one of the competition in which the municipality needed to develop an Emission form to be completed by businesses, namely: Fuel Stations; Dry Cleaners; Sewage Treatment Works and Spray Painters was successfully done.

“The Fire Department linked with our Air Quality Section has a Fire Permit to be completed if control burning wants to take place on Farms (Agriculture Land) to efficiently reduce smoke to the environment and combat air pollution. We further do Small Boilers inspection and issue a relevant small boiler certificate,” said Ellman.

“Last, but by no means least, we developed an Air Quality By-law (draft) that will be submitted to council. This by-law will improve Air Quality Management even further,” Ellman concluded.

MEC Bredell explained the reason for the competition and said: "The Greenest Municipality Competition is essentially aimed at motivating and inspiring our councils to address environmental issues in their regions.

"Our municipalities are central to addressing the challenges of climate change in South Africa. For one, our municipalities actually have some direct control over pollution issues like carbon emissions given that it is within municipalities where industries are located.

"It is also in our municipalities where those most vulnerable to climate change are staying. If these stakeholders are not adequately considered then the long term sustainability of municipalities must be questionable. Congratulations to Knysna!"

ENDS

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