
Blocked access to infrastructure hampers Municipal Water & Sewage Section

Continuous maintenance and servicing of bulk infrastructure is crucial to the efficient functioning of all systems, including water and sewage systems. Various external influences are, unfortunately, hampering Knysna Municipality's Water and Sewer Department from accessing infrastructure and ensuring the smooth delivery of this basic service.

"Illegal dumping and the erecting of illegal and informal structures over and along municipal servitudes, pipelines, pump stations, access points and other infrastructure are the main causes of inaccessibility," explained Acting Municipal Manager Dr Louis Scheepers. "Should a pump station be inaccessible to a vacuum truck when repairs are required, for instance, the delayed cleaning may hold severe health risks for persons occupying the surrounding informal structures."

The Planning and Development Department is developing a standard operating procedure for an upgrade of informal settlements inspections, which will be tabled at the next meeting of the Planning Portfolio Committee.

"It is with great disappointment that we have also identified contractor negligence on housing developments as a factor affecting daily operations," Dr Scheepers said. "When water and sanitation services are not constructed to standard, it becomes residents' problems, and the municipality's responsibility. We will be taking steps to ensure that this does not become a problem at any current or future housing developments. But, if we cannot access the infrastructure, we cannot fix the problem."

"Delivery of these basic services to our residents is a clear mandate, and their Constitutional right," Dr Scheepers continued. "While our teams do their utmost to keep our infrastructure in mint condition and to minimise turnaround time on fault repairs, accessibility to infrastructure is a real, daily challenge affecting their work performance. Our various departments and ward councillors will be working with them to monitor and alleviate the situation."

"This will also be made much easier with the cooperation of our residents," he concluded. "Please don't dump rubbish illegally and please keep access to all municipal infrastructure and service points clear. This will allow us to continue delivering the services you need to the standards you deserve."

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