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Municipality acts against illegal land invaders

Knysna Municipality is taking legal action against illegal land invaders in Sedgefield and are clearing the affected properties of illegally constructed structures.

“A docket has been opened at the Sedgefield SAPS office for contempt of the court,” explained acting Municipal Manager Dr Richard Martin. “We are compiling a list of individuals who have illegally built and occupied any structures on the identified properties and individual dockets will be opened for trespassing and the contravention of the interim court order. We are also breaking down half-built illegal structures on the properties.”

This follows an interim order to evict illegal land invaders from a municipal owned property next to the Usave and dunes in Smutsville, Sedgefield, issued by the High Court of South Africa.

“These transgressors are violating the rights of approximately 300 people who are on our pre-screened list,” Martin said. “These include individuals representative of the disabled, elderly, military veterans and child-headed households, who have all been pre-screened by the provincial government. We will prosecute these transgressors to the fullest extent of the law to protect the interests of our residents. Members of the community who are engaged with this – and any other – type of illegal activity are urged to desist immediately.”

The local Law Enforcement Cluster (including SAPS), met on 30 October to agree on a plan of action to enforce the interim court order and interdict for the dunes. “We have appointed a service provider to assist in deconstructing and removing illegal structures from both the properties next to Usave and the Sedgefield Dune,” continued Martin. “Around the clock security will prevent any further construction or illegal occupation. The cluster will implement an over-arching anti-land invasion plan.”

The illegally occupied land is earmarked for the Sedgefield Infill Housing Programme, which is set to deliver more than 150 serviced sites during its first phase. Continued illegal occupation of this site will jeopardise this R10.7 million housing project. I once again ask that all residents cooperate with officials during this time,” he concluded.

The interim order and interdict recognises the situation as a matter of urgency. It orders that the land invaders may not erect any structures on the land in question; they may not enter the existing unlawfully erected structures; and they may not enter the property in question.

ENDS

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