

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE PURPOSE OF NUMBERS IN SLUMS

There are more than 530 slums in the eThekweni Municipality. The number of people that houses should be built for prior to their removal from slums exceeds 190 000.

What is a shack? It is an illegal, informal structure that does not meet the municipality's standards of a decent house. These structures are characterized by a lack of basic services such as water and sanitation, electricity and the removal of waste. These informal structures are built to provide immediate accommodation.

Because of financial constraints and shortage of land, sometimes people occupy such structure for lengthy periods. The proliferation of slums in Durban is an indication that most people are in need of houses. Influx into Durban can

be put down to various causes. Some people are job seekers while others are lured by prospects of commercial and educational opportunities. Slums are usually beset with problems of overcrowding which makes people and children vulnerable to diseases many of which thrive in litter and filth and lack of hygienic toilets. The eThekweni Municipality's Department of Housing regulates slums by keeping a record of all slum so as to know the number of people that live in slums. Shacks are allocated numbers as evidence of their location, recognition and as acknowledgement of their occupants.

What is the purpose of these numbers? Numbers assigned to shacks enable the Department of Housing to collate information about people that live in in slums. Each number, accompanied by information on the

owner and occupants, is captured on a computer. The owner of the informal structure has to have an ID. When the Municipality allocates houses to shack dwellers or relocates them to Lindela, this is not done in a numerical order which means that No. 1 shack dweller will not necessarily be the first one to be allocated a house. When houses are allocated, preference is given to those most vulnerable, such as the elderly, the disabled, orphans, areas prone floods, etc. Government intends developing all slums all over South Africa, with the main objective being the eradication of all slums by 2014, by constructing proper houses with basic amenities such as electricity, water, sanitation, removal of garbage and roads for those that currently live in these informal settlements.

Why are people relocated

from slums? Because of the shortage of land, it sometimes happens that the land on which the informal structures are built is unable to accommodate all people in-situ development. Development of proper housing structures is undertaken systematically and roads are laid with sewage pipes and power cables underground, which necessitates the relocation of some people and the provision of houses elsewhere. Before construction is undertaken, engineers come and inspect the soil for suitability for building purposes. If the soil is found not to be suitable for housing purposes, people are moved and provided with houses elsewhere. People resident along river banks are relocated and provided with houses where it is safer or are evacuated to Lindela, which is a temporary legal residential area while they are waiting for

the construction of their houses. It is eThekweni Municipality's policy to see that the residents of informal settlements obey the rules governing the regulation of slums such as arresting the proliferation of slums, an indiscriminate erection of new shacks anywhere to the detriment of those already allocated numbers who are impeded from benefiting from development because of an increase in the number according to records or the database. The Municipality reserves the right to demolish any new informal structure. **What should I do when my informal structure has been ravaged by the rain, flooded or razed by fire?** You should see your Councilor who will issue you with a document authorizing the reconstruction of your structure using the same kind of material as before. It is further vital that

you visit the office that issues numbers in order for them to renew your number. Shacks may not be leased after a new house has been assigned; your shack must be demolished.

What information is required concerning the availability of houses while I occupy the shack?

- You need a South African ID.
- You must not have been allocated a government subsidized house before.
- You must be unemployed or earn below R1 500 (or R3 500 jointly with your partner).
- You must be able to enter into an agreement.
- You must be married by Western or customary law or cohabit with a partner
- You must have dependants under 21 years of age