

ABOUT US

The eZasegagasini Metro is the official eThekweni Municipality publication through which ratepayers and residents are kept informed about news, entertainment and perspectives in the greater Durban region. It is also a forum for readers' views. It hits the streets fortnightly on a Friday, with 450 000 copies distributed throughout the region. To contact us: eZasegagasini Metro, PO Box 5588, Durban, 4000 Newsroom: 311 2290/81/84 Fax: 306 4603 Communications: 311 2279 angamuthuv@durban.gov.za eThekweni Info Centre 0800 331 011 (toll-free) sizakala@durban.gov.za

STAFF

Editor: Vasantha Angamuthu
News Editor: Thrusha Naidoo
Sub-editor: Matthew Hattingh
Writers: Siyabonga Maphumulo, Ken Mchunu, Nomusa Makhutle, Sohana Singh, Alan Cooper, Gabi Khumalo, Vernon Mchunu, Finola Quarsingh
Photographer: Bongca Msimang
Translations: Themba Nyathikazi

CONTACTS

Municipal queries: 0800 331 011
Electricity faults: 080 131 3001
Electricity Tampering
Northern: 031 569 8300
Southern: 031 311 5031
Central: 031 311 6538
Street Light Faults: 0800 331 022
Robot Faults: 0800 333 467
Emergencies: 031 361 0000
Ambulance: 101 77
Revenue Billing: 031 328 1200
Metro Police
Central: 031 300 3333
Chatsworth: 031 402 0680
Inner West: 031 709 0808
North: 031 561 1297
Outer West: 031 767 1222
South: 031 910 7321
Regional offices
Central: 031 311 1111
North: 031 561 1101
South: 031 311 5844
Umkomaas: 031 311 5407
Outer West: 031 311 2717
Inner West: 031 311 6118
Overgrown verges and trees:
Central: 031 205 1418
Inner West: 031 311 6916
North: 031 566 3712
Outer West: 031 767 3908
South: 031 311 5733
Stormwater, burst mains, sewer faults, traffic signals: 080 131 3013
Disaster Management: 031 306 4074
Animal Nuisance and Abandoned Vehicles: 031 311 2814
Durban Solid Waste (DSW): 031 311 8804

Trouble for city-linked burial scheme

SINDY MTOLO

THE burial scheme for eThekweni residents has been facing some problems.

A number of subscribers have had their claims rejected because their records showed they did not keep up with the premiums – even though they might have actually paid the premiums.

This has happened because when ratepayers pay for services to the municipality, the municipality deducts money that it is owed first.

As a result, the payment records of a number of the

burial scheme subscribers, who are in arrears with their municipal accounts such as water, electricity and rates, were reflected as defaulters.

If the member is listed as in arrears with the municipality, then the burial scheme does not receive the member's monthly premiums.

In 2004 the municipality commissioned Nestlife Assurance Ltd to underwrite a burial scheme for residents of the municipality.

For just R10 a month a member can include up to six members of his family. This represents an affordable

burial plan, and to date the scheme has more than 10 000 subscribers.

For those who have subscribed, the municipality automatically adds R10 to the consolidated bill sent to every ratepayer every month.

Gravesite

For the non-ratepaying public, forms were made available at Sizakala Centres.

On the death of a family member covered by the Nestlife burial scheme, Nestlife pays the municipality for the gravesite at

any municipal cemetery.

In the event of a claim, Nestlife forwards the claim form for completion to the account holder.

They then validate the claim and, subject to the premiums being up to date, pay all claims to the municipality.

The municipality and Nestlife are now engaged in talks to remedy the situation.

One of the options on the table is whether there should be a separate account for the scheme.

"The scheme was started to help our people meet the

heavy costs of burying their loved ones and the municipality plans to keep that promise," said Council Speaker James Nxumalo.

"He appealed to burial scheme members who have had their claims rejected to reinstate their subscriptions and to keep track of the status of their premiums.

For more information about the Nestlife Burial Scheme, contact their offices at 26th Floor, Old Mutual Centre, 303 West Street, Durban, 4001 or call 031 336 2594.

Mtolos@durban.gov.za

Opposition reject blame for violence

SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO
From Exco

THE DA and the IFP have again distanced themselves from any wrongdoing on their part in last month's march against street renamings in eThekweni.

This was after the City Manager Michael Sutcliffe tabled before Exco the events of the protest march which took place on May Day.

According to the report, the IFP, which organised the march, violated certain conditions of the Gathering Act 205 of 1993.

The party's Chairman Mdu Nkosi had applied for permission to march and had agreed to conditions in terms of the Act and that the city's by-laws would be adhered to.

But the march turned chaotic after (street) traders' stalls were looted, roads blocked, and in some instances, people beaten.

Footage of the march obtained from CCTV cameras around the city shows a man dressed in an ANC T-shirt bleeding from the head after being alleged beaten up by marchers.

Another section of the video played before Exco shows a .303 rifle with a telescopic sight that was confiscated by the police from one of the marchers.

But IFP member Cllr Gladwin Ndlela disputed the contents of the report saying they had not incited violence and that outsiders were to blame for the day's havoc.

"A lot of other activities took place on the day and we cannot take responsibility for people who ran amok in the city."

He suggested that people

on their way to May Day celebrations at Curries Fountain may have been the culprits. "Those people did not fly over the city to get to the rally," said Ndlela.

But Mayor Mlaba poured cold water over these claims saying that May Day proceedings were annual events and had never before been violent.

He said the IFP had made threats in advance of the march that "blood would be spilled".

"Musa Zondi (IFP spokesman) said there would be blood and indeed that is what we saw." Mlaba said it was irresponsible of the organisers of the march to show no sympathy for those who had been affected by the march.

"Why is there no apology to the street traders and the innocent people who were going about their business?" he asked.

DA caucus leader Cllr John Steenhuisen said members of his party had been well marshalled throughout the march.

He was critical of the "quick response" from the city manager concerning the report on the march.

"If this is the way we treat marches by opposition parties why is it that matters of (ill-discipline) concerning the ANC aligned Samwu are handled totally differently?" he asked.

ANC councillors concurred that the law would have to take its course regarding the marchers.

Cllr Nomvuzo Shabalala said the police would have to investigate thoroughly the matter of the rifle with a telescopic sight, as such weapons "were used by assassins".

MaphumuloSiya@durban.gov.za



MULTI-TASKING: City Manager Michael Sutcliffe shares a lighter moment with Selby Hlatshwayo (left) and Michael Zungu (right) at a breakfast function for Electricity Department artisans and electricians

Picture: GUGU BLOSE

Sutcliffe toasts sparks

GUGU BLOSE

ELECTRICIANS and artisans from the municipality's Electricity Department were treated to a champagne breakfast at the Point Yatch Club, by City Manager Michael Sutcliffe.

This was in recognition for their contributions towards brightening the lives of eThekweni's citizenry.

The function was held under the banner of Sutcliffe's Reach Out Programme which aims to recognise and give credit to the talent and skill within the municipality.

"We want to create a family within the municipality so that you as the electricians

and artisans feel valued and know that you are helping in making a difference to the high level of service delivery to the citizens of this municipality," said Sutcliffe.

The Electricity Department is one of the municipal departments affected by a scarcity of skills, with engineers, electricians and artisans in increasingly short supply.

Also attending the breakfast was Derek Naidoo, Deputy City Manager for the Procurement and Infrastructure cluster, Sandile Maphumulo, Head of Electricity, and Gugu Mji, Head of Skills Development.

Naidoo stressed the importance of making sure

people working for the municipality felt they were part of a family and realised the value they bring to that family.

Maphumulo said he hoped the breakfast would help boost staff morale and bring pride to municipal staff.

"It will encourage people to be proud of the service they provide and not just look at it as a job, but as an essential service." Maphumulo also highlighted the importance of improving staff-management relations. "This sort of function ensures staff and management can all sit together in an informal setting and relax over breakfast," he said.

BloseGugu@durban.gov.za

SOHANA SINGH

THE fourth annual national Entrepreneurship Development Conference will be held from 19 to 22 June at the International Convention Centre.

The conference will seek to create a platform for people in entrepreneurship development to share and debate ideas, practices and models that could contribute to

Business conference

fostering entrepreneurship in South Africa, especially among young people.

The hosts are the Umsobomvu Youth Fund in partnership with the municipality, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic

Development and the Youth Entrepreneurship Campaign 2010.

This year's theme is "Unleashing Youth Entrepreneurship towards 2010 and Beyond".

There will be 50 youth businesses exhibiting and 30 development practitioners or institutions.

For more information visit www.youthportal.org.za.

SinghSohana@durban.gov.za