



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Garden Route DM Home Composting Pilot Project

Approximately 30% - 35% of waste going to landfill is organic waste. Landfilling continues to be the main 'default' method of managing organic waste. At the current rates of disposal to landfill, organic waste causes a variety of significant negative financial, social and environmental impacts. For instance, the high volume of organic waste occupies increasingly scarce landfill airspace, and it produces leachate which requires expensive landfill containment barriers to mitigate against surface and groundwater contamination (diverting funds that could be used for other needed infrastructure and social projects and programmes). This results in high logistics costs, particularly because of health risks, including smell and vectors. It requires frequent trips for collection and disposal. It is a significant contributor to greenhouse gases, resulting from the production of methane gas during the decomposition process.

The Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning has therefore decided to put in place a 50% diversion of organic waste from landfill by 2022; and a landfill ban on organic waste to landfill by 2027. Taking the abovementioned into consideration and in order to meet these targets, the Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM), in collaboration with the interested and participating local municipalities, has therefore started to implement home composting pilot projects in the district as one of the organic waste diversion strategies. The objective of the home composting pilot project is to create a waste minimisation culture among residents to reduce organic waste to landfill. The pilot project requires all participants to record and report the mass of organic waste diverted. This data will be tabled at the individual municipal Councils in order to motivate further rollout to other areas in the respective municipal areas. Home composting (at source separation), not only diverts organic waste from landfill, but results in financial savings (collection, transport and disposal costs as well as purchasing of compost), a reduction in the production of greenhouse gases and replace essential nutrients into soil.

Status Quo:

The home composting pilot project was implemented at 22 households in Gouritsmond in March 2018 and at 34 households in Mossel Bay during June 2018. Workshops regarding home composting were held with all participating households and each household received a composting bin, worm farm, scale and a file containing home composting guideline and datasheets. Each household is required to weigh and record the organic waste composted on the datasheet and also to report these data on a monthly basis. The recording and reporting of data will be required for a period of one year after which the composting bin and worm farm becomes the property of the participating household. Composting by means of a composting heap was also discussed at the workshops and included in the home composting guideline (home composting guideline will be made available on Garden Route District Municipality's website) for those households generating more green / organic waste that can be accommodated by the worm farms and composting bins.

A total of 2 536,75kg (2.5 tons) of organic waste has been recorded and reported in Gouritsmond from March 2018 to December 2018 (10 months). Therefore, an average of 11,53kg of organic waste per household per month is diverted from landfill by means of home composting.

A total of 6 127,32kg (6.1 tons) of organic waste has been recorded and reported in Mossel Bay from June 2018 to December 2018 (7 months). Therefore, an average of 25,75kg of organic waste per household per month is diverted from landfill by means of home composting.

When considering the abovementioned data, the amount of organic waste that could be potentially diverted from landfill, if the home composting project is rolled out to all households in a municipality, is significant.

The next phase of the pilot project will be implemented in the George- and Knysna Municipalities.

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