



FREE

# NEWS

Edition 31 - Quarterly Newsletter  
September - November 2018

## Firefighters battle wildfires for a month

On 21 October 2018 wildfires ignited in Vermaaklikheid near Riversdale in Hessequa. A few days later, more wildfires started in the George municipal area. The Disaster Management Centre of Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM) recorded 12 wildfires over the month of October/November 2018, which also resulted in the death of 9 people, including a Working on Fire pilot.

Said to be one of the biggest wildfires recorded since the great wildfire of 1869, the Garden Route is facing a new "normal". The change can be seen across the globe and it is almost common knowledge that climate change is not on our side. This poses an important question - how can we address this? Can we prevent these type of occurrences in the future or are we doomed?

In short, the Head of Disaster Management at Garden Route District Municipality, Mr Gerhard Otto explains: "Municipalities and stakeholders, together as a collective we have to develop a system to better plan for fires in our wildland-urban interphase (WUI).

Our town planners need to factor wildland fire risk into future development planning and our bylaws, as well as building codes, will have to be altered to ensure resilience to this type of fire incidents. With this, I mean that there should be adequate by-laws in place to address issues like high fire hazard areas. When we look at the urban fringes (where homes at the edge of neighbourhoods meet the forests), inhabitants should be made aware of the fire risk in these areas and a defensible space should be created around all properties not only to create a buffer area but also to provide a space from where firefighters could launch their firefighting actions when fires do approach these areas. In my opinion, the current fragmented approach to fire service delivery is central to many of our challenges, the sooner we centralise firefighting services by establishing a metropolitan municipality and address integrated veld fire management the better - "all efforts should be coordinated from one central authority"

He also added: "During the recent wildfires, we managed to pull resources from all over South Africa together to work at our Joint

Operations Centre at the GRDM head office. I know that since last year's Knysna fires we have improved the way in which we do things, but there is always room for improvement".

The following role players must be thanked for their selfless dedication to protect our communities and infrastructure over the past month: Provincial Disaster Management Centre, Working on Fire (WoF), South African National Defence Force, Cape Nature, SANParks, George Municipality, Knysna Municipality, Oudtshoorn Municipality, Bitou Municipality, Hessequa Municipality, Mossel Bay Municipality, Kannaland Municipality, Overberg DM, Cape Winelands DM, West Coast DM, City of Cape Town, Various NGOs and FBOs (Lions Alert, Rotary SA, Gift of the Givers, Garden Route Rebuild), SPCA, National and Provincial Departments

Department of Health, EMS, Human settlements, Rural Development, Housing Development Agency, Department of Agriculture, Department of Education, SASSA, DSD, ESKOM, Department of Transport, Provincial Traffic and SAPS.

## Garden Route Wildfire Statistics

21 October 2018 - 21 November 2018

FIRES	12 in total	FIXED-WING BOMBING	Waterbombing 244 times = 732 000 litres
FATALITIES	9, including a pilot	CHOPPERS BOMBING	Waterbombing 2 297 times = 297 000 litres
HECTARES BURNED	92 087 Hectares	AIRCRAFT USED	6 Spotters, 1 Oryx, 7 Hueys
AREAS AFFECTED	Hessequa, Mossel Bay, George, Knysna, Bitou	GROUND CREW	Reached 678 at a point
INFRASTRUCTURE DESTROYED	13 @ Farleigh (Knysna) 3 @ Beervlei (Knysna) 3 @ Geelhoutvlei Timbers (Knysna) 10 @ Vermaaklikheid	BULLDOZERS	2
		VEHICLES	158
		PEOPLE EVACUATED	+ - 1000
		PEOPLE DISPLACED	197 people
		JOBS LOST	+ - 150 Hessequa; + - 410 Knysna

Emergency Communications: 044 805 5071

Please note that Garden Route District Municipality's operating hours are as follows:  
**Mondays to Thursdays, 07:30 - 16:30 | Fridays, 07:30 - 13:30.**



# Foreword

by the Executive Mayor of Garden Route DM  
Cllr Memory Booysen



As we enter the festive season, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all citizens of the Garden Route and tourists visiting our area, a warm, happy holiday season and a prosperous new year.

Every year comes with highlights and drawbacks. For me, some of the highlights of the year include:

- renaming of our municipality from Eden to “Garden Route District Municipality” and successfully rolling out public participation campaigns to engage with and source public comments and opinions about the proposed name change and logo of Garden Route District Municipality;
- attracting investment with a chemical factory in Mossel Bay of approximately R1 billion and thousands of jobs;
- hosting a successful Garden Route Investment Conference;
- hosting a Skills Summit with the aim of establishing the region as a skills mecca;
- hosting a Smart City Summit; and
- hosting a Green Energy Summit

Unfortunately, there has also been some depressing times, especially because of the devastating fires that raged through the Garden Route and destroyed more than 90 000 hectares of vegetation. This situation was fumed by a prolonged drought which affected many of us and many other parts of the Western Cape and South Africa. Eight lives have been lost - my heart goes out to all those affected by the tragic loss of their loved ones, friends and family members - may every soul rest in peace. I know that many community members have been left without anywhere to go - but rest assured, we will ensure that everyone's dignity is restored.

Let us all continue to honour every person who risked his/her life to protect our fellow human beings, infrastructure and our ecosystems during these pressing times.

Next year when you return to our region, we are confident that the Garden Route will be as lush as it has always been - offering the perfect breakaway to those who are tired of the busy city life.

## Garden Route DM sponsors R100 000 to 2018 Fire Management Symposium

Dignitaries from Government departments, local government, forestry companies, media houses, academic and research institutions, as well as landowners, attended the 2018 Fire Management Symposium at the George Campus of the Nelson Mandela University from 3 to 5 October 2018.

The Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM) sponsored an amount of R100 000 towards this event which attracted more than 200 delegates, both locally as well as abroad.

In officially opening the event on 3 October 2018, Ms Pumeza Nodada, Acting Deputy Director-General for Forestry and Natural Resource Management, acknowledged that only by sharing the scarce resources across public & private sectors, we would be able to give effect to integrated veldt fire management (IFM). She pleaded that continuous efforts by all role players are needed to improve IFM. Ms Nodada also acknowledged the services currently rendered by institutions like Working on Fire and other organisations and highlighted: “These programmes are still contributing greatly to building the concept of integrated fire management”.

Dr Mmaphaka Tau, Deputy Director-General (Head) of the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), shared with the delegates that South Africa experiences increasing levels of disaster risks which exposes us to a wide range of weather hazards. “The interplay of these hazards point to the need for an integrated approach and sustainable mechanisms in the management of the risks it poses,” Dr Mmaphaka added.

By using the eco-systems approach, Dr Mmaphaka said: “We must surely by now understand the threat of invasive alien species” and acknowledges that there is a need to prioritise the clearing of these species, as it affects our water security as well”.

Cllr Barend Groenewald, Acting Speaker of GRDM, during his address, on behalf of the GRDM Executive Mayor, Cllr Memory Booysen, emphasised the following: “It is a known fact that all communities are vulnerable to the impact of various types of disasters, especially those who are not as fortunate as others. Many members of society still barely have enough to fulfil their basic human needs. As decision-makers and administrators who render services to communities, we have to recognise the diversity of our communities, adjust to the challenges of a dynamic environment and most importantly manage situations to the best of our ability with due consideration of scarce resources at our disposal”.

Mr Paul Buchholz, Project Manager of the Environmental work stream of the former Garden Route Rebuild Initiative (GRRI), elaborated on the

activities performed soon after the outbreak of the June 2017 fires in the Garden Route and how these activities were maintained. Efforts ensured successful outcomes to prevent further damage to affected areas, e.g. one such activity was the installation of 34 kilometres of fire sausages (soil erosion prevention booms) at the most damaged and affected areas to ensure that sediment does not flow down from higher geographical areas. Mr Buchholz acknowledged that this could not have been successfully implemented without the assistance of geographic information systems (GIS) to analyse the high-risk areas. A drone was also used to spot the most affected areas in order to prioritise and guide intervention initiatives.

The involvement of communities was also high on the agenda, when various role-players acknowledged that decisions cannot be taken without community inputs. “We need to include our communities in decision-making processes; we need to have value in the protection of assets e.g. trees, infrastructure etc,” Mr Leo Long, Senior Practitioner for Training and Skills Development at South African Forestry Companies Limited (SAFCOL) said. “An inclusive evacuation plan needs to be developed and communicated. Identify, communicate and maintain safe areas of which in where the community can actively take part in,” Mr Long highlighted.

Prof. Ed Kirtley, Assistant Dean at the College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology from the Oklahoma State University, also acknowledged the importance of community involvement. Through his presentation which was live-streamed at the event, he advised that formal and informal leaders need to be engaged with as soon as possible after an event and said: “Authentically engage with the community in decision making, debate conflicting ideas, act, decide and move forward” and added that these relationships must be maintained.

Mr Axel Jooste from SAPPI Forestry presented “A Case of Factory Blindness” when he made an example of the case study of the Apollo 1 space mission fire that killed three astronauts of which the accident inquest was the “failure of imagination”. Mr Jooste posed a question to the audience: “Are we also guilty of oversight: missing, overlooking, lack of imagination, blindness and blind spots?”.

The first day's event followed by two more days of active participation and a gala evening which the Executive Mayor of GRDM, Cllr Memory Booysen, and former Principal of the Nelson Mandela University in George, Prof. Quinton Johnson, also attended. At the gala evening, these dignitaries addressed the audience about the issue of the expropriation of land which left many delegates with something important to think about.





Executive Mayor of GRDM, Cllr Memory Booysen (right), and former Principal of the Nelson Mandela University in George, Prof. Quinton Johnson (left), addressed the delegates at the gala evening on 4 October 2018.



Acting Speaker of Garden Route DM, during his welcoming speech spoke about the initiatives implemented by the Garden Route DM, since the June 2017 fires destroyed many parts of the Garden Route.



The event was well-attended by representatives from forestry companies, government departments, including the National Disaster Management Centre, municipal authorities, media houses, private and public conservation bodies, academic and research institutions, as well as private and public landowners and land managers.



Panel discussions throughout the events, allowed delegates to pose questions to the speakers. The first panel consisted of Mr Gerhard Otto, Manager of Disaster Management at Garden Route District Municipality, Ms Pumeza Nodada, Acting Deputy Director-General: Forestry and Natural Resources Management and Deputy Director-General (Head) of the National Disaster Management Centre, Dr Mmaphaka Tau.



Speakers who addressed the delegates on the first day of the event, are from left: Dr Christo Marais, Chief Director at the Department of Environmental Affairs, Mr Roger Godsmark, Operations Director of Forestry South Africa, Mr Paul Buchholz, Project Manager of the Garden Route Rebuild Initiative, Dr Jaap Steenkamp, Director of Forestry and Allied Manufacturing, Ms Pumeza Nodada, Acting Deputy Director-General: Forestry and Natural Resources Management, Mr Malcolm Procter, Deputy Director of Regulation and Oversight at DAFF, Mr Leo Long, Senior Practitioner for Training and Skills Development at SAFCOL, Mr Axel Jooste, Projects Manager at SAPPI Forestry, Mr John-John Emary from Volunteer Wildfire Services, as well as Dr Mmaphaka Tau, Deputy Director-General (Head) of the National Disaster Management Centre.



Officials from the Garden Route District Municipality who were present at the symposium, were: Executive Manager of Community Services, Mr Clive Africa, Acting Speaker, Cllr Barend Groenewald, Manager of Disaster Management, Mr Gerhard Otto and the Garden Route DM George Station Officer, Mr Deon Stoffels.

“We need to include our communities in decision-making processes; we need to have value in the protection of assets e.g. trees, infrastructure etc,” Mr Leo Long, Senior Practitioner for Training and Skills Development at South African Forestry Companies Limited (SAFCOL) said.



# Informal Food Traders from Mossel Bay receive training

The informal food trading sector in South Africa has a positive impact on micro businesses which contributes to job creation, poverty alleviation and establishment of breadwinners in communities. The sector plays a critical role in food security, facilitating access to food by poor people living in urban areas and has the potential to expand the economic viability of the region.

To address the Key Performance Areas set for Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs), the EHPs of the Garden Route District Municipality's (GRDM) Mossel Bay office, facilitated an awareness training session, focussing on informal food traders selling offal on 3 October 2018, at the Asla Park Community Hall. The aim of this type of training is to educate traders on basic food hygiene practices, as outlined in legislation and also to ensure that food being consumed does not pose health risks. The importance of safe, hygienic food handling and selling in the prevention of food poisoning outbreaks, are always emphasised during these events. Fifteen Informal Food Traders from Mossel Bay attended the session.

The following aspects were covered during the training:

- registration of food stalls
- food safety

- food poisoning
- how does one contract food poisoning
- signs and symptoms of food poisoning
- five keys to safer food, which entail:
- keeping clean;
- separating raw food from cooked food;
- cooking food thoroughly;
- keeping food at safe temperatures; and
- using safe water and safe raw material.

Subsequently to the training session, interviews were conducted with participants who indicated that the training was significant. The session also confirmed that they were not familiar with some of the opportunities in Mossel Bay, and how it could benefit them. Attendees also indicated that they would appreciate if more training could be rolled out to them. Incentives such as cooler boxes, storage containers, meat trays, hairnets and aprons, were given to all the participants who attended the training. More training sessions will be conducted by the GRDM Environmental Health Practitioners throughout the year to ensure that safety and hygiene standards are met in order to protect the public.



The thirteen Informal Food Traders from KwaNonqaba and Asla Park in Mossel Bay, after the training session conducted by the GRDM Environmental Health Practitioners, Mr Lukanyo Mafuduka (left) and Ms Neo-Lay Britz (right).

## Cater Care Certificate ceremony

Friday, 26 October 2018, marked the beginning of a career in the food and beverage services for 10 previously disadvantaged young people, when they received a Cater Care Certificate. Students successfully completing a 6-month level 1 skills program at the François Ferreira Academy (FFA) in George.

As from 2011, the François Ferreira Academy has been working closely with the Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM) on the Cater Care Programme and later became the sole sponsor of this successful programme. The programme provides learners with the basic skills in food preparation and food and beverage services, which makes it perfect as a feeder programme for courses such as the National Young Chef Training Programme presented by the National Department of Tourism in association with the South African Chefs Association.

The 10 students, who started on 12 March 2018, were the second group for 2018. The GRDM's tourism unit sponsored R200 000.00 to train 20 students in the tourism and hospitality sector. The core responsibility of the district municipality is to coordinate the enrolment of trainees through a formal recruitment and selection process.

During the certificate handover ceremony, which was attended by family and friends of the students and councillors of the GRDM, the founder and Principle of the academy, Chef Francois Ferreira gave a brief background of the institution. He also gave an overview of the programme's subjects and shared success stories of previous Cater Care students. Many of who furthered their training and became professional Chefs, currently working overseas. He explained the aim of the programme is to 'take' unemployed youth; train them and place them into sustainable jobs or some become successful entrepreneurs. Furthermore, Chef Ferreira announced that 9 of the 20 students of the whole group have advanced to the Assistant Chefs Programme, presented by the Academy.

Chef Ferreira concluded and said that the Cater Care Programme has a drop-out rate of 0% students; a 90% success rate in placing students in sustainable jobs. He also mentioned that 70% of students further their studies in the culinary field by obtaining higher qualifications.

During interviews conducted with a few students after the ceremony, it became evident that this programme definitely changed their perception of life, and that they see it as a doorway to a successful future in the hospitality industry.



Councillors with learners who successfully completed their Cater Care training. Back row fltr: Councillor Rowan Spies, Mr Lorenzo Sass, Ms Rozanne May, Mr Goodman Mvubu, Ms Pheliswa Kewuti and Mr Siyamthanda Thota, Mr Aphiwe Dyantyi and Mr Avuyile Raymond Qodi. Front row fltr: Chef Francois Ferreira – Principal of FFA, Ms Fazlin Wildskut, Ms Joneen Boesak, Ms Kaylene Verland, Ms Denise Lindley – Vice Principle of FFA and Councillor Jerome Lambaatjeen.

Below: Students after graduating.





# GRDM host Quarterly Public Participation Forum

The Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM) hosted a District Public Participation Forum on the 23rd of October 2018, which brought together District Public Participation Managers, Community Development Workers (CDWs) Regional Coordinators, and Representatives from the Department of Local Government (DLG) Public Participation Directorate.

Some of the discussion points and resolutions taken during the forum were as follows:

- Legislative Review on Ward Committees and Community Participation as a guiding tool for the District Process Plan implementation.
- That the Ward Committee Monitoring Tool be used as a guideline by all local municipalities in the Garden Route District for their District Public Participation Process Plans.
- Functionality of Ward Committee Operational Plans.
- Consolidation and adoption of the District Work Plans.
- Assistance and support required from the District and DLG to challenged local municipalities.

According to the District Integrated Development Planning (IDP) Manager of the GRDM and Chairperson of the forum, Mr Mzukisi Cekiso, the engagement was well attended and good decisions on the way forward as a district, were taken. Mr Cekiso furthermore commented and said, "One of the emerging strategic directions is that the District must host a CDW and Ward Committee Summit in 2019, to align the Public Participation Process with the Integrated Development Planning Processes".

Ward Committees play a cardinal role in local government service delivery. According to Section 74 of the Municipal Structures Act, Act 117 of 1998, Ward Committees must act as a liaison between the community and local government.



There are 84 wards in the Garden Route district. The Ward Committee Monitoring Tool was designed to address the current disjuncture that exists between Ward Committee meetings and sub-committee meetings. It is also a tool that will monitor the effectiveness of the Ward Committee meetings, in terms of holding regular meetings, and the implementation of the resolutions taken during these Ward Committee meetings. Furthermore, the Monitoring Tool will also address the lack of willingness and capacity of Ward Committee members, to maintain sub-committee structures.

This was the last forum for 2018, and preparation for the upcoming Summit will commence early in 2019.

## Municipal Health team educates learners of Hoogekraal Primary School about Health & Hygiene

The Municipal Health team from the Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM), on Wednesday, 24 October 2018, surprised the learners and educators from the Hoogekraal Primary School near George, with a "different type" of health and hygiene training.

The learners looked confused when the team arrived, but soon a change in atmosphere took place when Ms Lana Don, Environmental Health Practitioner from the Municipal Health office in George led them with a song "Hands, shoulders, knees and toes" where after she opened the event with a prayer.

The highlight of the event was when the "Youth for Change" drama group from Oudtshoorn performed various plays to convey messages relating to daily health and hygiene practises. In the play, the learners witnessed how their "Grandmother" passed away in front of them due to poor health practises and unhealthy eating habits. Seeing this happen, got some of them almost in tears. The young audience was not impressed with the bad and unhealthy lifestyle of their "Grandma" which ended up causing her death.

Ms Carike Jantjies, during her presentation to the learners focused on various aspects, such as the safe storing of food and the temperature in which food must be warmed up. "Food must be stored in a temperature of no less than 50°C and must be heated in a temperature of 60°C or more," she emphasised. Ms Jantjies also enlightened the learners about Listeriosis, how it is borne and the dangers thereof. Environmental Health Practitioner, Ms Janine van Wyk, with colleagues Ms Ivy Mamegwa and Ms Sive Mkuta, demonstrated proper hand washing techniques to the learners. Ms van Wyk explained to the learners: "Do not only wash your hands, but also from the lower to the upper (middle) part of your arm". Ms Van Wyk furthermore reiterated that, hands must be washed after playing or after lunch breaks and after using the toilet.

Ms Emmy Douglas, GRDM Chief: Municipal Health at the GRDM George office, thanked the school principal, Mr Grootboom, for warmly welcoming the team on their arrival and allowing them to educate the learners in respect of good health & hygiene habits. She extended a special word of gratitude to the drama group and said: "You portrayed and conveyed the message to the learners in the best way possible, and we thank you".

Mr Grootboom officially thanked the GRDM team and the drama group for making time and effort to reach out to the school. He said: "It clearly shows that Garden Route District Municipality did not forget about our school's existence. We truly appreciate this important outreach". Mr Desmond Paulse, Manager: Municipal Health from the Oudtshoorn area, also attended the event.



*Learners and educators of the Hoogekraal Primary School, with the Garden Route District Municipality Municipal Health team and the "Youth for Change" drama group soon after the Health & Hygiene formal programme.*



*The Drama group "Youth for Change" performing various plays to communicate the importance of good health and hygiene practices. The group was formally trained by Garden Route District Municipality through their "Peer Educational Training Programme".*



*Juanita Samuels listen carefully and shows her fellow learners how hands must be properly washed.*



# Controlled fires are banned until further notice

All controlled burning of land in the Garden Route is prohibited.

Controlled burns are not permitted to be done by any person other than the fire control authorities.

It has come under the attention of the Garden Route DM Joint Operations Centre (JOC) that some land owners are attempting to start controlled burns.

Everyone needs to adhere to these precautionary measures until further notice.

The municipality appeals to all people who live, work and visit the area to exercise extreme caution at all times; to make fires in protected and designated areas only, and to dispose of cigarette butts safely. There is a long, hot summer ahead and we need everyone to help in keeping our region safe.

For more information regarding fire permits, contact: George – 044 801 6300; Hessequa – 028 713 8000; Mossel Bay – 044 606 5107; Kannaland – 044 805 5071; Oudtshoorn – 044 203 8911; Knysna – 044 302 8911; Bitou – 044 533 5000

For enquiries relating to wildfires, contact the Garden Route DM JOC on 044 805 5071.

# Defensible Space and Firewise tips

- Trees and shrubs are properly thinned and pruned within the defensible space. Slash from the thinning is disposed of.
- Roof and gutters are clear of leaves, needles, and other debris.
- Branches overhanging the roof and chimney are removed.
- Chimney screens are in place and in good condition.
- Grass and weeds are mowed to a low height.
- An outdoor water supply is available, complete with a hose and nozzle that can reach all parts of the house.
- Fire extinguishers are checked and in working condition.
- The driveway is wide enough. The clearance of trees and branches is adequate for fire and emergency equipment. (Check with your local fire department.)
- Road signs and your name and house number are posted and easily visible.
- There is an easily accessible tool storage area with rakes, hoes, axes and shovels for use in case of fire.
- You have practiced family fire drills and your fire evacuation plan.
- Your escape routes, meeting points and other details are known and understood by all family members.
- Attic, roof, eaves and foundation vents are screened and in good condition. Stilt foundations and decks are enclosed, screened or walled up.
- Trash and debris accumulations are removed from the defensible space.

## Freddy Thaver Fire Chief and Incident Commander

The fires were extremely demanding and the experience exhausting and stressful.

This time around, nature did not help us to make our job easy - unfortunately the wind fanned the fires and it made the fires move into directions which brought people and property into danger. The death of the pilot deeply touched me and at a certain time all activities in the Command Centre had to stopped after we received the report that the chopper crashed. My fear was also that we could not give our people the assurance that they will be safe during the operations. I was very concerned about the safety of our firefighters. If they had to be trapped they would not be able to provide rescue efforts to the residents of our area.

## David van Niekerk Senior Brandweerman

Ons brandweermanne se dapperheid en toegewydheid het my baie opgeval.

Ek verwys graag na die een aand toe ons deurgejaag het na die saagmeule in De Vlucht. Met ons aankoms, kon ons betyds toegang kry tot die saagmeule, maar toe tref dit ons dat die bos aan drie kante van die saagmeule reeds weggebrand het sonder dat die saagmeule aan die brand geraak het. Die saagmeule was veilig selfs voordat ons by dit aangekom het – dit was net genade. Die Maandag toe bergwinde die vure in Denneoord ingedruk het, was ons in Ferrigde waar 10 meter Bloekombome aan die brand geraak het - die vonke het die wêreld vol gespat. One moes rond hardloop om huise te probeer beskerm. Skielik het die wind gedraai, dit het begin reën, die rook was weg, die vure dood en al die chaos was verby. Op Heinrich Leslie se skof op die Jonksrus Pad het die vuur oor die pad gespring in die bos in. Die span het die vure vir 200 tot 300 meter met “fire hoses,” gejaag, gevang en geblus. Dit was net die toegewydheid en dapperheid van die manne en die hand van die Here wat ons gehelp terwyl ons onself nie kon help nie.

## Wildfires - Interviews with our brave “fighters” ▶

## ▼ What to do – and – What to take when evacuating your home

In an emergency, time and space are limited. You need to focus on the essentials and be prepared for the idea that you might never be able to come back to your home.

### BASIC ITEMS FOR SURVIVAL

**Water:** One litter per person per day for at least three days; **Food:** At least a three-day supply of non-perishables and a can opener; **Flashlights and extra batteries; Battery-operated radio;**

**First-Aid Supplies:** Two pairs of sterile gloves; adhesive bandages and sterile dressings; soap or other cleanser; antibiotic towelettes and ointment; burn ointment; eye wash; Thermometer; scissors; tweezers; petroleum jelly; aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever; Stomach analgesics such as Tums, Pepto-Bismol; Laxative.

**Sanitation and Hygiene Supplies:** moist towelettes, paper towels, toilet paper, garbage bags, plastic ties, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrush and deodorant.

### What to Put In Your Emergency Preparedness Kit

Here's a list of things you can prepare now in case your home is ever in harm's way: have a grab-and-go kit. Include essential supplies, such as water, food, and first-aid supplies; have copies of important papers. Keep these in a plastic, waterproof case - this stuff is priceless; because you may need to prove who you are and that you own your house. Include: your driver's license; the deed to your house; proof of insurance; medical records; passports / Identity documents; social security cards; a list of personal contacts; and spare keys.

Safeguard pets

Stockpile sandbags materials

Maintain trees and shrubs around your home

Safely shut off all utility services in your home

### Hein Lesley - Platoon Commander

Die vure was iets anders. Dit was die grootste vuur wat ons geveg het in die tyd wat ek by Tuinroete DM is. Die wind was baie uitdagend, asook die terrein. Soms kon ons nie by die vuur kom nie, omdat dit te gevaarlik was om byvoorbeeld, berg toe te gaan. Dit was baie frustrerend om te sien hoe die vure net verder gaan en ons nie by dit kon uitkom nie. Ons terreine het dit vir ons voertuie moeilik gemaak en soms moes ons 'n rukkie wag om byvoorbeeld 'n band herstel te kry. Dit was treffend om te sien hoe die verskillende munisipaliteite goed saamwerk. Die gemeenskap ook; hulle het hul deel gedoen. Dit het ook baie gehelp om toerusting van buite af in te kry. Ons almal het een doel voor oë gehad: “Om so min as moontlik lewensverliese te hê en huise, asook vee te beskerm. Soms het ek gevoel daar is niks wat ons omtrent 'n situasie kan doen nie, aangesien dit by tye gevaarlik was vir ons om na die brand toe te beweeg – dit was te warm. Steeds was dit 'n goeie ondervinding vir my en ek glo vir ons almal.





### Grant Gericke Senior Brandweerman

Die vuur was uitputtend en ek was altyd bekommerd oor die mense en hul huise, maar die kommunikasie tussen ons spanlede het baie gehelp – dit was baie goed.

Ons het alles tot die beste van ons vermoë gedoen. Die ondervinding wat ons tydens die Knysna brande opgedoen het, het ons baie gehelp om hierdie groot brand baie mooi te hanteer. Die samewerking onder die lede van ons skof was ook baie goed, veral ook met die skep van beheerde brande en die besluite wat geneem was. Dit het baie gehelp om gefokus te bly en om by die plan te hou. Die besluite wat geneem was, was geneem op grond van vorige ervaring – ons almal het baie goed gedoen en nóg meer uit hierdie brande geleer. My familie was altyd bekommerd wanneer ek die huis verlaat het. Wanneer ek so hard besig was met vure blus, dan het ek duidelik my vrou se stem in die agtergrond gehoor, wat sê: "Onthou, jy het nog 'n kind by die huis".

### Johan Brand Station Officer - Operational

At times I fulfilled the role of Incident Commander and Operational Chief respectively.

The recent fires were a very stressful experience. Reason being, for me it was my own town, where my own people, my family, live. Although I had to perform my duties, I was concerned about them as well, but I still had to focus on my work, to do it to the best of my ability. At some point I had to give instructions to my wife telephonically, to get our animals and come to the centre of the town. This experience made me understand how the firefighters from Knysna felt last year when they were concerned about their families and homes while being on duty. To see people lose their houses and belongings is difficult, but the mere fact that we lost lives in this fire, was a heartbreaking experience for me.



### Khutula Maki Senior Firefighter and Logistics

The recent fires were no child's play. However our strongest weapon to fight the fires was the communication between the superiors and the ground crew, as well as the commitment and availability of firefighters, including volunteers – our heroes.

On 28 October we arrived on a scene. At approximately 2 hours thereafter, Shift-A saved a structure. My colleague, Duarte said: "Maki I have had people saying that there are angels, but today I saw them in action helping us to save that house" – with 2 skid units and 4 firefighters. On 29 October at approximately 20h00, we dispatched the fire crew from Knysna to the fire line in Karatara. They came back the following day at about 12h00, very hungry, exhausted and dehydrated. They only rested for one hour and had to go back again - totally extra ordinary situations.

**Deon Stoffels  
Stasie Offisier**

Dit was baie droog in ons area die afgelope paar maande. En as gevolg van 'n gebrek aan brandvoorkomingsmaatreëls bv. brandbane en 'n beter kommunikasieselsel vir bewusmaking oor brandvoorkoming, was die afgelope paar dae se brandblusaksies nie maklik nie. Ons winde was baie onvoorspelbaar. Soms was ons baie goed in beheer, dan kom die winde en verander die hele prentjie. Ons inwoners is soms ook baie nalatig, daarom is dit belangrik dat bewusmaking regoor die hele distrik gekweek word. Ons het minimaal strukture verloor, maar my vrees was dat ons meer mense sou verloor. My groot kommer was dat mense nie betyds uit hul huise sou kon ontsnap nie; veral diegene wie se lewens en huise bedreig was. Ek was ook in vrees dat ons brandweermannes



**Edwin Lottering  
Senior Firefighter**

Die onlangse brande was 'n heel eerste en unieke ervaring vir my omdat die brande onkeerbaar was, as gevolg van die verouderde plantegroei en onlangse droogte wat ons area ervaar het. My grootse vrees was dat die brande moontlik lewens kon eis, aangesien van die huise geleë was in areas waarby ons nie betyds sou kon uitkom nie; veral in Vermaaklikheid. My mees traumatiese ervaring was om met my blote oog te sien hoe die helikopter uit die lig neerstort, en meer, omdat ek ook die liggaam weg van die brandende helikopter moes help verwyder. Aan wyle Nico Heyns se familie: "Nico Heyns was baie eg, veral wanneer hy vure moes blus wat 'n bedreiging vir mense, huise en diere ingehou het". Hy het alles in sy vermoë gedoen om lewens te spaar; ook die lewens van brandweermannes. Daarvoor salveer ek hom.

vasgevang sou word, veral met die tipe tipografie, asook uitgangspadde wat nie altyd vrylik bereikbaar was nie. Grotendeels het almal goed gedoen en verbeter wat randvoorkomingsmaatreëls aanbetref.



**Deon van Wyk  
Adjunk Brandweerhoof**

Ek het reeds 29 jaar ondervinding in brandbestryding. In hierdie tyd het ek myself bemagtig in terme van redding en nooddienste. Ek glo nie in berading nie, omdat God my berader is. Ek glo in my hart dat, ongeag waar ek werk en met wie ek werk, dat 'n persoon of dier of selfs strukture met respek hanteer word. In die geval van 'n persoon, of dit 'n vars liggaam of ontbinde liggaam is, die belangrikste is dat ons wel 'n liggaam terug aan geaffekteerde geliefdes kan oorhandig, sodat hulle berusting kan vind. 'n Persoon se liggaam moet dus baie sensitief hanteer word en ten alle tye beskerm word. In Vermaaklikheid was dit moeilik om die vure te veg en moeilik om dit vas te maak. Ek glo in die tegnieke wat ek oor die jare aangeleer het, veral die tegniek om ankerpunte in te sit. Gelukkig kon ek dit toepas en beheer neem van die vuur. Wanneer jy vure veg, moet jy rustigheid in jou hart het en dit met die grootste passie doen, sonder aggressie en vrees. Al is dit hoe gevaarlik, moet jy kalm bly, sodat jy die beste besluite kan neem en kan uitvoer.



## Thank you to all Garden Route DM firefighters:

Freddy Thaver; Deon van Wyk; Johan Brand; Deon Stoffels; Heinrich Leslie; Mzwandile Nelani; Brian Afrikander; Johan Minnie; Elana Basson; Jan Wolmarans; Deon Madikane; Melvin Hofsta; Michelle Smalberger; Freddy Ruiters; Sakkie Greyling; Khuthala Maki; Susanna Jansen; Morne Stuurman; Denver Moses; Bennie Van Vuuren; David Van Niekerk; Emile Conrad; Armien Bailey; Edwin Lottering; Wayne Petzer; Luciano James; Branwill Abrahams; Kurwin Gericke; Devonias Cupido; Grant Gericke; Jean Van Beulen; Allister Windwaai; Llewellyn Michaels; Chris Gerber; Dandro Frans; Martino Jacobs; Odrie-Ann Jaffa; Bonnita Conrad; Petrus Jordaan; Heinrich Jordaan.





# GRDM officials excel during 2018 SAIEH

The South African Institute of Environmental Health (SAIEH) in partnership with the Swiss Embassy, South African Local Government Association (SALGA), Department of Agriculture (Veterinary Service) and the City of Cape Town hosted the 21st National Conference in Environmental Health, at the City of Cape Town council chambers from 16-19 November 2018.

The theme of the conference “One Health – An Environmental Health Perspective”, aimed to demonstrate an integrative effort of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally and globally to attain optimal health for people, animals and the environment.

The Garden Route District Municipality's (GRDM) Executive Manager of Community Services, Mr Clive Africa attended the 4 (four) day conference, accompanied by his leading team of professionals within the field of Environmental Health. The GRDM Municipal Health Services (MHS) submitted nominations for the Best Municipality and Best Environmental Health Practitioner (EHP) awards. The Municipal Health App Project has been nominated for this Award. The Municipality has been awarded as one out of three municipalities, with the Best Environmental Health Project.

Since the implementation of the Municipal Health App, the GRDM Environmental Health Practitioners experience a lot of benefits in conducting their daily inspections. The App assists EHPs to capture information electronically on site, without writing reports afterwards. This method assists them to do more inspections and be more productive while they are out in the field and interventions can then be executed immediately. This method also enables EHPs to do more inspections and save more lives.

The GRDM resolved and implemented paperless council meeting agendas a few months ago in their effort to go green to save the planet.

Breakdown of inspections by GRDM  
2013 – 2014 financial year - 31 351 inspections  
2014 – 2015 financial year - 41 367 inspections  
2015 – 2016 financial year - 43 122 inspections  
2016 – 2017 financial year - 50 893 inspections  
2017 – 2018 financial year - 51 986 inspections

Mr Francois Koelman, an EHP from the GRDM Oudtshoorn office received a trophy for being one of the Best Environmental Health Practitioners in South Africa. This award is also one out of three nominees at a national level. Mr Koelman was not present during the award ceremony, but his colleagues received this remarkable award on his behalf. “We are very proud of our colleague and would like to congratulate him on this great achievement - hard work definitely pays off.”

The Saturday and Sunday's jam-packed programme was attended by various intellectuals in the environmental health sector. The GRDM research team (which was an initiative of the Executive Manager, Mr Africa), Ms Maxwelline Fatuse, Ms Jessica Erasmus, Ms Sive Mkuta, Ms Ivy Mamegwa and Mr Clive Africa presented scientific papers on the following research topics:

- Adulterated honey in South Africa;
- the effects of consuming toxic chemicals used in fake alcohol beverages on human health and the community;
- counterfeit food; and
- counterfeit medicine.

Ms Emmy Douglas who also acted as research supervisor and project leader, did a sterling job in coaching EHPs in delivering a quality research project and research presentations.

On Monday, a field trip was undertaken by delegates to the Goodwood Disaster Centre and the Swiss Housing project in Khayalitsha.

The last item on the program was the compilation and discussion of resolutions that were taken during the conference. One of the resolutions taken was to approach the National Health Laboratories and discuss their service delivery to the public. The possibility of establishing an accredited laboratory in South Africa, as most of the critical scientific testing can only be done overseas at a very costly price was also raised at the conference. Results for these complex tests also take a long time which could negatively influence the health of our communities.



The GRDM Executive Mayor, Cllr Memory Booysen with the EHPs who delivered presentations on day 2 of the conference.



## A special message to the tourists of the Garden Route and Klein Karoo

A special message to the tourists of the Garden Route and Klein Karoo. As we approach the festive season, Garden Route and Klein Karoo Tourism (GR&KK) would like to take this opportunity to wish all tourists, domestic and international, a warm and happy holiday season and a prosperous new year. This year was yet another momentous and testing time for the Tourism industry, considering the many tourism events that took place, in contrast with the devastating fires raging throughout the Garden Route, coupled by a prolonged drought experienced throughout the Western Cape. We are, however, encouraged by the attitude and strength shown by the residents of the Garden Route & Klein Karoo, who have been focused on building back better and supporting the growth of our region. We foresee an increase in tourism activities during the peak season.

The GR&KK regional office would like to take this opportunity to thank all tourism stakeholders for their unwavering support in our endeavor of

positioning the GR&KK as the preferred tourism destination in South Africa. We are grateful to the tourism industry and stakeholders for the passion, resilience and efforts to strengthen our region as a whole.

As we enter the festive season, we would need travelers to be cognizant of water usage and travel safety. Be cautious on the road and remember to encapsulate the festive spirit wherever you find yourself.

Explore the Garden Route and Klein Karoo, capture the moments and share memories. Why not tell your friends and family members about your experiences? Next year when you return, we have confidence that our beautiful, diverse Garden Route and Klein Karoo will offer even more to you and your fellow travelers.





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Physical Address:  
On R328 between Oudtshoorn and  
Prince Albert, Western Cape



# World Environmental Health Day Celebrations

Statistics from the Department of Health showed, that many children and adults are suffering from diseases, such as diarrhoea, which can be easily prevented or cured, but sometimes result in very sad consequences.

To address this problem, the Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) of the Garden Route District Municipality's (GRDM) Klein Karoo municipal health office developed a drama production aimed at creating awareness among community members, especially school children.

- The aim of the drama production was to:
- promote good food safety practices;
  - educate learners and the community, on how germs and infections are transmitted;
  - improve hygiene behaviour; and
  - prevent the spread of diarrhoeal and other hygiene-, sanitation- and water related diseases in communities.

A local actor and four (4) peer educators were approached to assist with the performance. The drama piece was also developed in commemoration of World Environmental Health Day, on 26 September 2018, themed – “Food Security and Sustainability”.

On 24 and 25 September 2018, the drama production was performed respectively in Hoeko (Ladismith area) and in Dysseisdorp. Approximately 216 households were reached through the initiative. Educators and community leaders were impressed by the informative messages that were conveyed. The actors demonstrated the relationship between good hygienic practices and health status towards a positive impact in community health and quality of life.

According to the organisers of the events, the initiative surely increased the self-esteem of community members, promoted health and hygiene awareness practices and empowered the community with knowledge, in order to take responsibility for their own health and life.

The drama production forms part of an ongoing health and hygiene education programme performed by the GRDM municipal health section.



Environmental Health Practitioners, Mr Willie Plaatjies (far left) and Mr Desmond Paulse (second from left) with the teachers, actors and some of the community members from Dysseisdorp.



Mr Desmond Paulse, Manager Municipal Health: Klein Karoo (left) with the Peer Educators who performed in the drama production.



Cllr Khayaletu Lose, the Portfolio Chairperson of Community Services, welcomed and thanked stakeholders for their attendance.

A highly successful event was held at the Thembaletu Community Hall, on Wednesday, 26 September 2018, in commemoration of Wold Environmental Health Day (WEHD), initiated by the International Federation of Environmental Health. This year marks the 7th celebration of the event in South Africa, in recognition of the need to improve environmental health to protect human health.

The theme for 2018 is “Global Food Safety and Sustainability”, aimed to support the provision of more safe food, to make use of the precious water and nutrient resources and for communities to increasingly value sustainable food production, distribution and consumption.

Approximately 80 people, consisting of informal and formal food and meat traders, small farmers, caterers, crèche cooks and community members, all from Thembaletu, were present at the interactive information session. The objective of the event was to educate, share and discuss the legal requirements in the food industry as well as major threats to food safety, in particularly

the incorrect handling of foodstuff; climate change; anti-microbial resistance; antibiotics in meat; food wastage and access to safe water and chemicals.

Mr Tony Dyers of the Veterinarian Service did an informative presentation on meat safety, followed by Dr Dyason of the Department of Agriculture, who talked about rabies, the symptoms, causes, treatment and prevention of the disease in animals.

The Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) of the George municipal health office furthermore enlightened attendees on counterfeit foodstuffs; “best before” dates and the five keys to safer food.

Similar celebrations were conducted in other areas within the Garden Route district, and according to the organisers of the event, the envisaged goals were achieved.

“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.” – Nelson Mandela



After presentations, attendees were encouraged to ask questions and raise concerns.



# Green Energy Forum held to discuss potential Green Energy Projects

Garden Route District Municipality, on 30 August 2018, hosted a Garden Route Green Energy Forum at its Disaster Management Centre in George. Representatives from the Garden Route district and George Municipalities, the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers (SAIEE), MTO Forestry and Latts University situated in France, attended the meeting.

The main aim of the discussions was to pursue Green Energy projects that would be in the interest of the residents of the Garden Route. These discussions stemmed from the resolutions taken at the Garden Route Green Energy Summit which took place on 11 and 12 April 2018 under at Fancourt in George. This two-day Summit has unpacked potential areas of alternative energy opportunities, which would see the fruition of an instrumental, collaborative, partnership-driven, green and cleaner environment.

At the Green Energy Forum, Mr Johan Dekker from MTO and Mr Pierre Conradie from CMB Engineering made presentations in respect of the Small Scale Embedded Generation Plant, where after SAIEE Southern Cape Centre extended an invitation to the Forum, to visit the MTO Forestry's 999kVA Steam Turbine Electricity Generation Plant - the biggest Small Scale Embedded Generation Plant in George. The purpose of the site visit was to explore and witness the capacity and operations of the plant for the Forum members to familiarise themselves with relevant information for informed decision making.

The Forum was coordinated by Mr Jason Shaffler from SA-LED in the absence of Mr Gerhard Otto, GRDM Manager, Disaster Management, and is foreseen to be convened on a quarterly basis to discuss progress made towards achieving the resolutions taken at the Green Energy Summit.



Members of the Green Energy Forum who attended the meeting held at the Garden Route District Municipality on 30 August 2018.

## “Moore pad” sampling as part of sampling done by Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) in the prevention of the Cholera disease

Cholera is an endemic disease, and the *Vibrio Cholera* bacteria is often found in the aquatic environment, where it can remain dormant for long periods as part of the normal flora of brackish water and river estuaries. It flares up under favourable conditions associated with algae blooms (plankton), which are influenced by the temperature of the water. Infected humans that are temporary carriers are one of the main reservoirs of the pathogenic form of *Vibrio cholerae*. Cholera is spread, as most other viral and bacterial diarrhoeal diseases, by contaminated water and food, i.e. the faecal-oral route. The ever-present role of flies and other vectors in the faecal-oral route must be kept in mind. Cholera is rarely transmitted by direct person-to-person contact.

There are three main factors that are critical in their influence on the epidemic spreading of cholera, namely:

- Lack of access to medical treatment facilities;
- Lack of access to safe water supply and sanitation services; and
- Socio-economic living conditions.

### The process of “Moore pad” sampling

Place sterile surgical gauze swab tied with a length of 1 meter string into the flowing river or sewage so that the pad hangs below the surface of the water. This pad should remain in place for 72 hours, after which it should be pulled out, into a pre-prepared sterile bottle containing double strength alkaline peptone water. The labeled specimens must be sent to the laboratory at room temperature for analysis.

The sampling rate is higher during season periods where water from the rivers and the lagoon are running into the ocean. *Vibrio cholera* bacteria is often found in the aquatic environment where it can remain dormant for long periods as part of the normal flora of salt water.

### Role of the EHP

The role of the EHP in ongoing monitoring and assessment plays a major role in the prevention of disease outbreak or sudden environmental health threats.



EHP, Ms Nokuphiwa Mbali, putting “Moore Pad” sample at Piesang River; one of the sampling points of Garden Route District Municipality.



Ms Zoleka Goniwe, EHP from the GRDM Bitou office, putting “Moore Pad” sample at Gansevelei Waste Water Treatment plant to test for final effluent.

## GOING ON HOLIDAY? Switch off your geyser.

The electricity demand it reduces helps the whole of South Africa.

The residential sector uses about 17% of the total electricity generated in South Africa. From 7am to 10am in the morning, and 5pm to 9pm in the evening – periods of peak demand in South Africa – residential demand is up to 35% of the total demand required.

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# Prestigious Wilderness Blue Flag Once Again to Fly during the 2018/19 Blue Flag Season



## Blue Flag South Africa

The Garden Route District Municipality is proud to announce that the Wilderness Blue Flag beach has been awarded Pilot Status and will be flying its flag once again during the 2018/19 Blue Flag season. The Garden Route District Municipality, George Municipality and the South African National Parks (SANParks) are committed to the Blue Flag programme, and have put resources together to work towards the goal of achieving compliance of the Wilderness beach with the strict WESSA Blue Flag criteria, and together ensured the successful Pilot status achieved by the beach.

The official Wilderness season period will be running from the 1st of December 2018 to the 31st of January 2019.

For the coming Blue Flag season, a total of 66 Blue Flags were awarded by the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) nationally, consisting of 46 beaches, eight marinas and 12 sustainable tourism boats. Within the Garden Route district, the beaches that were awarded Blue Flag status were the Natures Valley, Singing Kettle, the Waves, the Dunes, the Lookout beach, Robberg 5 (Bitou area), Buffalo Bay, Brenton on Sea (Knysna area), De Bakke, Little Brak, Hartenbos, Santos (Mossel Bay area), and the Lappiesbaai, Preekstoel, Gouritsmond and Witsand (Hessequa area) beaches, as well as the Wilderness (George), Glentana (Mossel Bay), Jongensfontein and Still Bay west (Hessequa) beaches which were awarded Pilot Blue flag status.

During the coming 2018/19 season, the Wilderness beach will be in full compliance with the Blue Flag criteria by ensuring high standards of water quality monitoring, public safety and lifeguard services, and well maintained coastal amenities, amongst others. The Blue Flag recognition is regarded by the World Tourism Organisation as the most well-known international eco-label and gives local and foreign visitors the knowledge that these beaches are clean, environmentally sound, and adhering to international safety and other tourist standards.

The voluntary Blue Flag eco-label is given to beaches that meet 33 main criteria which is spanning four aspects of coastal management, such as water quality; environmental education and information, environmental management as well as safety and services. The Garden Route District Municipality is continuously striving to provide top quality services to its community and is proud to assure a world class Wilderness beach. Through its commitment to the Blue Flag programme, the Municipality demonstrates a clear coastal vision to conserve our coastal resources and heritage.



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**2. Marlene Nqumse**  
**3. Marillia Veldkornet**

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## FINAL REGISTRATION WEEKEND

26 - 27 JANUARY 2019

8AM - 5PM

# 2019

## National & Provincial ELECTIONS



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