

EZOTHUKELA NEWS

UThukela District Municipality Online Newsletter

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OSS stakeholders meet to discuss COVID-19 pandemic

The Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) held a stakeholder information session meeting at the Ladysmith Town Hall under Alfred Duma Local Municipality with Dr T Zulu from uThukela District Operation Sukuma, uThukela District Speaker Cllr PG Strydom, Alfred Duma local Municipality Deputy Mayor Cllr T Hadebe, Alfred Duma Municipality Speaker Cllr Ngubane, Al Imdaad Foundation and officials.

Addressing the audience the Speaker Cllr Strydom raised serious concerns about the pandemic and the importance of fighting against it as the District as well as giving the correct information to the community. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) and there are also confirmed cases in South Africa that keep on escalating including those cases in the province.

The Provincial Executive Council held on the 11th March 2020 and approved a programme of intense community mobilization that should be followed by all MEC Champions in an effort to educate and share information about the virus and all the preventative measures to minimize the spread of the deadly virus.

First COVID-19 case was confirmed on the 5th of March 2020 in Pietermaritzburg. The patient was admitted at Greys Hospital and is in a stable condition. The Provincial Tracer teams are on the ground putting all precautionary measures in place to deal with containment of the virus through mapping contact cases and testing.

Precautions to take;

- * Avoid contact with live animals, poultry and birds
- * Avoid consumption of raw and undercooked meat
- * Avoid crowded places and around people who are unwell
- * Observe good personal hygiene at all times
- * Wash hands frequently with soap
- * Cover your mouth with a tissue paper when coughing or sneezing
- * See a doctor if you are unwell

Mayor welcomes the healthcare train in Ladysmith

UThukela District Mayor Cllr AS Mazibuko accompanied by Alfred Duma Deputy Mayor Cllr T Hadebe, Sakhile Xaba from I Care and officials visited the Phelophepha Health Care Train on Tuesday morning, February 18. The purpose was to officially welcome the train which was stationed in Ladysmith for two weeks.

The team was warmly received by Dr Thabiso Manabela who explained that the Phelophepha Train was established in 1994 focusing on the disadvantaged and rural communities rendering primary health care services. The train is operated on a day-to-day basis by a team of professionals, consisting of dedicated and committed staff.

The train treats minor ailments. In cases of major ailments the train do referrals to hospitals for intensive medical attention. Close to 200 people are attended each day. Services offered include; Edu-Clinic, Roche Health Clinic, Eye Clinic, Dental Clinic and Counselling Clinic. It also created a number of temporary job opportunities for the locals.

The Mayor Cllr Mazibuko appreciated the efforts put forward by Transnet in bringing such services to the community of Ladysmith. He also acknowledged job opportunities created by the project in the process. The team was then taken to the tour visiting various coaches inside the train where a variety of services were offered and the Mayor briefly spoke to the people.



Cllr Hadebe, Dr Manabele, Cllr Mazibuko and Xaba



OSS DTT Chairperson Dr T Zulu addressing the audience

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MEC encourages people to save money

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA), Nomusa Dube-Ncube, on Saturday March 7, held a meeting with uThukela District leadership and the uThukela District House of Traditional Leaders. The meeting aimed to introduce the MEC as the District Champion to Amakhosi and chart a way for the town's economic activities.

In her remarks the Deputy Mayor Cllr NW Mchunu welcome the MEC and guests by saying it was important for the community to take responsibility to save money and also to spend it wisely. "We welcome the department of EDTEA's initiatives to raise awareness about the importance of saving money. We also urge our communities to use their hard-earned cash in a more beneficial way," said the Deputy Mayor.



MEC Dube-Ncube talking to LCCI's Jennifer Wallace

The Deputy Mayor mentioned that they have launched the District Economic Development Agency which will assist to turn the regional economy around especially the district tourism and other business interests. She voiced her concerns about the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic in the country. She then made a clarion call to all civil organisations to come

together and work in unison.

Delivering her keynote address, MEC Dube-Ncube appreciated that she was formally introduced to the traditional leadership as District Champion. She then called upon all stakeholders to make use of OSS War Rooms to access a variety of government services. The MEC also mentioned a lot of programmes run by the Department to uplift the people from poverty.

"It is our wish to see our people become economically active by seizing the opportunities presented to them by government. We conduct workshops to educate people about the effects of renting out their businesses to other people," said Dube-Ncube.



UThukela District leadership paying attention to the MEC

MEC Dube-Ncube also briefed the guests about growing cannabis for commercial purposes which will require one to possess a licence. The Cable Car project is still on the cards. It is envisaged to boost tourism industry. She also touched on the challenges faced by the district as a whole with regards to service delivery, crime, domestic violence, health care, etc. She called upon all to fold their sleeves and get down to work. Alfred Duma Deputy Mayor Cllr T Hadebe gave a vote of thanks.

UThukela District scoops prestigious awards

Amid all the turmoil in our country and district relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, load shedding and other service delivery issues, the Uthukela District Council today had something positive to cheer about. This comes after the General Manager: Water, Sanitation and Technical Services, Neal Khuzwayo presented the Mayor Cllr AS Mazibuko and Speaker Cllr PG Strydom with the certificate and a trophy during the Council meeting.

The awards were presented to the Uthukela District Municipality at the EPWP Kamoso Awards which was held in Ballito, Durban on March 10. The municipality had the privilege in winning on the category of the Best District in Implementing Infrastructure Projects.



Mayor Mazibuko, N Khuzwayo and Speaker Strydom

It was based on Monitoring and Evaluation category that required no entry. All the District Municipalities were eligible for it. Formulas were applied using system reported data and uThukela District came out on top. On behalf of the Council and management, the Mayor Cllr Mazibuko wishes to congratulate the Water, Sanitation and Technical Services department for a sterling job.

Temporary shelters for the homeless

Homeless people have been encouraged to move to temporary shelters during the COVID-19 lockdown announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa. He briefly mentioned this in his address that temporary shelters must be identified to accommodate homeless people for at least 21 days.

In response to his call, the Operation Sukuma Sakhe District Task Team with the assistance of the Department of Social Development met with stakeholders to deliberate on the matter. Stakeholders identified the following places as temporary shelters; Inkosi Langalibalele municipality: Forderville Hall, Estcourt Town Hall, Khwezi Hall and Bhokuzulu Hall, Alfred Duma municipality: Utility Hall, Agra Crescent Civic Centre and Limit Hill Hall, and Okhahlamba municipality: DSD Centre, Woodford, Acton Homes and Bethany Halls.

Stakeholders were assigned with various tasks and responsibilities; SAPS - to provide safety and security, DSD - essential needs such as clothes, blankets and food parcels and Al Imdaad Foundation - to provide with mattresses. NGOs, NPOs and business sector will provide meals. There's also an appeal to anyone else to assist with whatever they could provide.

All local municipalities have complied with the requirements and will avail these shelters and maintain hygienic conditions. The Department of Health will be doing health screening services. This is to ensure that thorough check ups are conducted including tests for COVID-19 pandemic. Awareness campaigns on the pandemic are conducted on an on-going basis. The shelters are separated between male and female occupants.



Blankets and mattresses donated to the homeless

MEC joins the district pay out programme

The Uthukela District COVID-19 Command Centre member met with the MEC for EDTEA Ms Nomusa Dube-Ncube in her capacity as the District Champion to brief her about the status of COVID-19 in the district. The briefing was held at the Council Chamber of the Alfred Duma municipality in Ladysmith.

The District Mayor Cllr AS Mazibuko and Dr T Zulu from Uthukela District Health, Alfred Duma Speaker Cllr T Ngubane, EXCO members and both Municipal Managers led the team comprising various stakeholders. Of serious concern was the reported case of a person who sadly passed away after contracting the virus from outside the town and that of another one who failed to quarantine himself after learning about his status.



According to Dr Zulu the lockdown has had a negative effect in terms of conducting public awareness raising campaigns. The COVID-19 tests are sent to the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Hospital Laboratory where the process is much quicker. The MEC was, however, concerned about people's behaviour who have a complete disregard of the lockdown regulations.

She said once a large number of people have contracted this virus it will put unnecessary strain on the health system because of ignorance. "The President wants everyone from the ward level upwards to account for their actions. We need to ensure that our people have all the necessities to deal with this virus effectively", said MEC Dube-Ncube.

SASSA as represented by Mr Singh outlined their action plan in relation to the payment of grants. They have engaged with SAPO to make payment machines available. He then raised concerns about inadequate access control in some of the supermarkets. Vendors were allowed provided they kept social distancing as required.



After the briefing, the team then went to visit various pay points to see if they complied with the requirements and also to raise awareness about the pandemic by distributing pamphlets and engaging the public. SAPO and other banking institutions were found to be fully compliant.

Both Alfred Duma and Uthukela District municipalities assisted with additional chairs in some of the pay points. The Mayor Cllr Mazibuko also addressed the people about the importance of social distancing and the effects of the COVID-19 as well as that as the leadership they were out there to assess and assist during the payment of the grants.

COVID-19 intervention launch programme

The Inkosi Langelibalele Local Municipality in partnership with Uthukela District Municipality, Dept of Health, Bhhekuzulu Self-Sufficient Project and Al Imdaad Foundation rolled out the Covid-19 intervention programme at the Municipal Yard in Estcourt. This follows the establishment of the Local Command Team as per the Premier's attempt to reduce the spread of the COVID-19.

The OSS Local Task Team Chairperson Mr VT Nkabinde outlined the purpose of the gathering and cited some of the challenges in the process. He said it was important that vulnerable people are provided with the necessities in order to enable them to combat this pandemic.

The Al Imdaad Foundation as represented by Abed Karrim said the foundation was happy to donate about 30 water tanks to the course that will assist in the fight against the pandemic. Fezile Dlamini from Bhhekuzulu Self-Sufficient Project donated with sanitizers, soaps and disinfectants. She said it was important to work together with the government to contain the spread of the virus.



Inkosi Langelibalele municipality Mayor Cllr JM Mbele said they will go out in full force to make sure that businesses, traditional leadership and community at large understand and also comply with the regulations as set by government. "Communities must take extra precautions and lead a healthy lifestyle during this challenging period," said Cllr Mbhele. District Mayor Cllr AS Mazibuko said the district is committed to comply with the regulations as set out. He emphasised the importance of social distancing amongst the people.



"I wish to thank the Department of Health for the great work they're doing in terms of managing the situation and the SAPS for law enforcement during this trying period", said the Mayor. He then requested municipalities to check and work with businesses with regards to the issues of compliance. He also emphasised on the issue of education which will assist to raise awareness about the pandemic.

The Mayor alluded that wherever these water tanks will be placed but the issue of security will be important. He said they'll develop a roster to make sure these tanks are filled with water timeously. The Mayor mentioned that the tanks will greatly assist in the turnaround time of water provision. The team then visited various pay points in town to assess the situation there.

COVID-19 Self-Quarantine Guidelines



Who should self-quarantine?

Self-quarantine for COVID-19 is recommended for individuals who have been directly exposed to the virus or who have traveled to areas where there are large numbers of people infected in order to prevent further transmission.



Self-quarantine steps

- Stay home. Only go out if you need medical care.
- Monitor your symptoms: Fever, cough, shortness of breath
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, or taxis
- Keep a distance of one-and-a-half metres from family members
- If you are sharing a bathroom, wash taps, doorknobs and utensils with soap and water regularly
- Clean your hands often. With soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean surfaces like counters, tabletops, doorknobs, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables every day
- Keep clothes and bed linen clean
- Minimise visitors to the home. The person in quarantine should not interact with any visitors
- Cough or sneeze into the fold of your elbow. Alternatively, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- Wear a face mask when you leave your area of self-quarantine
- Get medical attention as soon as possible if you become ill

Follow these steps when seeking medical care:

- Call your healthcare facility and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19
- Put on a facemask before you enter the healthcare facility
- Ask your healthcare professional to inform the NICD

WhatsApp: 0600 123 456 | NICD Hotline 0800 029 999 | sacoronavirus.co.za

UThukela District Mayoral Slot

As a means of keeping the community abreast with the information regarding programmes that are in the pipeline as well as those undertaken by uThukela District Municipality including the ways we deal with COVID-19 outbreak, media play a pivotal role in terms of information cascading.

We utilize the services of our local community radio station Nqubeko FM to reach our target audience. The programme itself is called **uThukela Nezalo**, is run once on the last Thursday of the month between 18:00 and 19:00. Catch us live on Nqubeko FM 100.5 for the latest news, views and interviews!



UThukela orders shutdown of non-compliant factory

On Monday afternoon, March 30 the Uthukela District Municipality COVID-19 Command Centre led by the District Mayor Cllr As Mazibuko was alerted about a particular factory based in Pieters Industrials which was not compliant with health and safety standards. The team comprising stakeholders Alfred Duma Speaker Cllr T Ngubane, SAPS, Department of Health and organised labour did not waste time and headed to the place to check what was going on.



The team assessing inside the premises

On arrival they found that indeed the factory was in full operation. When the team questioned as to why they were operating during the lockdown period, it's manager told them they fall under essential services category. The employer made an arrangement without following regulations to house about 39 workers on their own will. However, these workers were accommodated in an appalling environment.

On the other hand the management do come to work and go back home thereafter on a daily basis. The factory was then ordered to close down because of non-compliance with the Health and Safety Act. Transport was also arranged to take workers home. There were no sanitizers available and the masks provided were not complying with safety regulations.

As much as the factory had been accredited as essential services but it wasn't compliant with hygiene standards. The management was then advised to get their house in order and will only then be allowed to carry on with its operations once these regulations had been met. By the evening the team then went to Nqubeko FM to do awareness raising campaign on COVID-19 pandemic.



Employees without protective gears

Covid-19

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC		
Call centres and Hotlines		
National Institute for Communicable Diseases: 0800 029 999	South African Police Service: 08600 10111	Department of Home Affairs: 0800 601 190
Gender-based violence command centre: 0800 428 428 or *120*7867# (free)	National Crisis Line: 0861 322 322	Department of Water Affairs: 0800 200 200
Support to SMMEs in distress: 0860 663 7867	Reporting undue price increases: 0800 141 880	Department of Tourism: 0860 868 747
	WhatsApp: 060 012 3456	Presidential Hotline: 17737

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