

The Weekly

LANDFILL SITE TO CREATE JOBS FOR SPRINGFONTEIN RESIDENTS

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Creating healthy environment ... The new piece of land where the municipality plans to erect a landfill site

The Kopanong Local municipality has demarcated a piece of land for a landfill site near the spoor rails in Springfontein.

The Xhariep based municipality has also applied for a licence for the landfill site to be in the waste information system, while creating jobs for local residents.

Environmental affairs minister, Edna Molewa's spokesperson, Albi Modise, said currently there are 239 landfill sites registered on the South African Waste Information System (SAWIS) and that the registration and licensing of landfill sites are two separate processes.

He said registration is only done once a landfill site has obtained a waste management licence from the environmental department.

Modise added that the licensing takes place when the owner of the landfill site has appointed an environmental assessment practitioner or consultant to handle the application on their behalf in terms of National Electrical Manufactures Association (NEMA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) regulations.

The EAP submits the application to the department following the EIA processes and then the department makes a decision on whether to grant or reject the application based on the final application report received in terms of NEMA and EIA regulations.

Modise stated that it is important to register landfill sites with the WIS in order to transmit waste data to authorities to ascertain the amount of waste that is disposed of in landfill sites for waste planning purposes.

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“To obtain a waste management licence depends on legislated timeframes and how long it takes the consultant (EAP) to compile and submit the reports. Insufficiency of information may also result in delays, once a waste management licence is obtained; it may only take approximately an hour to register.”

However, Modise said the department is not happy with the historic rate of registrations that is why WIS regulations were developed to fast track registration. He said the regulations came into effect on January 1, 2013 and the situation should improve, going forward.

“In respect of licensing rates, the department would like to see more of the unauthorised general landfill sites licensed. However this is dependent on the ability of municipalities to undertake the requisite studies and processes in support of license applications to provinces,” added Modise.

He said currently most municipalities are struggling to undertake the licensing procedures and the department is assisting as far as possible.

The Kopanong Local Municipality in Springfontein has applied for the integrated waste management licence from the environmental affairs which will allow them to separate waste material according to their types.

The municipality’s community service manager, Eric Mqungquthu, told The Weekly that the municipality cares about the residents health hence its decision to get a license for the dumping site situated in the area.

He said the municipality has decided to remove the dumping site from the current space as the owner of the guest house behind it was complaining about clutter that was surrounding the guest house.

“We have found a space far away from the people and we have submitted all the necessary documents to the environmental affairs department to help register the area. When the area receives the integrated management license we will then apply for the municipal infrastructure grant to help smoothen up the programme” added Mqungquthu.

Mqungquthu confirmed that about 80 percent of people staying in the area are unemployed and that the municipality is hoping to create jobs after drafting the integrated waste management plan that will help employ hundreds of people in about two years’ time.

The councillor of Ward 5 in Springfontein, Selaocoe Sola, said the municipality has been applying for the integrated waste management license for several times in years now but the processes were delayed due change in the political leadership of the municipality.

He said the area where the dumping site is currently situated affects the tourism negatively as it is at the town’s entrance. Municipal officials expect the environmental affairs department to process the application by the end of March.

A local resident, Johannes Josih (65), said he was born in Springfontein and had lived in the vicinity of the town ever since he was a young boy. He said he was happy that the erection of the dumping site was going to create jobs.

Another resident, Sofie Oerson (47) of William Ville, said she does not have a problem with the area where the dumping site is situated.

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