

## **Illegal dumping affecting the working class**

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All over South Africa illegal dumping has become an issue, mainly occurring in working class communities. In Kliptown and Pimville (south of Johannesburg) the problem has worsened – almost at every open field there is illegal dumping. This activity had been going on for years now and still the communities have had no proper assistance from the municipality with the issue.

In Kliptown the biggest illegal dumping site currently is at Natasha (First Gate), and the residents are worried about the health of the residents, especially the children.

“Time and time again we have been reporting this issue and still no proper solution has been instated. They brought dustbins but that was stolen by the drug abusers,” said Modise one of the residents of Kliptown.

According to the community they had reported the case several weeks ago but still have not received any response from the Councilor or the municipality.

“For years we had no dustbins or anything that could help us with collecting our trash, then people decided to use that open space for dumping. And, it doesn’t make sense because the dumping is in the middle of where people should enter,” said Rachel, an elderly woman.

She also said that at first the dumping was not really a huge problem until people made it a norm and children started playing there. The community said that the temporary solution was not successful because it only made matters worse after the dustbins were stolen.

According to Rachel, they hired some boys a few times to clean up the garbage and asked taxi drivers and motorists to assist with payment because the piling rubbish affects them too as it spilled over into the street.

Peter Rafferty, the Ward Councilor of Kliptown said he was not aware of the situation, and thought that it was dealt with. He also said that he was not aware that the dustbins had been stolen because nothing was reported, however what the community has said contradicts this. “I arranged for a clean-up where the community will be participating in the clean up and also get Pikitup involved,” said Rafferty.

But Natasha (First Gate) is not the only area which suffers from illegal dumping. Angola and Swaziland (both informal settlements) residents said that their areas also face the same problem.

Nikiwe from Angola said Pikitup initially gave each household just three refuse bags per week but decreased the bags and now Pikitup no longer comes at all. She said this problem started at the end of 2019.

Puleng from Swaziland said that the whole area receives refuse bags but then they do not get collected, so they end up dumping it on an open field. She also said that

they had reported the issue, but the matter doesn't get resolve because of where and how they are living is not being taken seriously.

The community of Pimville said that they had also reported the issue because it appears to be spreading. "We spoke to the Ward Councilor and [the] municipality once to address the issue and they said that they will come back to us but never did", one resident said.

The community said that they are tired of their calls being rejected. Another resident said that this whole issue is not good for the community or surrounding areas because they don't know what diseases are breeding there. And it's most certainly not safe for the animals that eat grass from where the dumping site are.

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