

Mistake Leaves Shack Burning, Furniture Destroyed

In attempt to set the grass in his yard alight, the owner of the shack in the yard of the Shiketa Buthery premises in Zone 12, Sebokeng (south of Johannesburg), burned his shack down.

On the morning of 15 July, Simon Khumalo woke up to perform his daily duties, which include maintaining the yard. There is only grass growing in the yard he resides in and this can be costly to maintain. Instead of cutting it down this winter, he decided to burn the grass, which is both cheaper and quicker.

“I set the grass alight and went to the other side of the yard to collect some papers that had flown in. Something told me to look up at the smoke after a while and I realised that there was too much smoke in the air and that couldn’t have been coming from the grass. I then went to see and to my shock, my shack was on fire. That’s when I started shouting help and ran for the buckets and the neighbour came running with a water hose pipe and helping me put the fire out.” said Simon.

Some informal settlements have burned down this way, but there are many other reasons why shack fires have started, especially in winter. Although no one got injured in this incident, many people have lost their lives to fires.

This article was submitted on 19 July 2020. You may republish this article, so long as you credit the authors and Karibu! Online (www.Karibu.org.za), and do not change the text. Please include a link back to the original article.

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