

Sloppy Waste Management a concern in Sebokeng

Residents in Sebokeng, a district of the West Rand in Johannesburg, are frustrated by a piling solid waste that remains uncollected by Emfuleni Local Municipality (ELM).

In both Zone 10 and Zone 14 the waste management truck from Emfuleni Local Municipality (ELM) take turns on Monday mornings to collect solid waste. In most cases, since the COVID-19 lockdown began, trucks have disappeared from the streets of Sebokeng – not only in Zone 10 and Zone 14. The entire ELM communities are experiencing the same situation of non-collected solid waste.

On the weekend of 9 August 2020, Karibu! interviewed a few households in Zone 10 Ext. 1 and Ext. 2 whereby illegal dumping is again becoming a lot more annoying to local residents.

"We don't have a municipality, they are under administration as we speak, because of their corrupt deeds," said Mr. Thulo, a Zone 10 Ext. 2 resident. Thulo lives in front of an open public space that has been turned into an illegal dumping site.

"Many of these people coming to dump waste in front of my yard. Some are my neighbours while most of them come from other areas like Zone 11. They do this because they think we don't know where they live," said Thulo, expressing his frustrations.

Mrs. Matlala is Thulo's neighbour. Her frustration lies with the dangers these illegal dumping sites pose amid COVID-19 lockdown.

"Our children are young and playful, they soon turned these illegal dumps into play fields. Since the schools are not fully open, they go out in the streets and play as friends. We don't know the dangers they are exposed to with COVID-19 pandemic happening," she said.

Some of the residents find it difficult to contain household waste, with the number of rats are rising due to a number of illegal dumping sites booming in local communities.

"We have now turned to elevate refuse bags and hang them on poles and washing lines, out of reach from rats and keep them away to seek food somewhere else. And because some of our neighbours keep cats to keep these rats away I am happy." said Matshediso, a Zone 10 Ext. 1 resident.

On the week of the 3 August 2020, residents of Vanderbjlpark (south of Gauteng) and Boipatong took to the streets of Frikie Meyer Boulevard. The boulevard is the main entrance inside Vanderbjlpark coming from Boipatong. Sloppiness in waste management is one of the major problems in the area.

The ELM Executive Mayor launched new fleet for waste management of 30 trucks in 2019. This however was a good initiative which could have been disturbed, soon as Eskom started attaching ELM assets due to their debt. The struggle for "service delivery" is very deep in ELM whereby one would find back logs even in the leafy suburbs of ELM. This is surprising as one would expect everyone to pay for services.

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