

Knysna Municipality is ready for the summer season

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The greater Knysna area including; Noetzie, Knysna town, Brenton, Belvidere, Rheenendal, Buffalo Bay and Sedgefield, has long been a favourite holiday destination of local and international visitors.

According to Knysna's Acting Municipal Manager Jonny Douglas, the administration and supporting staff are ready to provide residents and visitors with exceptional services throughout this summer season.

“We constantly challenge ourselves to offer our residents a high standard of service delivery,” he said. “And, with an influx of visitors expected this summer, we have made the necessary preparations to continue this same level of service delivery despite the increase in seasonal population.”

The Community Services and Planning and Economic Development Directorates have compiled a seasonal plan to facilitate the smooth running of services during this period of increased demand. The plan was implemented earlier in November this year and will run until February 2019. Highlights include increased activity throughout several departments:

Solid waste and refuse collection.

The municipal waste section is currently collecting refuse in wards 3, 4 and 8 (commonly known as ‘The Northern Areas’), and the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) will be utilised to employ additional community members for street cleaning and refuse collection.

“To keep residents up to date and to inform our visitors, domestic refuse disposal guidelines and collection schedule will be advertised,” Douglas explained. A revised route plan to deal with the peak period is being finalised and collections and cleaning will be increased at hotspots.

“Additional refuse collection staff will be appointed to speed up refuse collection during this period,” he continued. “This will include the filling of 21 currently vacant, permanent positions in our waste management section.”

Additional staff will clean the CBD and other selected areas daily, including camping sites and popular beaches within the greater municipal area. Service providers are being appointed to assist municipal staff with cleaning and maintaining public ablution facilities, picnic areas and refuse bins.

Traffic and law enforcement.

The number of vehicles on our roads nearly doubles over the peak season and, to assist with the free flow of traffic, approximately 30 temporary point duty officials will be appointed. “I know that it can be very frustrating to deal with the heavy traffic and drivers who are unfamiliar with our roads, but I ask all road users to please be patient. Not just to be polite to our guests and each other, but to minimise fender-benders and to avoid injuries on our roads,” urged Douglas.

Linking Plover Road with Vigilance Drive, Sandpiper Street will be opened with the relevant height restrictions and traffic calming measures in place.

Law enforcement officers will continue to patrol the CBDs of Knysna and Sedgfield, and to deal with illegal car guards, vagrants, noise complaints and any other incidents that may occur. An additional 40 officers will be temporarily employed to monitor all beaches, camping sites and braai areas.

Parks

Key tourist roads and routes have been identified to receive priority attention during the holiday season. While normal grass cutting is taking place according to the normal schedule, a comprehensive grass cutting program will be implemented between the middle of November and January 2019. The parks section will be ready to deal with any emergencies that may arise, supported by contractors appointed under an Expression of Interest tender, in line with Supply Chain Management procedures and regulations.

Water and sewer treatment and reticulation.

Seven plumbing teams will be operational during the season, with procedures in place to incorporate additional assistance in case of emergencies. Mechanical and electrical maintenance has been contracted to two service providers, who will each have two teams available to service the greater municipal area. “Water and sewerage works are classified as essential services,” said Douglas. “To ensure the uninterrupted supply and treatment of these resources, all supervisors and superintendents will be on call to respond to any crises that may occur in their respective sections.”

Roads and public works.

“We have implemented a roads and public works maintenance blitz in preparation for the busy period,” Douglas explained. “Shifting 80% of resources to the CBD and public recreational areas, the blitz began on 5 November and will run until we close for the annual break. Thereafter our teams will return to their normal maintenance schedule.”

The repair of potholes, reinstatement of water breaks within the road reserve and the grading of gravel roads in recreational areas have been prioritised, with an additional 25 temporary employees assisting municipal teams until the end of December 2018. Storm water infrastructure will be prepared and maintained as a matter of course, with a focus on infrastructure within the road reserves and public recreational areas.

Informal trade permits and trade bays.

The application for informal trade permits and availability of trade bays has been advertised and these permits will be validated by the end of November. Approved seasonal informal traders' permits will be valid from 1 December 2018 to 28 February 2019. This trade will be monitored by municipal law enforcement officers.

“We will be working harder than usual to make sure that our residents and our visitors enjoy their holidays,” Douglas concluded. “Our town – and the areas within our greater municipal borders – has overcome many challenges over the last 24 months. We all deserve to take a breather and to enjoy the beauty that still surrounds us.”

“I urge our residents to make the most of the facilities available to you, I welcome our guests and thank you for choosing Knysna as your home for the holidays, and I thank our Council, the administration and all staff for working together to create an inspired, innovative and inclusive town where we can all make the most of summer.”