

MAYOR ROLLS OUT CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN ACROSS THE CITY



The increase in illegal dumping has prompted Cape Town's executive mayor, Dan Plato, to roll out a cleaning exercise across the Metro.



By Peter Luhanga

The increase in illegal dumping has prompted Cape Town's executive mayor, Dan Plato, to roll out a cleaning exercise across the Metro.

On Saturday, 12 January, Plato launched the cleaning exercise's pilot phase in ward 26 (Elsies River area).

Shoulder to shoulder with the Ward's councillor, Franchesca Walker, Plato with a team of about 100 officials from the City's solid waste department, were joined by residents who together cleaned-up 20 of the hotspots used for illegal dumping in the Elsie's River area, which falls under sub council 4.

"We want to encourage the public to not throw refuse on vacant land because it is not

good for the environment. It gives our City an ugly face. We want to encourage communities to work with us to make sure that the suburbs are as clean as possible.

We also want to encourage councillors, to inspire residents, so that our suburbs remain as clean as possible. There is no reason why cleanliness cannot be achieved in poorer areas," said Plato.

His aim, he said, was to take the cleaning exercise to all corners of the City.

He explained that the cleaning costs the City a lot of money, and gave as an example, the fact that it would cost up to R100, 000.00 per day for one cleaning exercise, which excluded salaries for council employees working on weekends. While the pilot phase was carried

out by City employees, Plato said that the City would eventually use the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) funding to create job opportunities for residents to carry out the cleaning exercises themselves.

He said that he will return to the area after five to six months. "Residents love the clean-up drive. The test will be the sustainability of the project," he said.

Walker said that illegal dumping had recently become quite extensive in the area.

"It's not a lack of service delivery from the City's side; it's the residents that go out to dump in open spaces. The City's solid waste comes here three times a week to collect refuse.

There is no need for residents to dump illegally. Cleanliness is next to Godliness," said Walker. She said the fact that Plato had joined the cleaning exercise showed that he was the "people's" mayor.

"We walked the streets without bodyguards and we want to show people that we are on the ground with them.

We want to encourage people to sweep in front of their yards because if everybody swept in front of their yards, the entire community would be clean," she said.

Also, Walker said that she will look for vacant land in the area which could be utilised for community vegetable gardens.

Lawrence Sauls, 55, lives in council flats on 16th Avenue.

He joined the cleaning exercise at the back of his flat.

"The illegal dumping is a hotbed for flies and rats. Flies are all over my flat.

I applaud the mayor for the cleaning exercise. It is a good thing. We have an engaging mayor," said Sauls.