

Officials and informal waste pickers clear Royganna Road of waste. PHOTO: SANELE JAMES



OFFICIALS ROLL UP THEIR SLEEVES: CLAMPDOWN ON DUMPING

War declared on littering

SANELE JAMES

OFFICIALS of the regional Department of Environmental Affairs and the local Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality's community services unit joined hands last week and emulated President Cyril Ramaphosa's example to rid the environment of rubbish.

Ramaphosa launched his Good Green Deeds environmental programme last week in East London. The initiative aims to clampdown on illegal dumping of waste.

Responding to the president's call for proper management of waste across the country, Environmental Affairs officials

and the local municipality rolled up their sleeves and cleared heaps of waste that had formed along Royganna Road near the Queendustria area.

The public servants were joined by local informal waste pickers, who make a living by selling waste from the Ezibeleni Township landfill site.

Royganna Road has been in the news for its filthy state despite numerous clean-up campaigns.

Portfolio head at the department of community services in Enoch Mgijima Local Municipality, Zukiswa Ralane, said upon investigation they realised that most of the waste came from professional institutions.

"The waste we found there belongs to either businesses, professionals and the afflu-

ent. I am saying this because a person without a car cannot carry their garbage by hand and be able to dump it that far from the residential area.

"Other items we identified belonged to specialists like private health institutions and there were even addresses," said Ralane.

Ralane said they would now work close with employees of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) to help identify the perpetrators.

"We have asked the EPWP workers to photograph the registrations of vehicles that litter in prohibited areas," said Ralane.

Meanwhile, a garbage collector from the municipality was photographed illegally dumping on grazing land belonging to the

Mlungisi Farmers' Association. Ralane said they would make an example of the man.

"I was in a community meeting at Ward 13 where locals were angry at us, as the municipality, for policing them regarding waste management yet we fail to dish out the same lecture to our employees.

"The municipal employee who was caught dumping in that area is in deep trouble, and I have warned him.

"The next step will be to escalate the matter to his manager," she said.

Regional environmental affairs manager, Mncedisi Makosonke, said many projects were in the pipeline as far as waste management was concerned, including the upskilling of informal waste pickers.