

Novel plan to deal with refuse collection backlog

Guy Rogers

rogersg@rtisoblackstar.co.za

The Nelson Mandela Bay municipality will be using loud-hailers in Walmer Township to remind residents of the refuse collection days.

The plan follows the deterioration of the municipal collection system in the township over the past 2½ months and the efforts by frustrated residents from areas A and B to clean up themselves.

Residents said compactor trucks were only collecting rubbish bags piled on street corners and even then not coming every week.

Heaps of bags were accumulating outside homes where they were torn apart by litter pickers and dogs.

Earlier this week, the situation seemed to be improving, with the metro's cleaning and

greening co-operators brought in to support the refuse removal crews and the compactor truck working overtime to clear the backlog.

Municipal spokesperson Mthubanzi Mniki said on Wednesday the new alert strategy would start on Sunday.

"We will be loudhailing in the relevant areas as a reminder to residents for Monday collection," Mniki said.

The programme would be rolled out throughout the following week and continue until residents were familiar with their collection days, he said.

Monday collection will be in areas A, C, E and B and New Town, on Tuesday in areas N and M, on Wednesday in G West and areas G and O, on Thursday Q phases 1, 2 and 3 and on Friday in Federation, New Rest and Q Extension.

Mniki said the Walmer area

had until 2014 been serviced by co-operatives in terms of refuse removal, until the contract expired.

At that point, Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants had been brought in due to the dire shortage of metro staff.

"In March, EPWP recruitment was put on hold and that resulted in a shortage of workers to service the area.

"Our permanent employees had to work overtime," Mniki said.

Backlog clearing had been implemented in terms of a plan devised by Ward 4 councillor Ayanda Tyokwana and the collection schedule was now back to normal, he said.

"Residents must take their refuse out only on their specific day of collection and not any other. Each area in Walmer has its own day of collection."