

# FIRE DISPLACES FAMILY OF 14

## Flames eat up five houses

By XOLILE NKOSI

**HE** watched helplessly as the raging flames approached his family's home.

The fire ate five houses at once.

Now, all 14 members of the Zulu family, from Ekufeni in Melmoth, KZN, are destitute after the houses and their contents were completely destroyed in the fire.

Family member Siphosiso Zulu (54) said he was woken up by huge flames approaching his home on Wednesday night.

"I heard a strange sound approaching. I woke up to check. I was shocked to see huge flames racing towards our home. I woke everyone up to try to put out the

fire before it could reach our home, but they were just too powerful for us," said Zulu.

"We're not sure what started the fire. But I suspect it started in the nearby forest and spread quickly towards our home, assisted by a strong wind. We tried everything in the book to put it out but the wind was just too strong for us."

The family, who were left with the clothes on their back, are appealing to Good Samaritans to help them rebuild their home.

They are all squashed in their neighbour's house.

Siphosiso said he was a casual worker and the money he earned was so little it won't even enable

him to build a one-roomed house.

"I work under the Expanded Public Works Programme. The money I earn from the programme will only be able to help us buy food for the month. We appeal to anyone who can help us with anything. It can be clothes,

food, furniture, school uniform and even building material so we can be able to have a roof over our heads again," said Siphosiso.

Ward councillor Mjabuliseni Zulu said he had asked the disaster management team to evaluate the damage so the family could be assisted.



**Main photo:** Some of the family members who were left destitute after their homestead was destroyed by fire. **Inset:** The remains of one of the family's five houses.

