

■ REFUSE

Blame game wins in clean-up impasse

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A BLAME game has ensued between the City and community leaders of the informal settlements of Marikana in Philippi, Kanana in Gugulethu and Europe in Nyanga, who say their areas have become rat-infested, and stink of rubbish because their refuse has not been collected for about three months.

The City says it pulled its refuse collection services in the areas due to employment disputes, but the communities were making it difficult for services to be reinstated.

More than 100 Marikana informal settlement residents marched to the City's Fezeka Centre in Gugulethu yesterday demanding the City explain the process for employing cleaners.

Community leader Madiekielitso Dirubo said: "The contract ended in August and when the City employed people again it only deployed a few, meaning the operations were short staffed. We also found out the few it had employed weren't people from

the community, while others had relocated." Dirubo said the community was standing together and refusing to work until more job opportunities were given to residents.

Another Marikana resident, Abongile Ngcobo said his children had developed a rash and she feared they may pick up diseases due to the number of rats and amount of rubbish in the area.

Kanana residents said they had complained to their ward councillor Bongani Ngcombolo about the dirt and health risk on several occasions.

According to Ngcombolo, the issue was that residents did not want to adhere to the City or contractor's rules.

"Residents want to control the employment process. The City stopped collecting garbage because people were divided and had started fighting each other and this could have escalated and ended in a bloodbath," said Ngcombolo.

Mayco member for Urban Management Grant Twigg said the City was aware that the informal settlements affected had attempted to reinstate

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Bongani Ngcombolo
WARD COUNCILLOR

services, but was continually prevented from doing so.

"Leaders in some informal settlements are preventing the City from cleaning their communities, which now poses serious health risks. Some leaders are unhappy with and are attempting to interfere in the employment processes of the City's Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP).

"The problem has been exacerbated by the internal tension and conflict between the community and their elected leaders.



About 150 people marched to the City of Cape Town's Fezeka Centre in Gugulethu where the Marikana Community will protest the lack of refuse collection in the past month which has resulted in an increase in rats and an inquiry into the process for employing cleaners in the area. | ARMAND HOUGH African News Agency (ANA)

"We have been engaging with some of the communities and their nominated leaders since the beginning of August, but have been unable to reach an agreement," said Twigg.

The City would continue to engage

with the affected communities, Twigg said, and in the interests of the health and safety of residents, he appealed to community leaders to allow a clean-up of the areas while engagements continued.