



Publication: Witness, The - Main

Title: DA CALLS FOR INTERVENTION OVER MSUNDUZI DISCONNECTION DRIVE

Publish date: 03 Oct 2022

Page: 2

Reach: 11641

AVE: R 13886.73

Author: Clive Ndou

DA CALLS FOR INTERVENTION OVER MSUNDUZI DISCONNECTION DRIVE

CLIVE NDOU

With the stand-off between the Msunduzi Municipality and government entities in Pietermaritzburg over the council's electricity disconnection programme set to escalate, the DA is concerned the disconnections will affect pupils.

In recent weeks, the municipality has been disconnecting residents, businesses and government entities that have not settled their bills.

However, DA Msunduzi constituency head Hannah Shameema Winkler said pupils within the Msunduzi Municipality ended up being the victims of the disconnections.

In a letter to Public Works Minister Patricia De Lille, Winkler called on the Public Works Department to intervene.

"The disruption and distress caused by these disconnections to students cannot be understated.

"The fall-out from these disconnections on schoolchildren and various nutrition programmes that schools run will be disastrous," she said.

The Msunduzi Municipality, which previously put its disconnection campaign on hold to

allow government to settle its outstanding accounts, was by Friday set to resume its disconnection campaign.

Winkler told De Lille to ensure that the municipality's bills were settled to avoid a situation where pupils would be unable to write their examinations.

"The risk we run, especially since there are no contingency plans for such large outages in so many of our schools, is that learners dependent on electricity for their various tasks and examinations will be significantly disadvantaged.

"This is especially applicable to all learners using or involved in IT and related subjects," she said.

DA KZN Education spokesperson Imran Keeka has also written to Education MEC Mbali Frazer, urging her to intervene in the matter.

"It is important for the DoE [Department of Education] to make sure that it does not owe any money to the DPW [Department of Public Works] to start with and then, for yourself to engage with the MEC for Public works to urge them to work out a settlement agreement with the municipality," he said.

• clive.ndou@witness.co.za