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Project to tackle waste problem

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THE City is piloting a programme at its rental housing units to address the increase in waste.

Mayco member for Urban Waste, Grant Twigg, said backyarders will be supplied with moisture-controlled refuse bags due to insufficient space for wheelie bins in those premises.

As part of the new initiative, the bags will be collected and transported by smaller light-duty vehicles, known as the Bakkie Brigade, for separation of recyclables, before the remaining waste is transported to landfill.

"This is positive enterprise development, as the Bakkie Brigade community-based vendors are getting the opportunity to run their own businesses," he said.

Currently residential homes are supplied with one 240-litre wheelie bin for refuse collection once a week.

If there are any backyard tenants living on the properties, the bins fill up

quickly, and the bins and refuse bags are dumped in open spaces.

At least 22 areas are part of the initiative, including Bishop Lavis, Grassy Park, Gugulethu, Lwandle, Mfuleni, Nyanga, Langa, Retreat, Manenberg and Atlantis.

Twigg said the waste recycling component was already reducing the amount of waste going to landfill by about 20%, and this amount was set to increase.

"The City also recovers some costs when recyclable materials are sold."

Twigg would not disclose the budget set aside for the project, "given current risks of extortion".

However, the service providers have appointed "up to 300" Expanded Public Works Programme workers to carry out the project.

"We hope this will have a positive effect on illegal dumping levels in the area and improve community health. We encourage all those who are benefiting to make use of the service and see the difference it can make to your

areas," he urged.

Recently refuse collection service providers have come under attack in some townships, including Philippi, Browns Farm, Samora Machel and Crossroads, where staff were subjected to extortion.

A worker was killed in Philippi East on April 25, and the service provider has not returned since the incident.

Other service providers withdrew their services in nearby areas after they were also threatened.

However, Twigg said the City had now implemented an interim service in the area which was provided with law enforcement and security escorts.

Twigg said there were no plans to increase the frequency of refuse collection from once a week in other residential areas. However, for sectional title buildings, refuse collection could be increased to three times per week. Non-residential properties that choose to contract with the City have their waste collected once, three times or five times a week.