

Publication: Witness - Main

Title: Msunduzi collects more on account defaulters

Publish date: 11 Apr 2025

Page: 3

Reach: 6180

AVE: R 39564.86

Author: CHRIS NDALISO

Msunduzi collects more on account defaulters

City targets government departments in R213 mln debt recovery drive

CHRIS NDALISO

The Msunduzi Municipality has issued final notices to several government departments — among them the Department of Correctional Services — demanding urgent settlement of outstanding municipal accounts.

Msunduzi Municipality spokesperson, Ntobeko Mkhize, confirmed that defaulting institutions have been given five days to settle their debt or face disconnection.

This forms part of the City's intensified Operation Qoqimali revenue collection drive, which focused yesterday on state departments with long-standing arrears.

Among the departments visited were Grey's Hospital, the Department of Public

Works, the South African Social Security Agency (Sassa), the Department of Correctional Services' Medium B Prison on Mayor's Walk — alleged by the City to owe over R5 million in unpaid electricity and rates — as well as several public schools.

However, Department of Correctional Services spokesperson, Singabakho Nxumalo, disputed this claim, saying the department had no outstanding debt with Msunduzi in relation to the Medium B facility.

"Previous delays in our payments were due to internal processes, which have now been addressed and resolved with the municipality," said Nxumalo.

Mkhize clarified that no disconnections were carried out yesterday, as this phase of

the operation focused on delivering notices and engaging stakeholders.

"Government debt to the municipality currently stands at R213 million, and urgent action is being taken to reduce this figure in the short term to safeguard service delivery," she said.

She added that the municipality welcomed a formal undertaking from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Public Works to settle the current financial year's property rates by May 31.

The Witness previously reported that, as of November 2024, Msunduzi's total outstanding debt stood at R7 billion — comprising R3,7 billion for water, R1 billion for electricity, R1,7 billion for property rates, and the

remainder for other services.

At that time, government departments owed R186 million.

"While [yesterday's] focus was on government debt, Operation Qoqimali continues across all categories, including businesses and residential customers," Mkhize said.

"We, therefore, appeal to all consumers to do the right thing by paying their municipal accounts on time — before the teams come knocking at their doors.

"Paying for services rendered is not only a legal obligation but a civic responsibility that enables the municipality to continue delivering essential services to all communities across Msunduzi."

• news@witness.co.za