



co-operative governance  
& traditional affairs

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Building No. 6, Ext 2, No. 7 Government Boulevard, Riverside Park, Mbombela, 1200, Mpumalanga Province  
Private Bag X11304, Mbombela, 1200. Int Tel: +27 (13) 766 6087, Tel: (013) 766 6087  
Int: Fax: +27 (13) 766 8252, Fax: (013) 766 8252

Litiko  
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Departement van  
Koöperatiewe Regering  
en Tradisionele Sake

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neeNdaba zamaKhosi

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **MEC MTSHWENI CAUTIONS COMMUNITIES AGAINST THE OUTBREAK OF FIRES DURING THIS WINTER SEASON**

MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Ms Refilwe Mtshweni has cautioned all communities in Mpumalanga to take precautionary measures against the outbreak of fires. Mpumalanga is prone to fires, as a result of the winter season and windy conditions. Areas in the Gert Sibande and the Nkangala Districts are extremely cold and communities are at risk of household fires due to a high dependency on braziers.

The Disaster Management unit in the department is working jointly with all the 21 municipalities in the fire awareness campaigns to educate communities about the dangers and the need to prevent possible outbreak of fires. "We have observed with concern that some of our people make open fires in the mornings while waiting for transportation to work, and leave them unattended to. This has the potential to cause uncontrollable fires due to morning winds, and create disasters which can lead to loss of lives for human beings and wild animals. In some areas, people leave open fires inside their houses," MEC Mtshweni cautioned.

She further urged communities to take precautionary measures such as the following:

- Parents should never leave unattended fire braziers (imbawula) with children.
- Ensure that properties are clear of rubble at least 10-20 metres around the house as this may comprise corrosive materials such as leaves and wood piles.
- Communities should also ensure that roads to their properties are clearly marked and numbered for easy access by the Fire Services.

MEC Mtshweni says all emergency units are on high alert in the province to deal with any potential outbreak of fires. She advised communities to call the Provincial Disaster Toll free number for emergencies. The number is **0800 202 507**.

End.

**Issued by: The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs**

**Contact Person: Mr George Mthethwa – 013 766 6572 / 083 302 2774**

**E-mail: [gpmthethwa@mpg.gov.za](mailto:gpmthethwa@mpg.gov.za)**

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