



co-operative governance
& traditional affairs

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Departement van
Koöperatiewe Regering
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COGTA CAUTIONS COMMUNITIES AGAINST THE FIRE SEASON

The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in Mpumalanga has cautioned communities to handle fire with precaution during the winter season. The Nkangala and Gert Sibande Districts are the coldest areas during the winter season with temperatures hitting below 1 degree Celsius.

MEC for COGTA, Ms Busi Shiba says fire must be handled with precaution to prevent the potential loss of lives, injuries and damage to property. "The use of household apparatus that are ignited with fire in areas prone to the cold weather is on a peak during this period. Apart from normal household chores, it is also used as a critical component to keep them warm. We urge communities to ensure that all fire facilities are switched off after use to prevent potential human and property hazards," she explained.

Ms Shiba further appealed to parents not to leave children with braziers without supervision. "Fire fatalities and severe injuries are highly prevalent in areas prone to the cold weather. Our focus is currently on COVID-19 pandemic. However, the potential loss of lives, injuries, and damage to property due to fire, must not be a blind spot and we all have the responsibility to prevent it. We must apply the same amount of energy of preventing the spread of the pandemic to prevent fire related fatalities and injuries," she explained.

Ms Shiba says the prevention of fire outbreak is the responsibility of all communities. She warned smokers to stop throwing burning cigarette buds. "Those who throw away cigarette buds without butting them off are committing an offense. Such a habit is a serious violation of the fire prevention legislation. Such behavior shall be met with a stiff punishment, should they be arrested for the violation of such act," Ms Shiba added. She urged communities to adhere to the following:

- The fire management regulations when burning fire breakers in the farms.
- Butt cigarettes after smoking.
- Mark properties for easy access by the Fire Services in case of emergencies.

The Department has established the Provincial Disaster Toll Free number: 0800 202 507 for emergencies. Communities are advised to use the number to report fire cases.

Ends.

Issued by the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs

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