



8 August 2019

To: Complaints Department: National Department of Environmental Affairs

Dear, Sir/Madam

Stutterheim Environmental Disaster

The Amahlathi Residence Association (ARA) represent numerous households, businesses and farmers in the greater Amahlathi area and is a registered non-profit company.

The Amahlathi Local Municipality (ALM) service the town of Stutterheim in terms of refuse services and electricity, while Amathola District Municipality (ADM) serve the town in terms of water and sanitation. In October 2018 a string of protest resulted in all municipal services grinding to a halt for almost 6 months, subsequent to that ALM ran into severe cash flow problems, that resulted in their staff not being paid and the municipality not having limited equipment to collect and process refuse. In February 2019, the ARA in conjunction with one of the local businesses (ANCA) commissioned an environmental audit of the town (**See attached annexure A**). Since then there were sporadic refuse collection, however, most of the public dustbins has been burnt and the local refuse site is not being managed. It can therefore be confirmed the situation has not improved, since the audit.

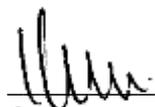
From the start of August 2109 the staff of ADM embarked on an unprotected strike and started a campaign of systematically sabotaging both the water, as well as the sewerage systems. Although the ADM condemns the action of the employees, they still damaging infrastructure on a daily basis, with the authorities seemingly looking the other way. At present local businesses has taken it upon themselves to repair water supply, although water supply has been interrupted daily over the last 2 weeks. It also seems sewerage is currently leaking directly into local rivers and it is doubtful the sewerage treatment plant is operational.

The ARA is very concerned that effluent from decaying refuse in the streets and refuse site, combined with the raw sewerage leaking into the storm water system, would indeed pollute the Cumakala River and the Kubusi River, which feeds the Wriggleswade dam, which we believe feeds into the Buffalo City Municipal water network.

We urgently require the Department of Environmental Affairs to come assess the extent of the pollution and arrange the necessary interventions.

Should you wish to communicate directly with the ARA you can forward any correspondence to Donald Kemp who will serve as the liaison for the purposes of communication (Mobile number: 073 427 2119 & e-mail: donald@barkaybirds.co.za).

Yours Sincerely



Chair Person of the ARA

CC: The Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism

The Amahlathi Residents Association is a Registered Non-Profit Company: 2019/151068/08
Directors: DH Kemp (Chairperson), AC Pretorius and ZZ Mzati.