

# Recycling programme comes to life at five primary schools

Itumeleng Modiba  
itumeleng@caxton.co.za

The recently appointed MEC for Environment, Ewan Botha, joined Purpose Recycling (PR) and partners to celebrate Mandela Day and launch the Purposeful School Recycling Programme (PPSRP) at Don Mateman, Eldorado Park.

Through this initiative, PR and sponsors Fibre Circle, Polyco, the Electrical Waste Association of South Africa, and Metpac teach primary school learners about waste separation, recycling and environmental health. Due to the limited capacity to implement the program at all schools simultaneously, the PSRP will initially launch at five primary schools: Heerengracht, Eldridge, Kliptown, McBain Charles, and Boekenhout.

Each participating school has already received recycling bins and educational reading material on recycling.

PR project manager Shannon Boer said that although they had partnered with the school to do waste collection for the past two

years, there was no programme to teach learners about recycling, hence the launch of the PSRP.

"We need the children to be involved if we want to see change in our environment. We must start teaching them from a young age, so that they never forget even when they are older," Boer said.

He explained that PR's mission is to promote recycling, create an economy from waste and prevent waste from ending up in landfill sites. "If our children learn about all the different types of recyclables, including organic waste, metals, glass, plastic, paper and electronics, we can work towards zero waste to landfill. A clean environment will mean no illegal dumping sites because people will realise that waste has value. It is not only about the money, it's about creating a cleaner environment," he added.

## Gauteng landfill sites on Botha's radar

Eldorado Park residents are among those affected by air pollution and water contamination caused by landfill sites, especially those in Ext 2, as the area is near

the Goudkoppies landfill site, which has operated for 30 years.

Botha said it was no secret that most of Gauteng's landfill sites are reaching capacity.

"The government is looking at ways to divert waste away from these sites. Recycling is not only vital for easing pressure on Gauteng's landfill sites, but it also plays a key role in improving air quality, creating jobs and unlocking a multi-billion-rand industry. Our department is focused on regulating the sector, supporting buy-back centres and ensuring waste is diverted from landfill," Botha said.

He said there is a court order to close the Goudkoppies landfill site. The closure and rehabilitation of the landfill remain a priority, with strict monitoring now underway to prevent further burning plastics and pollution, he added.

He also stated that his department was dedicated to ensuring cleanup efforts associated with major events, such as the G20, are sustainable, so communities can benefit long after the attention has shifted.



Able Stitch NPC managing director Lizzy Strydom hands over a personalised hoodie to a young beneficiary.

## Winter drive warms hundreds of children

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The Able Stitch NPC concluded the Warm 1 000 Children winter outreach on 35 Amerits Street, Eldorado Park, where they donated 46 hoodies to beneficiaries of the Joburg Child Welfare Centre's Elton John Masibambisane Community Centre on 8 August.

The beneficiaries, orphans and children from disadvantaged families, each received a hoodie with their name on it.

Although Able Stitch did not achieve its goal of assisting 1 000 children, it recognised the numerous challenges faced by many township communities. These lessons, along with first-hand experience, will help the NPD prepare and establish partnerships for the next winter outreach.

Lizzy Strydom, the NPC's managing director, said it was established to create a double impact by upskilling vulnerable and unemployed individuals with sewing skills, which would help them find jobs or start businesses, while also providing warmth to needy children during winter.

Her four-year-old daughter's suggestion to make clothes for orphans during an executive meeting inspired her decision.

Although they reached 500

children instead of the initial goal, Strydom said the two-month-old NPC gained valuable experience and built strong partnerships that will help them expand the project to more cities next year.

Nare Manamela, the manager of the Elton John Masibambisane Community Centre, said the donation was an unexpected but welcome surprise.

"We applied for assistance months ago and had almost given up hope, as many promises made to organisations like ours are never fulfilled. When we received confirmation that our centre had been selected, the excitement among the staff and the children was overwhelming," she said.

The centre works with orphans and vulnerable children, many from households surviving on child support grants, which are often stopped.

"This was our first winter donation, and it made a huge difference. These hoodies mean the children will be warmer, more comfortable and able to concentrate better in class. It shows that there are still people who recognise the work we do and our impact on our community."

To donate to Able Stitch, email [stitch@ablespot.co.za](mailto:stitch@ablespot.co.za) or call 084 616 6330.



Purpose Recycling, Fibre Circle, Polyco, EWASA and Metpac were joined by various schools and representatives from the Gauteng Department of Education to celebrate Mandela Day and launch of Purposeful School Recycling Programme, at Don Mateman Hall, Eldorado Park, on July 31.

## Youth shine at Eskom Expo Regional Science Fair

Learners participating in the Eskom Expo for Young Scientists regional competition impressed the judges with their creativity, critical thinking and innovative solutions to real-world challenges facing SA during the science fair held at the University of Johannesburg, Soweto Campus, on July 26.

The competition followed a year of preparation, with learners progressing through various stages, including workshops and district expos. Schools from across Soweto participated, including Kgatelopele Primary School, Curro Protea Glen and Acuedo College Protea Glen.

Eskom Expo Gauteng provincial co-ordinator Raven Motsewangwe said this year's regional science fair was the largest event in the region's history, with more than 72 schools participating at the school and the district levels, and over 50 advancing to the regional stage.

"Starting a programme with a learner who knows nothing about the Eskom Expo to seeing them complete different research projects is an amazing experi-

ence for me.

I am proud of all the learners, especially those who come from difficult backgrounds but still came up with good, innovative ideas," he said.

During the awards ceremony, learners were recognised for excellence in research and innovation.

With 36 learners awarded gold, 57 silver and 69 bronze medals, along with Bluetooth wireless speakers and wireless chargers for the outstanding young scientists.

Science director at the University of Johannesburg, Dr Paul Molefe, said, "I am proud to see that we have learners from grades Four and up.

This shows that the Department of Basic Education and the country are doing well in nurturing young minds to take science as their subject, making sure the economy grows."



A learner's wheelchair project.

Learners during the expo.