

NOVEMBER 2025

Bulletin

Official newsletter of the Overstrand Municipality

FIRE SEASON WARNING!

Be safe. Be vigilant.

At long last, winter seems to be a thing of the past: The days are getting longer, the sun is out, and there's hardly a cloud in the sky.

Unfortunately, the one element that steadfastly refuses to take its leave is the wind: Yes, it might have changed direction, but it remains as unpredictable as ever.

During summer, the prevailing southeaster has a tendency to gust out of the blue. It might die down just as quickly, or decide to blow for days on end. Given that summer is the "dry" season in the Western Cape, the indigenous vegetation in and around our towns and villages becomes brittle and, in combination with the plant debris that inevitably accumulates over time, is highly susceptible to wildfires.

All it takes is one spark; the southeaster will do the rest. Surely, no-one needs to be reminded just how devastating these wildfires can be. Nevertheless, as is custom at the onset of the fire season, we yet again urge residents to make sure that the necessary precautionary steps are taken to safeguard their properties and appeal to everyone to remain on high alert for the duration of the fire season.

BE PROACTIVE

On your property:

- Cut back overhanging tree branches.
- Remove shrivelled shrubs and any other plant debris.
- Clean the gutters.
- Get rid of unnecessary rubble.

If your property borders on or is located near an undeveloped area, it is advisable to establish a buffer zone: Create a "fire break" by removing all flammable shrubs along the borders of your property and by keeping the lawn trimmed.

Out in the open:

- Only make braai fires in designated areas.
- Never leave open fires unattended and ensure they are fully extinguished before leaving.
- Always dispose of cigarette butts responsibly: Don't flick them out the car window or into a vegetated patch.
- Do not dump **anything** on sidewalks or vacant erven: This is not only against the law, but serves as fuel for runaway fires.

PROTECTING LIVES & HOMES IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Even though Overstrand Municipality goes out of its way to take every possible precautionary measure in preparation for the fire season and, in conjunction with its partners (goFPA, Overberg District Municipality, CapeNature), work hard to manage brush fires across the district, all will be in vain if residents do not offer their full cooperation. We not only ask that you safeguard your own property but also to be extra vigilant.



Should you see any signs of smoke or a fire, call Fire & Rescue on **028 312 2400** immediately. Early reporting can make all the difference.

In the event of a fire, it is essential to allow emergency vehicles immediate and unhindered access. Be sure to keep the roads clear by avoiding unnecessary travel near active zones and refraining from "sightseeing" during mop-up operations.

In short, the outcome of the 2025/26 fire season is dependent on the level of cooperation. Please do your bit.



Neville Michaels

WE SALUTE YOU

29 July 1967 – 6 October 2025

The news of our former colleague Neville Michaels' passing was met with great sadness. Neville joined the municipality in December 2008 as Director: Protection Services (nowadays going under the name Municipal Public Safety) and served in that position until his untimely passing.

In recognition of his remarkable leadership as a true public servant, just about everyone that ordinarily show up for work in a uniform – law enforcers, traffic officials, fire fighters, paramedics – were there on 9 October to pay homage during a moving Celebration of Life ceremony.

They again showed up, this time in full regalia, two days later on the 11th when Neville was laid to rest.

“Your legacy will live forever, sir, and we will remember you with fondness but mostly with a great deal of respect. Rest in peace.”



THERE'S A CHAMP IN THE HOUSE! Not only did **Kolunga Ndleleni** earn his 4th consecutive national gold medal, he was also named Best Boxer of the Tournament at SANABO's 2025 championship for cadets and juniors! Executive Mayor Archie Klaas had nothing but praise for the boys and girls who train under Coach Mzi Damesi at the Overstrand Whale Boxing Club in Zwelihle: "Your performance as a team made our region proud, and we are delighted with your outstanding achievements. Well done everyone!"



Undoubtedly, patrons of the **HERMANUS LIBRARY** will be most pleased to learn that their much-loved library has earned well-deserved recognition for "going above and beyond in service, innovation and community involvement".

Your favourite library has just been crowned Public Library of the Year in the Western Cape!

Each year, the Western Cape Directorate of Cultural Affairs recognises those public libraries that made an exceptional contribution towards reading and literacy development as well as the advancement of digital literacy.

Not to be discounted is the recognition afforded to the **Hawston Library** team for making a substantial contribution towards reading and literacy development (1st place) and having a substantial community impact through outreach programmes (2nd place).

Executive Mayor Archie Klaas extended his heartfelt thanks to every librarian in the Overstrand: "You are making a meaningful difference in people's lives by not only encouraging them to embark on an incredible journey of discovery but by also showing the way. Clearly, your passion and dedication do not go unnoticed. Congratulations with this momentous achievement!"

Sharing in the celebrations were Municipal Manager, Dr Dean O'Neill (centre), flanked by Aron Gcotyelwa, representing Overstrand's Community Services Directorate, Mayco Member for Community Services, Cllr Ronald Nutt, and senior librarians Belinda May (left) and Edna van der Linde (right).

WHY OVERSTRAND'S IDP IS OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU

The Integrated Development Plan (or IDP in short) is Overstrand Municipality's master plan for development over the five-year term of Council. It sets out the key priorities, goals and projects for **a municipal area** and helps to serve as a guide for all the work done by the municipality so that residents can have a better life.

The IDP is reviewed annually within the five-year cycle, with the 2026/27 review currently in process.

The IDP looks at social, economic and environmental needs and ensures that different departments make a concerted, coordinated effort to meet these needs. Most importantly, the plan includes inputs from the **community and ward committees** to, in this way, ensure that it speaks to the real needs of people who live in a specific area.

Think of the IDP as Overstrand's roadmap – showing what we are working on now and what lies ahead in the future. It is important because it affects your everyday life: your **neighbourhood/ward**, your safety, your business, your environment and your family's wellbeing.

In this plan, you can see where we envisage building new roads and parks near you, how we plan on putting an end to illegal dumping, and how we are going about ensuring that communities can lead a safer, healthier life.

In sum, the IDP is our shared vision for Overstrand: A plan for a safe, clean, well-run and vibrant municipality that benefits all who live here.

That is precisely why ward committee meetings are so important. In this regard, make sure that the right people serve on the committee – people who can bring matters of concern in your area to the municipality's attention and can give proper feedback on how the priorities in your neighbourhood are being addressed.

Take part in the November 2025 ward committee meetings because this is where the public will have an opportunity to comment on the priorities that have been identified for their ward in the reviewed draft IDP for the next financial year (2026/27). The meeting dates will be published in the local media and will be available on the municipal website under Ward Maps & Info.

To learn more about our vision and key focus areas, download the full IDP document from the municipal website www.overstrand.gov.za > Documents > IDP.

STRANDED MARINE ANIMALS

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE, OBSERVE AND REPORT

Overstrand is blessed with a wide variety of marine animals that occurs along its coastline. Sometimes, these animals "beach" to regain their strength for a while. There are also instances where they have to come ashore because they have been injured, are sick or are in distress. Thus, there is the odd chance that someone out for a stroll along one of our beaches might come across a marine animal.

Should you encounter a marine animal, do take the following advice to heart for the sake of both your safety and the animal's survival:

• DO NOT APPROACH THE ANIMAL

Some beached animals may be in distress due to an injury or a disease, and some are known to bite.

• DO NOT INTERFERE

Never, ever attempt to push the animal back into the waves. Doing so could cause more harm than good since simply attempting to "wet" the animal could prove fatal.

• OBSERVE AND REPORT

- Are there obvious signs of injuries or entanglement?
- Does the animal seem alert, or are there no signs of life?

• REPORT

Responding to sightings of stranded marine animals is a coordinated effort between an array of organisations and the municipality. When reporting a sighting of an animal in distress, be sure to:

- Add all the details you have observed as accurately as possible
- Send a location pin or a description of the nearest beach access point
- Attach clear photos of the animal's head and body, if possible

To report a sighting, we suggest your first point of call should be CapeNature or the DFFE (Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment) for a quick response. In the case of seabirds in distress (penguins and even the odd turtle), you can also alert the African Penguin & Seabird Sanctuary (APSS) or SANCCOB (Rooiels area).

- Cape Nature 087 087 9262
- APSS 072 598 7117
- DFFE 086 111 2468
- SANCCOB 078 638 3731

As an alternative, you can report the sighting via Overstrand's Citizen App (simply click on the Stranded Marine Animals icon) or turn to local volunteers (i.e. the Overstrand Stranding Network) at 082 746 5579. There is, of course, also the option to call the 24/7 Municipal Contact Centre on 028 313 8111.

Your help as a member of the public is vital: Please report sightings of stranded marine animals as soon as possible since calling in the right team is crucial for the animal's survival.

** Do note, though, that the responsibility for removing animal carcasses along the coast rests exclusively with the DFFE since local authorities are neither mandated nor equipped to do so. The municipality will, however, provide assistance where possible.*

EXPECT THESE "REGULARS" AND THE ODD "FOREIGNER" IN THE MONTHS AHEAD



• CAPE FUR SEALS

It's the weaning season for seal pups that must now learn to fend for themselves. Understandably, they will have to come ashore to rest for a while, especially after encountering high swells during a storm. Concurrently, it's the mating season for adult males who must now compete for territory. Understandably, they will also have to catch a breather.

Thus, if you come across a seal between the months of November and May, do not be alarmed. If it's lying quietly, appears alert and has no obvious injuries, let it be.

• TURTLE HATCHLINGS

They may not hatch along Overstrand's coastline, but it is not uncommon for the odd hatchling to end up on one of our beaches following on high seas elsewhere along the coast. Beached turtles are the exception to the rule. In cases such as these, your intervention is required. If you find a turtle on the beach, place it gently in a plastic tub lined with a dry towel. Do not wet, wash or feed it, and keep it out of direct sun and the wind.

Alert CapeNature or the DFFE immediately, or report your find via the Collab Citizen App. The nearest turtle rescue team (most likely APSS) will be alerted and will then contact you with further instructions.

