

OCTOBER 2024

Bulletin

#overstrand4all

Official newsletter of the Overstrand Municipality

#C4ourself

RIVERLANDS DAM DISASTER

STEPPING IN TO RETURN A FAVOUR

The severe flooding caused by the collapse of the Riverlands Dam not only destroyed homes, roads and infrastructure, but also severely hampered Swartland Municipality's ability to provide potable water to thousands of people.

And this is where Overstrand Fire, Rescue and Disaster Management stepped in: A water tanker with a capacity of five-thousand litres was dispatched, along with a fire and rescue team that worked in shifts until mid-September on a rotational basis to help ensure a near continuous distribution of water amongst those in need.

As Dr Annelie Rabie, Overstrand's Executive Mayor, pointed out: "Not all too long ago, other municipalities stepped in to help alleviate the water crisis we experienced in September 2023. My heartfelt thanks to our fire and rescue team who, in the spirit of co-operation, were more than willing to return the favour."

Pictured here are Hershelle Marinus, Cecil Abrahamse, Owen Stewart and Aldenovan Arendse. They count among the many fire and rescue workers who stepped in to help alleviate the crisis Swartland experienced.



MUNICIPAL DAMS ALL COMPLIANT

In light of the tragedy that recently befell communities in and around Malmesbury when the Riverlands Dam collapsed, Overstrand Municipality wishes to ensure its residents that all municipal-owned dams in the Overstrand are registered and inspected regularly.

By law, all owners of dams, with the inclusion of government institutions, must see to it that their dams are registered with the Department of Water and Sanitation and undergo safety inspections by approved accredited dam safety engineers every five years.

As an extra precaution, Overstrand's own technical staff conduct safety inspections every quarter.

BE WARNED:

TO SHOOT A BABOON OR TO SCARE THEM OFF WITH AIRGUNS IS ILLEGAL

Not too long ago, yet another baboon was shot and killed in Pringle Bay.

Not only is it illegal to discharge a firearm, including an airgun, in a built-up area in terms of the Firearms Control Act (Act 60 of 2000) but, since baboons are protected under the Nature Conservation Ordinance, to shoot or even harm a baboon is a criminal offence.

Anyone found guilty of such a transgression or offence will not only be liable for a hefty fine, but will be declared unfit to possess a firearm in terms of the Act.

It is a well-established fact that to cull a baboon results in a disruption of the troop's behaviour since it upsets the delicate balance maintained within the troop.

For that reason, Overstrand Municipality has adopted humane and non-lethal methods to manage human-wildlife conflict and urge residents to focus on strategies that will ensure both animal welfare and community safety in their attempts to deter baboons.

In essence, if the food sources in town are eliminated, the baboons will be less likely to return and will, eventually, move back to their natural habitat outside the urban area. But to accomplish this, we need your cooperation.

First and foremost, **DO NOT FEED THE BABOONS!** Second, adopt three simple strategies to safeguard your loved ones and property against marauding baboons.



STRATEGY 1: DO NOT "INVITE" BABOONS TO YOUR PROPERTY
Baboons are attracted by all things "edible", so best make it near impossible for them to lay their hands on anything they can scavenge:

- Make use of baboon-proof bins and **do not** leave any black bags on top of the bin or on the sidewalk
- Do not put out any birdseed or leave pet food outside
- Pick ripening fruit from trees and bushes
- Enclose vegetable gardens and compost heaps

STRATEGY 2: KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED AND YOUR EARS PRICKED

- Contact the dedicated baboon hotline in your area (see details below) to ensure that you can be warned well in advance via WhatsApp whenever the baboons are on their way to town
- Take heed of the early warnings sounded by baboon monitors (i.e. blowing on vuvuzelas or whistles)
- Whenever a troop is nearby, close and lock all doors and windows immediately

STRATEGY 3: WHEN THE BABOONS DO SHOW UP, MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEY'RE NOT WELCOME

- Fit your garden hose with an attachment that can spray water a good distance and use this to "shower" the baboons
- Make a loud noise by, for instance, banging on pots and pans

For additional information on baboon-proofing and tips to keep baboons off your property, please contact the Baboon Hotline West (Kleinmond, Betty's Bay and Pringle Bay) at 069 151 5962, or email Gary Beukman at projectmanager-bmp@overstrand.gov.za. The contact number for the Baboon Hotline in the Hermanus/Voëlklip area is 072 028 0008.

INDIGENT RELIEF

Qualifying beneficiaries **must** apply once a year

Overstrand Municipality's Equitable Subsidy aims to offer financial relief to indigent households by covering the cost of basic services.

In addition to 100% coverage of these services, households that meet the criteria specified in the municipality's approved Indigent Policy will also receive the following free of charge every month:



Of importance here is that **those in need of financial relief must confirm their indigent status once per year**, irrespective of whether they are applying for the first time or are already registered for indigent support.

MORE LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS NOW ELIGIBLE

The criteria to qualify for indigent support have been amended as follows:

1. Only the income of the applicant and their spouse or life partner will be considered. The income of backyard dwellers or children in the household will not be included in the assessment.
2. When calculating income to determine eligibility for indigent support, the likes of war veteran, disability, foster child, care dependency and child support grants will not be taken into account.
3. In instances where a property owner has passed away or abandoned the property, the new resident will be able to apply for indigent relief, provided that that resident confirms by means of an affidavit that he or she is willing to accept full responsibility for the municipal account, in which case the municipality will create a tenant's account.

MASSIVE SAVINGS ON ENERGY COSTS

“1 500 new streetlights have resulted in an annual savings of ± 551 922 kWh in direct energy costs”

Grant funding provided under the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy's initiative to reduce carbon emissions recently enabled Overstrand Municipality to replace some streetlights with energy-efficient LED ones at a cost of R7.2 million.

“We took this step as part of the municipality's commitment to support green-energy initiatives and are happy to report that by replacing a mere 1 500 streetlights, a massive annual saving of around 552 000 kWh in direct energy costs has been brought about,” Executive Mayor, Dr Annelie Rabie, said.

“Not only are LED streetlights typically 50% more energy efficient, they are also renowned for their durability and require far less maintenance than conventional streetlights. For that reason, we will do our utmost to seek additional funding so that as many as possible streetlights can be replaced throughout Overstrand as quickly as possible,” she added.

BE SURE YOUR PET'S RABIES VACCINATION IS UP TO DATE

A number of confirmed cases of rabies among Cape fur seals in the vicinity of Overstrand have been reported.

As a first line of defence against this deadly disease, Overstrand Municipality urges all pet owners to check with their veterinarian whether their pet's vaccination is up to date or to take their pet to any of the animal welfare organisations in the area to have it vaccinated.

Secondly, those who walk their dogs along the shoreline are advised to keep their dogs on a leash and under their control at all times. Rabies can be spread by infected seals biting dogs/humans, and by dogs biting seals, but it can also be spread when a dog as much as lick or scavenge on a carcass.

Should you encounter a seal carcass or any part thereof on the beach, do not touch or handle it and keep well clear of live seals that have hauled out along the coastline.

If you spot a seal that appears to be behaving abnormally, please take a video if you can and pin the locality. Report such incidences as well as any attacks/bites to the nearest vet or Overstrand Municipality's Environmental Management Section on 028 316 3724 (o/h) or the Fire & Rescue Emergency Control Room on 028 312 2400 (a/h) immediately.

Note, too, that all seal sightings (well or sick) can be reported on the iNaturalist website. With prompt and appropriate medical care (i.e. vaccination), the spread of rabies can be prevented. **We therefore urge all pet owners to act responsibly by taking the necessary precautionary steps and behaving responsibly.**

TO QUALIFY FOR INDIGENT SUPPORT, APPLICANTS MUST:

- ✓ Have a combined income (applicant + spouse/life partner) that does not exceed R8,801 per month;
- ✓ Use an average of no more than 500 kWh of electricity per month;
- ✓ Consume no more than 20 kℓ of water on average per month;
- ✓ Be a South African resident;
- ✓ Own no more than one property; and
- ✓ Use the property solely for residential purposes.

CONFIRMATION OF INDIGENT STATUS:

To verify eligibility for indigent support, applicants will be required to submit the following documentation:

- ✓ Latest municipal account
- ✓ IDs of residents older than 18 years
- ✓ Copies of birth certificates of all residents younger than 18 years
- ✓ Latest three months' salary/wages slips of each applicant
- ✓ Latest three months' bank statements of each applicant, including those of spouses/life partners
- ✓ In instances where the applicant does not have a bank account, an affidavit to confirm that this is indeed the case
- ✓ In instances where the applicant is self-employed, an affidavit to declare income
- ✓ In instances of unemployment, an affidavit stating that this is indeed true and that the applicant has no other source of income
- ✓ Where applicable, proof of SASSA pension income
- ✓ In the case of a divorce order/separation or abandonment, an affidavit stating that the applicant will take responsibility for the municipal account
- ✓ In the case of a deceased co-owner, a death certificate to verify that the co-owner did indeed pass

... Mowing to go ahead

Seemingly unkempt public open spaces, greenbelts and road verges are a sight for sore eyes. In an attempt to prevent the above from being overgrown by grasses and all sorts of unwelcome vegetation, Overstrand Municipality has no option but to stick to its mowing schedule. Sad as it may be, the delightful carpet of emerging spring blooms may have to be sacrificed in the process.

... Prepaid Electricity Meter Upgrade

Having launched an extensive campaign back in 2022 to ensure that prepaid electricity meters are upgraded in time for the token-identifier rollover scheduled for November this year, Overstrand Municipality is pleased to announce that it managed to accomplish this task well ahead of the deadline.

Attaining a 100% success rate did not come easy, and Overstrand Municipality would like to extend its heartfelt appreciation to our residents for their co-operation and to our dedicated staff who went all out to ensure that everyone got the message and understood the urgency thereof.

Yet again, though, we need to advise consumers who buy their electricity directly from Eskom (i.e. those in Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay, Rooiels, Fisherhaven, Vermont, Onrus, Hemel-en-Aarde and certain areas between Die Damme and Hermanus) to contact Eskom directly as a matter of urgency if the software on their prepaid meters has not been upgraded yet.

... Fernkloof declared bin-free

Now leave-behinds are strictly limited to footprints.

Those who enjoy hiking along the reserve's cliff and contour paths, or love picnicking in the gardens, should take note that the Fernkloof Nature Reserve has adopted a “no-litter, no-bin” policy.

This decision was reached in the interest of safeguarding the reserve's delicate ecosystems and basically boils down to an arrangement whereby visitors and hikers agree to carry whatever they brought in, back out again.

In short, no litter bins will be provided: Not in picnic areas, nor along paths or trails.

To ease adjustment though, a few bins will remain in place along the cliff and contour paths for the time being. In support of this drive to retain the unspoilt nature of one of Overstrand's most cherished attractions, our appeal is simple: Please carry your litter home.

