Special focus on food safety

Guides to going green in 2010

CELO BUTHELEZI

The Municipality has launched a series of books aimed at combating global warming and providing the public with eco-friendly solutions to dealing with climate change.

Developed by the Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Unit and the Strategic Projects Unit, the Greening Durban 2010 series provides information on four critical areas of climate change: water, green landscaping, energy efficiency and sustainable waste.

Speaking at launch, Mayor Obed Mlaba encouraged residents and businesses to find ways to reduce their impact on the environment and make eThekwini a more sustainable city. “These books are a great source of information. They offer practical, easy tips to those wanting to do their bit in combating changing climate,” Mlaba said.

The Head of the Strategic Projects Unit, Julie-May Ellingson, said Durban wanted to leave a positive legacy and has taken steps to ensure a carbon neutral World Cup. “This 2010 was an ideal opportunity to promote the Municipality’s green agenda. Environmentally sustainable principles were entrenched in all projects for 2010. "Past hosts of the World Cup found there was a massive increase in waste and pollution during the event. With this in mind, we thought it essential that the Municipality puts together plans to minimise the tournament’s effects on the environment," said Ellingson.

The water conservation book gives information on how to save water. One low-cost suggestion is to install low-flow aerated taps on your basin and low-pressure showerheads.

The sustainable waste management book looks at ways of managing waste and the different processes available to the public. The green landscaping book discusses biodiversity and the importance of planting to create a healthier environment.

The energy efficiency book suggests power saving programmes that homeowners, business and industry can implement.

The green books can be downloaded at http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/durban_pages/GreeningDurban_2010

NTUTHUKO ZIKHALI

The Health Unit is working around the clock to ensure that visitors and locals alike enjoy a safe, healthy World Cup.

Key focus areas are food safety, pollution reduction, water quality testing and risk identification and planning.

The unit has been closely involved in the planning processes for the major Fifa precincts, including the Moses Mabhida Stadium, public viewing areas, training grounds and King Shaka Airport.

Food safety is particularly important and the unit held a food advisory seminar late last year to ensure formal and informal food businesses understood what was required to comply with food safety regulations.

Manager of Food Safety Justice Dlamini said that the Municipality, together with other stakeholders, were continuing to roll out food safety training, both to the formal and informal sectors.

Deputy Head of Pollution Control and Risk Management Siva Chetty said the aim was to ensure food was safe and free of contamination and that any incidents of food poisoning that may arise are quickly addressed and any ill effects minimised.

The Municipality is concerned about the safety of its citizens and visitors. Knowing that most people rely on formal food sectors and that 2010 FIFA World Cup is close by, we need to be certain that all food retailers in the city follow all the food protocol precautions and that they are properly monitored by the health officials,” Chetty said.

Guidelines and protocols have been designed to assist the unit’s environmental health practitioners to work more efficiently over the busy World Cup month. These include guidelines for the remote search park and food sampling.

Health Practitioner Manager in the Northern District Phindi Mchunu said that the sampling rate would increase during the World Cup and they would have teams in all spheres of the tournament.

The unit is engaged with service providers of the fan camp, which will be at the Sahara Kingsmead Stadium during the tournament. The aim is to ensure that proper sanitation, waste disposal and food preparation areas are provided.

Upgraded

The Food Safety Laboratory at 9 Archie Gumede Place is being upgraded and by the time the World Cup arrives it will have an enhanced capacity to deal with rapid bacteriological sampling and testing.

The unit has purchased and equipped a mobile air quality testing station for monitoring of pollution.

The Blue Lagoon precinct is being upgraded to ensure that all the food traders are compliant and the area is clean and healthy for the recreational activities expected during the event.

The unit has secured additional resources for overtime expenditure for monitoring and surveillance during the World Cup.

The Vector Control team have completed rodent, roach and malaria control in the targeted Fifa precinct areas.