Disaster Management

Our approach in efforts to minimize disaster risks is that, most of our resources must be directed to the introduction of preventive strategies aimed at saving lives and protecting assets before they are lost.

To-date the Provincial Disaster Management Centre has supported the building of six District Disaster Management Centre, namely, uMkhanyakude, Ilembe, Harry Gwala, Ugu, uKhahlamba and Umlalazi Disaster Management Centres. Currently, three more District Disaster Management Centres, namely uThukela, uMzinyathi and Amajuba are being constructed with the help of the Department.

The Department continues to provide grants to municipalities for the establishment and enhancement of their Disaster Management Centres to deal with disasters. In addition, the construction of a fully equipped Provincial Disaster Management Centre at Mkhondeni is now complete and its equipping is now underway.

Partnerships with stakeholders and NGOs

The Department has concluded an agreement with the 911 Fund in New York which has led to the province receiving two containers of fire-fighting equipment. We also have good relations with Red Cross, Alimdad Foundation and Gift of the Givers.

The South African Weather Services continues to be our strategic partner in providing regular forecasts and enables issuing of early warnings for some inclement weather patterns that, from time to time, result in incidents that do impact and disrupt our community and economic life.

Fire services

The department is in the process of establishing a unit that deals with fire coordination in the province in line with the Fire Services Act. In order to rescue entrapped victims and perform fire suppression more efficiently, fire services in places as geographically diverse as the United States and Singapore, are becoming increasingly coordinated under one command centre. The revised organisational structure has made provision for this new function and recruitment of qualified personnel will be underway in 2017/2018.

Fire detection alarms

To address fire problems in some of our informal settlements, all our municipalities will be expected to pilot the installation of fire detecting alarms in some of the informal settlements that are prone to fire incidents, especially as we approach the winter season. Most fires occur at night so these alarms will make warning sounds to wake people up for safety.