



ENVIROSERV

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Dear Hillcrest and Shongweni residents,

The last few weeks have not been an easy time for many of us. People living in close proximity to the Shongweni landfill are understandably concerned, emotions are running high and people are looking for answers. We understand that. Let me just say right up front that we're working really hard to do not only what is required of us by the various authorities, but more than that. We have been at Shongweni for more than 20 years and it's our responsibility to ensure we stay good neighbours.

After much engagement with the community and other stakeholders, we are busy putting a stakeholder engagement plan in place so that all voices are heard, and heard properly. All stakeholders will be given the opportunity to comment before a company is appointed.

In the heat of debate, the details sometimes become obscured, and highly technical information is often difficult to communicate with clarity. That said, we have had a number of accusations levelled against us in person, on social media and through direct correspondence that just aren't true and which cannot be substantiated. Before we move to the next stage of community engagement, I'd like to take the opportunity to address just a few of these.

The air quality testing results done by two independent air quality monitoring companies - one of which was selected by the community themselves - was rubbish as "junk science". These are in fact highly scientific surveys which revealed the Shongweni landfill is not the only source of the malodour. They also revealed levels of contaminants were well below the acceptable level and could not be responsible for the many claimed ill-health effects. That said, we are investing millions of Rands to minimise our contribution to the odours by installing covers on our leachate tanks, among other extensive actions.

Despite the fact that we are clearly not the only source, EnviroServ is the only company which has responded and has continued to take action. While we're not by any means asking for any credit for taking action - that is after all our responsibility - we do ask that our community neighbours

be even-handed. We are co-operating with the authority's investigations and continue to be transparent and solution-focused.

Another allegation is that we are damaging the health of people living close to the site. There is no substance to this claim, nor is there any evidence of any description to support it. There is no scientific evidence of any health impact resulting from Shongweni landfill. Given the proximity to the site at which our people work, they would be the first to show symptoms of any illness, and there have been none in more than 20 years we have operated at Shongweni. Not one.

One accusation which we found deeply upsetting was that the landfill has led to an increase in the incidence of childhood cancer. Again, there is no substance or evidence to support this accusation at all. International studies have conclusively revealed that landfill gas is not a contributor to increasing the rate of cancer in populations living in close proximity. Nonetheless, residents will be pleased to know that a comprehensive toxicology study will shortly get underway at Shongweni. Terms of Reference have been drawn up and circulated to interested and affected parties for input.

We have also been accused of dumping toxic waste into the ocean. Please let me be clear: the Shongweni landfill site does not dump any waste into the sea at all - ever. Our Effluent Treatment Plant is fully operational and can treat the leachate, liquid generated as a result of the biodegradation process within a landfill, on site. However, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) instructed us to speed up the process by emptying our leachate tanks and stormwater dams

and (as authorised by eThekweni Water and Sanitation) send this effluent to Southern Waste Water Treatment Works for legal disposal.

There are literally hundreds of other industries which use Southern Waste Water Treatment works to dispose of their effluent - the Shongweni landfill's effluent is just a fraction of this. Importantly, before the effluent is accepted for disposal, it has to meet meticulous standards which are governed by the eThekweni Municipality.

Over the past five years we have received five fines for not meeting one of the 17 standard parameters as measured by the Municipality. Please be assured that these fines do not relate to a major non-compliance or criminal prosecution but are rather administrative in nature. Nonetheless, we have made sure that systems have been improved to avoid any technical non-compliance of any standard parameter in the future. External and internal compliance audits are conducted routinely and independently of our operational entities. At our last external audit by the DEA in May, the Shongweni landfill achieved 99.2%, which is only a minor non-compliance.

EnviroServ's company values are collaboration, innovation, integrity, quality, passion and diversity. We've tried to show that we do not simply pay lip service to these, but work hard every day to live up to them. EnviroServ was set up 35 years ago by forward thinkers with a social conscience - and these are the kinds of people we still employ today.

We undertake to engage with all affected communities honestly, transparently and in the interests of finding solutions with you through collaboration.

Regards,
Dean Thompson
EnviroServ Group CEO