



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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To all media houses

“NO STATE VEHICLES HIJACKINGS UNTIL THE RABIES VIRUS SPREAD IS ELIMINATED IN UMLAZI,” DECLARES SITHOLE-MOLOI AS ETHEKWINI METRO POLICE ENLISTS IN THE FIGHT

The MEC for KZN DARD, Bongiwe Sithole-Moloi, will enlist the help of the eThekweni Metro Police to ensure that no state vehicles are hijacked in uMlazi Township as the Department and its veterinary teams resolve to take the fight against the spread of rabies house to house to stop further deaths in the area.

Sithole-Moloi said despite having previously resolved against a “door-to-door” rabies fight strategy due to high staff exposure to hijackings, DARD vets team will now visit homes accompanied by eThekweni Metro Police ensure that no state vehicles are stolen, the virus is eliminated and right for uMlazi residents to live in a safe environment is restored.

She said the decision to extend the vaccination drive in uMlazi was triggered by the fact that most victims that died during this surge of rabies, have been children under the age of 10 years – proving that rabies has made the area’s environment unsafe for the full enjoyment of many human rights.

“There’s no doubt that human rights and the environment are interdependent. Children are particularly vulnerable because of their height, inquisitive nature, interest in animals and inability to protect themselves. That is why the entire country was declared rabies-endemic in 1999 and it is now compulsory for all dogs and cats to be vaccinated at least once every three years,” Sithole-Moloi said.

She added that in terms of legislation - The Animal Diseases Act, 1984 (Act No 35 of 1984) – dictates that owners of dogs and cats must have their pets vaccinated against rabies between the ages of 3 and 7 months, then 12 months later and then again once every 3 years thereafter.

“The purpose of vaccinating a pet against rabies is same as when human babies are taken for their vaccinations at the local clinics. Treat your pet as would your children,” she concluded.

For more information, kindly contact Media Liaison Officer, Mr. Mack Makhathini on 076 965 5870.