

## Rabies outbreak fear in eThekweni with dog population topping 150 000

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**Durban — A vaccination drive to combat rabies and a spaying campaign to control the population of dogs, through sterilisation was held in Chatsworth on Tuesday.**

The eThekweni metro alone has more than 150 000 dogs and statistics revealed that there have been three cases of rabies reported a month, said KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture MEC Super Zuma.

This is the reason for the rabies vaccination campaign.

“This is a proactive programme.

“The department was approached by two NGOs from Chatsworth to assist. They wanted help in stabilising dogs and cat populations. It was very important to partner with these NGOs,” said Zuma.

Dr Minkie Masemege, South Region veterinary service director, said rabies can be deadly to humans.

“We encourage people, especially here in eThekweni, since it has a high dog population, to get their dogs vaccinated. That is the first line of defence against rabies. Rabies is transmitted through saliva into the wounds when dogs bite you. A person needs to seek treatment from a doctor immediately after being bitten,” said Dr Masemege.

One of the residents, Judy Naicker from Moorton, brought her dog Teddy who is 4 years old. She was happy with the campaign.

“It’s a scary process because it’s the first time vaccinating my dog, but overall we are happy about it and very grateful that our dogs receive better treatment not just against rabies but all pets’ diseases,” said Naicker.

Signs of rabies in humans are uncontrollable shaking; seizures and some people can show signs even after six months. Dogs become aggressive, unsettled and change their normal behavior.