Solid Waste Management in Mogale City Local Municipality

Mogale City Local Municipality (MCLM) was established as a Category B Local Municipality in terms of the Municipal Structures Amendment Act (act 33 of 2000) and officially came into being after the democratic Local Government elections held in December 2000. In line with Demarcation Board’s ‘wall to wall’ concept for municipalities, Mogale City became successor in title of the former Krugersdorp Local Council, the Magaliesburg Rural Council and a portion of the Magaliesberg Local Area. The municipality is situated in the western side of the Gauteng Province.

Although, the Gauteng Province is the smallest province in South Africa, it has the highest and the fastest growing economy and is the most urbanised. Being South Africa’s economic powerhouse, Gauteng is the most densely populated, with its population growing faster than growth in the supply of housing, employment and provision of basic services (GDACE, 2004, p27). Due to increased population growth and urban development, there is an increased demand for waste service provision in terms of storage, collection facilities and services, handling and transportation, treatment disposal services and facilities. In the case of Mogale City, the situation is further exacerbated by the fact that the municipality abuts two rapidly growing metropolitan municipalities, the Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality in the east and the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality in the north (See Map), which has a great influence on the urbanisation and population growth of the municipality due to the edge effect.
At the same time, Mogale City remains a mixture of urban and rural areas. The urban areas reflect different levels of development. The former black townships are a mixer of clearly laid out serviced sections, most of which have backyard shacks, and a concentration of unserviced informal settlements. The former white areas are fully serviced with immaculate tarred roads, storm water systems, parks, piped water, electricity, street lighting, and provided with waste storage containers and a fairly reliable weekly kerbside refuse collection. The rural areas primarily host tourism oriented activities together with farming. The majority of the rural area has no waste management service. The historic unequal provision of basic services remains an issue in that there is a sizeable service delivery backlog evident in Mogale City’s historically disadvantaged areas (MCLM Annual Report, 2002/03, pg.18).

As is typical of most municipalities in South Africa, the municipality is faced with solid waste management service delivery backlogs and difficulties in sustaining existing services. According to the Mogale City Local Municipality State of Environment Report (SOER), 2003, 87-89), the following are major challenges that face Mogale City in terms of solid waste management:

- The rapidly growing population has resulted in increasing volumes of domestic waste
- Lack of refuse removal service in the rural area and informal settlements
- The refuse removal service is ineffective, mainly due to old trucks and equipment as well as staff shortages
- Waste management is fragmented in view of the lack of integrated waste management planning and systems
- Non-prioritisation of waste management by the municipality and other spheres of government (National and Provincial), particularly in terms of budget allocation and funding of waste programmes
- Non-payment of services by the communities and businesses in the area
- Illegal dumping and littering in open spaces and unmanaged parks
- The various mining and industrial activities in the area result in waste production, which includes hazardous waste and the type and quantity of hazardous waste produced per sector per year is unknown
- Lack of community awareness in terms of waste management issues, particularly issues pertaining to waste prevention, minimisation, reuse and recycling
- Increased costs of waste disposal in view of the stringent legislative requirements in this regard.