

# **Incidents/accidents & the Failure of Government**

**SDCEA presentation to Parliamentary  
Portfolio Committee on Environmental  
Affairs  
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# **SDCEA working with the EThekweni City Health**

- The SDCEA over the past years have been working with Ethekewini health department offering our experience and Knowledge in many strategic plan for the management of odors in EThekweni, hoping it will enhance the health and well being of the communities of south Durban and the surrounding.
- We didn't consider both parties working in isolation because we as SDCEA new that we need each other for making a better living society for the communities of south Durban.

# **EThekweni City Health withholding Information**

- The SDCEA is an environmental justice and human right organization, made up of 16 affiliates.
- We have received a slap on the face from eThekweni City health department for refusing to provide us with information regarding the air quality data from their air monitoring stations, that inform us about the level of pollution that communities are exposed too, we are entitle to receiving this information as the representatives of the communities of south Durban.
- Since 2011 to date, no data has been received from the department regardless of our effort writing emails and more than twenty four letters to the department.

# Withholding Information

- On the 16<sup>th</sup> & the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014, Stakeholders meetings were held in Durban, DEA; Ethekewini health authorities; gWorks; SDCEA and community members, the local authorities agreed that they will release information to us.
- To our surprise nothing has been forthcoming.

# Health Impact

- We are concerned that the emissions levels from industry trigger health problems such as respiratory diseases, cancer, Leukemia, skin and other related sicknesses.
- We are aware that our industrial fence line neighbors like the Chemical and Petro Chemical have been protected for years with either minimum laws or in some cases no law at all.
- In South Durban despite the installing of 14 monitoring stations which measures for only five [5] chemicals out of a total of 300 hundred class one chemicals ,we still lack the political will to enforce the law where serious violations of the permit conditions take place on a daily basis.

# **Recommendations (1)**

Having traveled all the way from the highly polluted area of south Durban we request the portfolio committee to do the following

- We require an expert panel to include community expert, academics to develop standards.
- The portfolio committee must direct the department to have an inclusive stakeholder forum of national, provincial and local government officials including community representatives, polluting companies and trade unions to work on a plan to reduce high level of pollution in south Durban such as Multi point plan stakeholder forum.
- The department must be directed to deal with the recommendations of the 2006 health study which should form part of the multi stakeholder forum.

# Recommendations (2)

- No polluting industry should be allowed to develop and expand in the south Durban basin.
- The air quality standards should be developed using the best systems, equipment and policies such as the EU and or the US EPS (Environmental Protection Standards)
- The portfolio committee should visit communities in all the hot spot areas such as south Durban, Richards bay, the Vaal, the Highveld and Table view to get an insight in to the high levels of pollution and the impact this pollution has on people's health.