

Role and interventions by the Eden Municipal Health Department during the Knysna Oyster Festival

Friday, 06 July 2018

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Annually, Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) of the Eden District Municipality's (Eden DM) Municipal Health Service act proactively in planning and implementing mitigation measures and monitoring work schedules before, during and after the Oyster Festival.Â This is done to minimize and address public health issue that might arise during the festival.

This year, Knysna will be hosting the 37th Oyster Festival and it is anticipated that more than 50 000 visitors will visit the town during the 10-day event.

The EHPs from the Knysna office will be responsible for delivering the following services before and during the festival:

EHPs from the Eden DM Knysna Office are constantly visible amongst Festivalgoers, conducting inspection and health surveillances at food premises.Â

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FOOD CONTROL

Inspections of informal food premises will includes the following:

- Daily inspections at the Oyster Festival – Hot Spots;
- Central Festival grounds inspections;
- Inspections at various locations in town, where thousands of oysters will be kept under health prescribed conditions, impose by EHP's;
- Several batches of oyster samples have been dispatched to the Merieux Nutriscience Laboratory in Cape Town for bacteriological analysis, prior to the start of the festival in order to establish the status of the holding tank water, as well as the bacteriological oyster quality.
- EHPs across the district have been requested to assist with the sampling and surveillance of oysters procured in other areas within the Southern Cape.

- Drinking water (Sachets) to be provided to the athletes participating in the Forest Marathon, will be analyzed to ensure compliance as stipulated under the Bottled Water Regulations: Regulation 692 of 1997, promulgated under the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectant Act (Act 54 of 1972).

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

- Bacteriological water monitoring of the Knysna Estuary will be undertaken by sampling water at 14 identified sites in and around the estuary.

- Bacteriological Water Monitoring at sites where recreational water sport events will take place, will be monitored.

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Environmental Health Practitioners must make sure that Oysters sold to the public is fit for human consumption.

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HEALTH SURVEILANCE OF PREMISES

Regular inspections and health surveillance of premises of all related public amenities will be undertaken during the Festival, including:

â€¢Â Â Public toilet facilities;

â€¢Â Â Accommodation establishments;

â€¢Â Â Festival grounds;

â€¢Â Â Food markets; and

â€¢Â Â Tobacco control at premises.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE OUTBREAK

A strict communication protocol regarding the reporting of any communicable disease outbreak to the local District Municipal Health authority has been established with all relevant medical health care providers, which included both the Private and Provincial Hospitals, General Practitioners and Pharmacies.