

## Untruths being told about waste plant

Johann Mettler's comments cited in the article on the proposed Waste to Energy project in Wellington are untrue in many respects.

\* In terms of the Access to Information Act I personally requested information pertaining to the Waste to Energy project formally and in writing per Drakenstein Municipality due procedure on 3 June. At this time I was told that the information would be issued with an associated fee, and agreed without reservation. So Mettler's comments in this regard are untruthful. The requested information was not forthcoming and many requests followed, confirmed by repeated written correspondence. Mr C Wessels is the Information Officer who has assisted me and he has been helpful, but has been dependent on being issued with the information to release to me in turn.

On 3 July I finally received an email from Wessels stating that the information was available, and that I should visit his office to peruse the documents. Later that day I telephoned him from the municipality building to say that I was on my way up to his office to view the information, and he apologised saying that since sending the email that morning, he had received a directive from a superior stating that the information was not to be issued to me. A subsequent email from Deon Louw detailed that in terms of the Access to Information Act the Drakenstein Municipality was not obliged to issue any information considered to be confidential pertaining



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to a third party, including any other information deemed to be confidential. In this instance, the third party is the proposed Public Private Partner for the Waste to Energy Project, namely Interwaste.

Drakenstein Municipality has subsequently insisted that specific documents must be requested, as it cannot/will not accept my information request for "any and all" information pertaining to the Waste to Energy Project. My point to Deon Louw and the municipality is that the Drakenstein Community is entitled to a transparent disclosure of the full body of information (including, but not confined to, internal and all other correspondence, reports, licence submissions and any other information pertaining to the project), which can potentially have a huge health and environmental impact on this region. It is not possible to request particular documents/information if we are not fully aware of what is available. In a meeting last week (29 July) Louw confirmed the municipality's standpoint, namely that they will not disclose information or correspondence which relates to the preferred WTE bidder, Interwaste.

The Public Waste to Energy meeting held in May this year (attended by more than 300 members of the Wellington community) discussed concerns regarding Interwaste's employment and funding of environmental experts to conduct the WTE Scoping and Environmental Impact Studies, on behalf of a project in which they have potentially huge financial and business benefit - as these cannot be considered as impartial and independent assessments. It is noteworthy that Interwaste has been implicated in a Supreme Court matter pertaining to access to information, namely Reportable case 147/05 Transnet Ltd and Interwaste (PTY) Ltd and SA Metal Machinery Co (PTY) Ltd. The Supreme Court Summary for this matter relates to an unsuccessful tenderer SA Metal Machinery Co (PTY) Ltd requesting transparent disclosure of information relating to the tender and successful bid awarded to Interwaste. This information had been refused, motivating the subsequent Supreme Court matter listed above. It is just fact that refusal to issue information raises questions regarding the reasons for lack of transparency.

In principle, I believe that it is reasonable, democratic and lawful to request and be given fair and reasonable access to information. This is within the constitutional rights framework of our country, and these rights are underscored in circumstances when health and environmental factors are at potentially high risk.

**CARON POTOCNIK  
WELLINGTON**

## Tien jaar later onthou ek julle almal nog

Op 16 Augustus hierdie jaar is my oorlede man, Danie du Toit, al 10 jaar oorlede.

Danie is op die ouderdom van 30 met leukemie gediagnoseer deur 'n baie knap dokter by Mediclinic Paarl, ek kan ongelukkig nie sy naam onthou nie. Op daardie stadium het ons vier kinders gehad tussen die ouderdom van 2 en 6 jaar, en soos jy kan dink was dit 'n verskriklike tyding. Danie is drie jaar nadat hy gediagnoseer is op die ouderdom van 33 oorlede.

Maar die ondersteuning van die gemeenskap was oorweldigend, beidetydens Danie se siekte en na sy afsterwe. Ek wil dus die gemeenskap van die Paarl bedank vir die ongelooflike bystand wat ons ontvang het in daardie

baie swaar tyd.

Daar is sekere mense en instansies wat ek graag spesifiek wil bedank; eerstens die WP Bloedoor-tappingsdiens se fantastiese klinieksusters wat onbaatsugtig gesoek het na 'n geskikte beemurg skenker, en selfs hulle naweke opgeoffer het om bloedskenkers te toets, onder andere by die Du Toit-dag te Franschoek, waar daar meer as 300 skenkers opgedaag het. Ek is seker hulle weet wie hulle is en ek is opreg dankbaar vir hul onbaatsugtige diens, deernis en bystand.

Ek wil ook graag my dank uitspreek vir die dames van die Strooidak- en Toringkerk, alhoewel ons meeste van hulle nie geken het nie het hulle gesorg dat daar byna elke aand 'n warm ete

vir ons afgelewer word.

Daarmee saam wil ek graag vir Luther Bakkes, die eienaar van McDonalds, uit my hart bedank vir die sakke vol kaasburgers wat byna daaglik by ons huis afgelewer is en basies my kinders se stapelvoedsel was vir daardie tydperk.

Ek wil ook graag vir Dokter Haai bedank vir sy bystand. Vanselfsprekend is ek ontsetend dankbaar vir ons vriende, my ouers en skoonfamilie asook my kollegas en werkskennisse wat gehelp het om 'n baie swaar tyd meer draaglik te maak.

Ons mis vir Danie daaglik maar ek kan sien hoe hy voortleef in elkeen van sy pragtige kinders.

**COMINE MARAIS  
AUSTRALIË**