

48 Mapobe Street
Zwide
GQEBERHA

01 AUGUST 2023

Executive Director: Budget and Treasury
Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality

PER HAND

**SUBJECT: FORMAL COMPLAINT REGARDING ERRONEOUS BILLING AND
UNRESOLVED ACCOUNT DISPUTE – ACCOUNT REF NUMBER: 600 041 392 203**

Dear Sir/Madam,

1. I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my profound dissatisfaction and utmost frustration with the gross mishandling of my sister-in-law's municipal account (Ref: 600 041 392 203), which pertains to the property situated at 48 Mabope Street, Zwide Township, Gqeberha, Eastern Cape, South Africa.
2. At the beginning of this year, we discovered that the water consumption for January was outrageously stated as **71 units (kl/m)**, resulting in a preposterous bill amounting to over R49 000.00.
3. My Sister-in-law, Mrs. S. Mbodla, the account holder, promptly attempted to bring this error to the attention of the Municipality's account department. However, instead of a resolution, she was met with repeated instructions to check for a water leakage on the property, which she consistently confirmed did not exist.
4. In response to this dire situation, she granted me the authority, through a "special power of attorney" with power of substitution, to act as her lawful agent and manage all municipal matters concerning the property, given the fact that she is not around the Eastern Cape.
5. As the appointed representative, I visited the municipality's accounts department on the 22nd of February 2023, where it was acknowledged that the error was attributed to a system malfunction known as "EDAMS." This issue, apparently arises when a nearby blockage affects water meters, leading to excessively high claimed usage records.
6. The municipality assured me that the matter would be escalated to the relevant authority for resolution, and a review date of 22nd March 2023 was provided for the adjustment of the account. However, the promised resolution never materialized, instead we were asked to pay an "average" amount based on our previous monthly payments, despite the ongoing dispute.
7. I feel obliged to remind your office that this approach by the municipality is in direct contravention of its duty and responsibility as mandated by the Municipal Systems Act (Act No. 32 of 2000). According to Section 152 of the Act, municipalities are required

to "provide services to all communities in a sustainable manner" and to "promote a safe and healthy environment." The municipality's failure to promptly resolve account discrepancies and its disregard for our well-being is a breach of its statutory obligations.

8. To compound matters, the municipality abruptly blocked our electricity purchase, citing the system's protocol. This action deprived us of our basic right to essential services. I made further visits to the municipality seeking resolution, but the lack of coordination and accountability among your staff only intensified our ordeal.
9. It is evident that the manner in which this matter has been handled by the municipality borders on extortion. We have been coerced into paying an invoice we are disputing, all in the name of "while we are trying to resolve", with no sign of a genuine effort to rectify the issue. The repeated delays and false promises have caused significant inconvenience, financial loss (as I have to, now and again, break from my official tasks as a self-employed individual), and mental distress.
10. This blatant disregard for customer satisfaction and failure to address our legitimate concerns is deeply disheartening. As loyal and responsible residents of this Metro, we deserve transparency, accountability, and a timely resolution to this matter.
11. Therefore, I am formally submitting this complaint, seeking an immediate investigation into the account discrepancy and a comprehensive, accurate invoice statement.
12. Furthermore, I hereby wish to exercise my explicit right as conferred upon me in terms of section 5(1)(b) of the Municipal Systems Act (Act No. 32 of 2000), by requesting a written response within 7 working days detailing the actions taken to rectify this situation (by the "the administration of the municipality") and the assurance that such errors are not to be repeated in the future.
13. We trust that you will take this complaint seriously and act promptly to restore our faith in the municipality's ability to provide fair and efficient services to its residents, as mandated by the Municipal Systems Act.

Yours sincerely,

Jonguxolo Wiseman Mbodla

Mobile Contact Number: 074 851 2070

Email Address: jongim@jongibrandz.co.za

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE FORMAL COMPLAINT

I _____ *[full name(s) and surname]* hereby do acknowledge receipt of a copy of a formal complaint as lodged by Mr Jonguxolo Wiseman Mbodla regarding the erroneous billing and unresolved account dispute – account ref number: 600 041 392 203.

DESIGNATION: _____

BUSINESS UNIT: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____