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South African National Energy
Development Institute

ENERGY INNOVATION FOR LIFE

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Turning waste into energy at four Emfuleni schools

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The Gauteng Department of Infrastructure Development's (DID) Green Agenda is about exploring innovative technological ways that are efficient in resources, such as alternative building materials, energy, water, air, carbon emissions etc.

"The law of conservation of energy means that energy can neither be created nor destroyed; rather, it can only be transformed or transferred from one form to another. This law has now inspired a new energy innovation in Gauteng," explains Thembakazi Mali, interim CEO at SANEDI.

"We have entered into partnership with DID to get a contractor to install bio-digesters that convert organic waste into fuel to be used to run facilities at four schools in Emfuleni Municipality - Emmanuel Primary School, Kgomoco Primary School, Lehlasedi Primary School and Seliba Primary School.

"The schools use gas for cooking and home economics classes. The food waste that is produced is the major source of waste fodder for the bio-digester. The fuel produced will significantly help the schools in saving money spent on buying gas.

"The schools have also been encouraged to start agriculture projects in order to accumulate organic waste and keep the supply constant and secure.

"These kinds of projects are in line with our belief that energy innovation and the efficient use of energy are two key components to mitigating the challenges of providing clean, sustainable energy. With global energy demands on the increase, coupled with the depletion of our natural resources and the negative impact of fossil-based energy sources on the environment, the issues have become a pressing reality," concludes Mali.

The South African government established the South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI) to direct, monitor and conduct applied energy R&D, demonstration and deployment, as well as to undertake specific measures to promote the uptake of green energy and energy efficiency in South Africa. Its mission is to use applied and energy research and resource efficiency to develop innovative, integrated solutions that will catalyse growth and prosperity to meet its vision of sustainable living for growth and prosperity in Africa.

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