

STORM DAMAGE UPDATE – 30TH MARCH 2007

We are pleased to advise that Corporate Sure have confirmed that the storm damage suffered on the 19th March 2007 is covered under the Body Corporate policies taken out with them and underwritten by Santam.

An Assessor was immediately appointed and has been undertaking a full investigation and assessment of the situation over the past week. He was on site the Monday morning of the storm damage causing the high tide waves to crash through private property causing devastation in its wake.

Literally hundreds of photographs have been taken of every unit damaged both by the assessor, by the writer and by Imelda, employee and of North Coast Insurance Brokers looking after the interest of the complexes.

A meeting has been held with C-Sure and their attorney and the appointment of a quantity surveyor and an engineer has been approved and they will be on site in the next week.

All units that were breached have been boarded up to ensure their security and many owners have assisted by moving all salvageable furniture and items to a safe position.

Once the engineer and QS have completed their inspection clean up operations will begin. Firms will be employed to carry out clean up operations. It may unfortunately be the situation that some of the units will be condemned by the engineer however this cannot be pre-empted and we must wait for the reports.

There is some indication at this time that the insurance company will, after assessing the damage, offer a cash settlement offer. This decision will however only be finalised at a later date.

The entire situation along the coast line and the devastation caused to the beaches and the promenade has to be assessed before any renovations can take place.

Kwa Dukuza Municipality (KDM) have been holding emergency meetings daily since the disaster occurred. Unfortunately KDM do not have money to cover the cost of repair and renovation of the ravished areas. They have applied to Province to be declared a disaster area and have presented the MEC with a damage assessment of approximately R1.8 billion. Unfortunately the MEC has advised that the assessment was not done by a professional team and has requested that such a team be employed and that further figures be provided to him in due course. KDM have appointed this team and the assessment is currently taking place. There is therefore still some hope that Province may assist with the rebuilding of the beachfront and the Ballito promenade.

Of highest concern is the fact that the sewerage pump stations were all damages with the storm and that approximately 1000m of sewerage pipe lines have been damaged. At this time Siza have managed to restore the pump stations but until the pipe line is repaired there is nowhere for the sewerage to be pumped but into the sea. The problem is that many of the pipes are now left high and dry and there is no where to rest the replacement pipes with the sand having been washed away. This may require some re-establishment of the beaches to support the pipeline.

There is a lot of work to do and the area now falls under the new Coastal Act which has many dictates regarding coastal properties. Environmental acts and requirements all have to be complied with and full environmental assessments (EIA's) will have to be done before any beachfront properties are going to be permitted to start doing re-building operations.

There are however concerns amongst some owners and residents in Ballito that the reinstatement of the promenade is not top priority but they feel that it is one of the main tourist attractions and that it is imperative that it be rebuilt.

To this end Mr Bruce Renken, owner of the Lifestyle Centre approached the writer and suggested that a Trust Fund be started. I am please to advise that this fund has now been started and money can be deposited in the following account :

Name of account : De Wet Shultz Trust Account

Bank : Standard Bank

Bank a/c : 251175715

Branch Code : 042826

Ref : Ballito Promenade Fund

All donations will obviously be welcomed and used for the re-establishment of the promenade and the beachfront.

Money has already been deposited into this account and the first task to be paid for from these funds is aerial photographs of the coastline which will take place this weekend.

Photos were taken last month, photos will be taken this weekend showing the wash line of the high tide and hopefully the new high water line. These two maps will be overlaid by a land surveyor with the private property boundaries to get a picture of the coast line and to show where and if private property start and municipal property ends. This is vitally important because where there has been erosion of BC land it will be the BC responsibility to replace their own land and it will not be done by KDM. This kind of repair is not covered by insurance that covers only buildings and not gardens or ground.

An Urban designer has been approached to assist with the design of the promenade and all environmental processes will be strictly followed.

The writer has been appointed to the task team appointed by KDM and co-opted onto the team that consists of an engineer, a QS, an environmentalist and members from KDM building department. Their expertise together with the information gained by the engineer and QS appointed by the insurers should provide invaluable information. KDM building control department have apparently already prepared a report on which buildings they submit are "uninhabitable" and this report should be available early next week.

There is one major item that everyone should be aware of and that is that KDM have closed all the beaches for at least the next two weeks. This is due not only to the sewerage flowing into the sea but also the debris washing around in the surf after the storm. Word is that there is even a fibreglass swimming pool was seen floating in the sea! This could obviously cause serious injury as could the logs and glass in the surf. Regular tests will be taken and as soon as the e.coli count drops back to normal and the debris has settled beach will be opened.

Owners who holiday let their apartments should be aware that even if their unit is still habitable they might be asked to reduce the rental from Peak season tariff to In season tariff due to the diminished beach facilities.

Anyone wanting to know more can contact me on

barbara@ballito-estates.co.za

We will try and keep this website up to date with information but please understand that with the additional work now having to take place this is sometimes difficult. We will however try and keep all affected owners informed.

BARBARA SHINGLER

Managing Director Ballito Estates

And Member of North Coast Insurance Brokers