



## Report fraud now!

Reporting fraud is everyone's responsibility, because fraudulent behaviour affects us all with increased bills, illegal water and dangerous electrical connections. To combat fraud we have created a Fraud Hotline that investigates allegations of fraud, corruption, theft and other suspected criminal activities committed against the City. All reports are treated in the strictest confidence and callers may remain anonymous. The **Fraud Hotline is 0800 002 587**. All allegations of fraud and corruption are thoroughly investigated and, where warranted, followed up with the full force of the law.

Fraud includes illegal connections, which is any interference with the water or power network, or the meters, by unauthorised persons. This can include:

### Water

- Operating a water system without the consent of the City Council;
- Interfering with or damage to any part of the City's water supply system;
- Disconnecting water meters or breaking the seals on water meters; preventing or restricting physical access of Johannesburg Water or Council employees to the premises to carry out work on the municipal water system; and
- Paying or attempting to pay a City employee for personal gain.



## Refunds to be collected by account holder or transferring attorney

Refunds on municipal accounts can only be collected by the account holder or their transferring attorney: third parties will not be accepted unless they have written proof of full Power of Attorney. This is necessary due to the high risk of potential fraud.

### Electricity

- A meter which has been removed and connected to an illegal power supply;
- Two or more houses connected to one power supply;
- Stealing of cables and pipes;
- Illegally reconnecting a supply;
- Tapping into a power infrastructure that doesn't belong to the household, such as a street light;
- Tampering with meters and reversing the readings, or slowing them down;
- Illegally connecting a cable that has been disconnected due to lack of payment; and
- Paying or attempting to pay a City employee for personal gain.



These activities are not only illegal and dangerous, but can lead to the electrocution of innocent people and the starting of fires.

### Rates & Taxes

- Deliberately providing the City with false contact and personal information;
- Failing to create a new account as a new tenant or home owner; and
- Paying or attempting to pay a City employee for personal gain.

If you suspect or are aware of fraud or corruption within the city, call the **Fraud Hotline on 0800 002 587**.

### Who needs a refund?

The majority of refunds are due once applications for Clearance figures have been processed. In order to apply for a Clearance Certificate - required when selling a property to prove that municipal accounts are up-to-date when registering the sale of a property - property sellers are required to pay an average of five months' costs upfront. If an overpayment is reflected once the account has been finalised, this is refunded to the seller.

### Contact us:

**Joburg Connect - one number for all billing queries related to the City of Johannesburg**

**011 375 5555**

- Fraud and Corruption Hotline  
☎ **0800 002 587**
- Emergency Connect – for life-threatening emergencies only  
☎ **011 375 5911**
- Fax proof of payment for reconnections to the Credit Management Unit  
☎ **011 358 3164**
- Tracking of building plan applications  
☎ **011 407 6058 / 6217**, or [www.joburg.org.za](http://www.joburg.org.za), select the e-services option and follow the Building Plan Progress buttons

- Log on to receive your statement via email  
[www.joburg.org.za](http://www.joburg.org.za), select the e-services option and click the Account By Email button
- Report change of postal address for statements  
✉ [statements@joburg.org.za](mailto:statements@joburg.org.za) or ☎ **011 381 9377**
- Send proof of payment for account queries to  
✉ [cashcollections@joburg.org.za](mailto:cashcollections@joburg.org.za), ☎ **011 358 3044 / 3843** or deliver by hand to your nearest Customer Service Centre.  
☎ **011 375 5555** to follow up after you've sent proof of payment
- For queries regarding the City's implementation of the National Credit Act, please ✉ [nca@joburg.org.za](mailto:nca@joburg.org.za)

### Contact details: City Buzz

Editor, Mandy Jean Woods, Revenue & Customer Relations Management Department.  
For queries contact us at ✉ [citybuzz@joburg.org.za](mailto:citybuzz@joburg.org.za). To get your electronic copy of this and previous issues of City Buzz, log on to [www.joburg.org.za](http://www.joburg.org.za)



a world class African city

# CITY BUZZ

CUSTOMER NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Contact us:  
**011 375 5555**



## It's our Inner City

### Our pledge to Inner City regeneration

In the last few years we have recognised the importance for all to improve and regenerate our Inner City area, and so met with residents, builders, investors, etc. to discuss the best way forward. The result, the drafting and signing of the Inner City Charter, is a promise of our commitment to addressing all the issues raised. The Inner City Charter sets out the objectives and proposed actions to meet these issues head on.

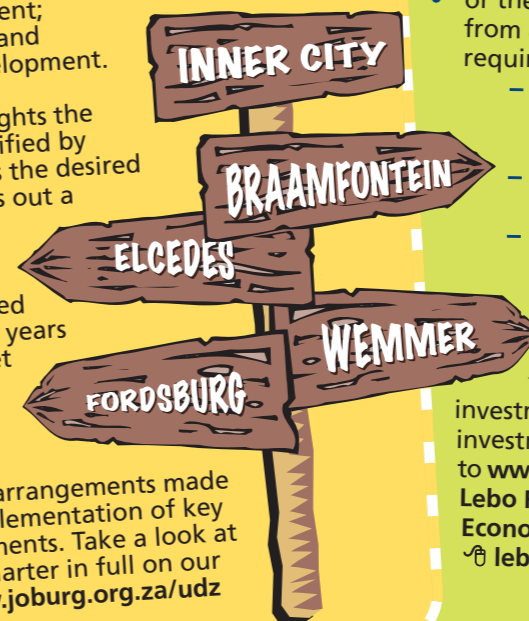
It takes a look at the future of Johannesburg's Inner City, taking into account current challenges and opportunities to give direction to the Vision statement agreed with all stakeholders in 1996/97.

It's then divided into six sections that reflect the stakeholder discussions:

1. Urban management, safety and security;
2. Public spaces, arts, culture and heritage;
3. Economic development;
4. Social development;
5. Transportation; and
6. Residential development.

Each section highlights the critical issues identified by stakeholders, gives the desired outcomes, and sets out a number of clear measurable commitments that will be pursued over the next few years to ensure we meet the desired outcomes.

There is also an overview of the arrangements made to guide the implementation of key Charter commitments. Take a look at the Inner City Charter in full on our website at [www.joburg.org.za/udz](http://www.joburg.org.za/udz)



## Benefit from Inner City development - Urban Renewal Tax

By improving our residential and commercial buildings within the Inner City, we can improve the lives of the people who live and work there. While we can play our part in this improvement, we also need private owners, developers and investors to get involved. To incentivise them to erect new buildings and improve existing ones through extensions, additions and refurbishments within the Inner City, and specifically within the Urban Development Zone (UDZ), we have developed the Urban Renewal Tax. This incentive comes in the form of an accelerated depreciation allowance:

- a newly constructed building or a part thereof will receive deductions amounting to 20% of the investment in the 1<sup>st</sup> year, and 5% in each for the subsequent 16 years;
- for a refurbished building or a part thereof, the deduction is a 5-year straight-line depreciation of 20% of the investment in each of the 5-year periods upon completion of the development.

This great deduction is applicable for:

- erection, extension or improvement of, or addition to an entire building;
- erection, extension, improvement or addition of part of a building at least 1 000 m<sup>2</sup>;
- or the purchase of such a building or part of a building directly from a developer on or after 8 November 2005, subject to the requirements that:
  - the developer has erected, extended, added to or improved the building or part of the building representing a floor area of at least 1 000 m<sup>2</sup>.
  - the developer has not claimed any UDZ allowance in respect of the building or that part of the building.
  - the developer has incurred expenditure in respect of these improvements equal to at least 20% of the purchase price paid by the first purchaser.

To date, over 100 projects have been completed at a total value of about R1 billion, with well over 150 investments in the pipeline for about R3 billion worth of investment. For more information on the Urban Renewal Tax, go to [www.joburg.org.za/udz](http://www.joburg.org.za/udz). Alternatively, contact: **Lebo Ramoreboli, Programme Manager: Inner City & CBD, Economic Development Department, ☎ 011 358 3437, ✉ lebor@joburg.org.za**



## It's our Inner City



## Inner City meter reading dates

SUBURB	MAR '08	APR '08	MAY '08	JUNE '08	JULY '08
JOHANNESBURG	FRIDAY 7 MAR	TUESDAY 4 APR	FRIDAY 9 MAY	WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE	THURSDAY 10 JULY
MARSHALLTOWN	FRIDAY 7 MAR	TUESDAY 4 APR	FRIDAY 9 MAY	WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE	THURSDAY 10 JULY
NEWTOWN	FRIDAY 7 MAR	TUESDAY 4 APR	FRIDAY 9 MAY	WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE	THURSDAY 10 JULY
JEPPESTOWN	THURSDAY 13 MAR	TUESDAY 15 APR	THURSDAY 15 MAY	TUESDAY 17 JUNE	TUESDAY 15 JULY
BENROSE	THURSDAY 13 MAR	TUESDAY 15 APR	THURSDAY 15 MAY	TUESDAY 17 JUNE	TUESDAY 15 JULY

SUBURB	MAR '08	APR '08	MAY '08	JUNE '08	JULY '08
CITY AND SUBURBAN	FRIDAY 7 MAR	TUESDAY 4 APR	FRIDAY 9 MAY	WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE	THURSDAY 10 JULY
BRAAMFONTEIN	WEDNESDAY 12 MAR	FRIDAY 11 APR	MONDAY 12 MAY	WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE	FRIDAY 11 JULY
VREDESDORP	WEDNESDAY 12 MAR	FRIDAY 11 APR	MONDAY 12 MAY	WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE	FRIDAY 11 JULY
PAGEVIEW	WEDNESDAY 12 MAR	FRIDAY 11 APR	MONDAY 12 MAY	WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE	FRIDAY 11 JULY
FORDSBURG	THURSDAY 18 MAR	TUESDAY 15 APR	THURSDAY 15 MAY	WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE	THURSDAY 17 JULY
BELLEVUE EAST	MONDAY 3 MAR	THURSDAY 3 APR	TUESDAY 6 MAY	MONDAY 2 JUNE	WEDNESDAY 2 JULY

## Rubbish is a dirty word

A city's cleanliness goes a long way to contributing to its residents' happiness and health. Pikitup is constantly looking at new ways to keeping our city clean:

- Pikitup has rolled out 5744 swivel bins throughout the Inner City and outer suburbs of Johannesburg, providing an alternative to the traditional concrete bins, which fill up rapidly. The swivel bins' mesh structure makes it easier to spot when the bins are full.
- There are 17 underground bins in the Inner City (located in the CBD, Joubert Park, Hillbrow and Yeoville, as well as three in Alexandra). The five cubic metre steel containers are



encased within a metal frame and then sunk inside a concrete sleeve in the ground. Pedestrians, street cleaners and informal traders can deposit their waste into the bins, which are attached to the containers at street level.

Replacing your lost or stolen 240Lt bin couldn't be easier:

- Report to your nearest police station and obtain an affidavit;
- Phone our call centre on ☎ 011 375 5555, select the option for Pikitup and have your account number ready. You'll be asked to fax the affidavit to ☎ 011 712 5322 and be given a reference number; then
- Your new bin will be delivered to your house within seven working days.
- If your bin is broken and needs to be replaced, ☎ 011 375 5555, select the Pikitup option and have your rates account number, physical address and contact details to hand. Our agent will then provide you with a reference number and your replacement bin will be delivered within seven working days, free of charge.

Pikitup's street cleaning programme is conducted twice daily in the Inner City. Pikitup collects refuse bins from households once a week, so please take out your 240Lt bin by 07:00 am on each collection day. If you create more waste on a regular basis, please order an additional bin by contacting our contact centre. Report illegal dumping by calling Joburg Connect on 011 375 5555.



## We no longer accept credit card payments

As of 31 January 2008, we no longer accept credit card or debit card payments for your municipal services account at any of our Customer Service Centres. This is because charges related to credit card payments have increased to the point where it's no longer viable for us to carry these costs.

The only means of payment at these Centres will be cash or cheque. Internet transfers and debit orders will still be the most convenient method of payment for you.

EasyPay outlets (such as Pick n Pay, Shoprite Checkers, Spar, etc.) will continue to accept credit card payments, and you can also make a payment at any bank branch, ATM machine and the SA Post Office. The City's other service providers offer the following payment options:

**City Power** - City Power has two walk-in-centres, located in Reuven (Booyens) and Lenasia. Both cash and cheques are accepted at these centres, however, credit cards are not. You can pay with your credit card at Easy Pay outlets, or by debit order.

**Johannesburg Water** - Johannesburg Water takes cash, cheques and credit card payments at their inhouse terminals, SAPO, Easypay and ABSA. They also have a debit order facility.

**Pikitup** - Pikitup accepts all forms of payment including cheques, credit cards, cash, stop payments on bank accounts and debit orders, with the exception of Postal Orders.

## Resolve your old credit balance quicker

We have recently embarked on a special project to reduce the number of accounts with credit balances that are more than 12 months old. Thousands of customers could be receiving refund cheques if the account holders can be traced. If you're expecting a refund for an overpayment, or are still outstanding the refund of the Clearance Certificate payment you made, we invite you to contact us as soon as possible. You can email us at [joburgconnect@joburg.org.za](mailto:joburgconnect@joburg.org.za). Remember to include:

- the name of the account holder,
- the account number,
- the physical address and postal address,
- your contact phone numbers (cellphone and landline), and
- your email address.

If your query is less than a year old, you can also email us at [joburgconnect@joburg.org.za](mailto:joburgconnect@joburg.org.za). Remember to specify in the message field if your query is less or more than a year old; or ☎ 011 375 5555.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### The MPRA and your Sectional Title

- 1 Why has my Sectional Title unit been valued separately from the entire property? This is a requirement of the new legislation, and will result in each unit owner receiving an individual rates account in the future.
- 2 How was my unit valued? In exactly the same way as a normal residential property. Sales of similar units were considered to determine the value of your unit within the complex, taking into consideration factors such as exclusive rights and common property. Where no sales have taken place in a complex, other similar complexes are used as barometers of potential values.
- 3 How will you value common property? Exclusive use rights that are registered in the Deeds Office will be valued according to the use (e.g. garage, carport, store, etc.), and the owner will be liable to pay these rates.

## Understanding the new Valuation Roll

The General Valuation Roll is a legal document containing the property information for every single property within the City of Johannesburg. Based on this information we can calculate rates and taxes payable by each property owner. In the past, property was valued on land only, however the Municipal Property Rates Act now requires us to value property based on market value (that is land value plus improvements, or building value).

In estimating market value, our Valuers use many sources of information, including title deeds, building plans, on-site inspections, and income and expense information (where the property produces an income). Other factors such as land size, location, age of improvements, quality of construction, and type of accommodation are also considered. Sectional-title properties, factories, warehouses, schools, churches, hotels, and golf courses, for example, are valued differently from domestic properties.



## Tell a friend about Sectional Title address details

If you have a friend, family member or even colleague who is a Sectional Title property owner, please make a point of telling them that we need their address details urgently.

Sectional Title owners will be receiving their first rates account from 1 July 2008, as part of the new Municipal Property Rates Act. However, if we don't have their correct address details, their rates statement will be sent to their Body Corporate or Managing Agent.

There's a form that they can **download from the City's website at [www.joburg.org.za](http://www.joburg.org.za)** (click on the **Sectional Title button**), or they can send us a **fax to 011 381 9377** with the heading, "**Sectional Title Form required**". They can request an electronic copy of the form by sending us an email to [ratespolicy@joburg.org.za](mailto:ratespolicy@joburg.org.za) and adding "**Sectional Title Form required**" into the message field. They can return the form to us by email, or fax it to **011 381 9377**, or **post it to Rates Policy, Sectional Title Forms, PO Box 1450, Johannesburg, 2000**.

Remember that they can also request to receive their statement by email by sending an email to [citybuzz@joburg.org.za](mailto:citybuzz@joburg.org.za) - and so can you!

## Life Rights excluded from rates

If you're a pensioner and own the 'Life Rights' to the property you live in within an old age home or complex, you aren't liable for rates and so won't be affected by the new rates policy (MPRA). This is because you own Life Rights to your property - the right to live in that property until you die. You don't own the actual property or the land it stands on. This is owned by the old age home management group, and they remain liable for the rates on your property. If the old age home management group is registered as an NGO or Section 21 company, then it can apply for a rates rebate, under the new policy.