



MEDIA STATEMENT

How consumers should dispose of food that may contain Listeria

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07 March 2018

The Health Minister, Aaron Motsoaledi, announced that notices of safe recall had been issued to Enterprise Foods in Polokwane and Rainbow Chicken Limited in Sasolburg due to traces of Listeria being found at these production facilities, the announcement has caused further public concern and outcry since Sunday.¹ The Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA) would like consumers to be aware of the safe disposal method of food that may be contaminated.

“The IWMSA finds it encouraging to see that brands are being transparent and putting their consumers’ health first. The fact that certain cold meats may contain Listeria bacteria means that these food products are condemned and should therefore, be classified as infectious waste to be disposed of responsibly. Simply discarding the food in the waste bin will not solve the problem, as waste pickers could go through the bags and bins to recover this waste before it is collected and transported to the landfill site. Landfill waste pickers, who recover recyclable material from landfill are also at risk,” says Prof Suzan Oelofse, past-president of the Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA).

The correct method to dispose of infectious food is to return it to the store or manufacturer from which it was purchased for responsible disposal through thermal treatment or lime treated trenching at licenced engineered landfills.

Consumers and businesses within the food and hospitality industry can search www.allwastesolutions.co.za, the buyer’s guide of the waste industry, for reputable treatment and disposal facilities and services where these food items can be safely managed. The website has been created in collaboration with and is fully endorsed by the IWMSA and its members.

The IWMSA supports the Department of Health’s efforts to educate and inform the public about this foodborne disease. The Department’s website (www.health.gov.za) can be consulted for informative documents regarding the Listeriosis disease.²

To find out more about best practices and training within the waste management industry please visit www.iwmsa.co.za. You can also follow IWMSA on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/iwmsa>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/IWMSA>).

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Released by Reputation Matters

Media contact:

Nadia Nel

Mobile Number: 081 439 3912

nadia@reputationmatters.co.za

List of references:

¹ Press Reader. 2018. <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/pretoria-news/20180306/textview>

² Department of Health. <http://www.health.gov.za/index.php/component/phocadownload/category/432>