



**Press statement issued on behalf of the Executive Mayor of Midvaal Municipality Cllr Timothy Nast. Immediate release: Monday 13 December 2010**

### **MIDVAAL EMPOWERS FARMERS TO CONTROL FIRES IN THEIR AREAS**

On 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010 the Executive Mayor Cllr. Timothy Nast handed over 5 brand new fire trailers to sector leaders in Midvaal's Fire Protection Association. "Due to the effect that grass/ veld fires have on our farming communities and the environment Midvaal local Municipality has invested R 120 000 to these additional 5 fire trailers to ensure proper preparedness and response to these hazards," says Executive Mayor Nast.

Each year the Midvaal Fire Station receives approximately 550 grass/ veld fire related calls. To combat this huge amount of grass/ veld fires, over the past 10 years, Midvaal acquired some 70 fire trailers that are being used throughout Midvaal's entire 2400 square km area. The Midvaal Fire Station has trained farmers to use fire trailers to extinguish fires in their area.

Executive Mayor Nast encouraged all farmers and landowners to ensure that fire breaks are in place to ensure that grass/ veld fires do not spread to adjacent properties and that all open land/ vacant stands are kept clean and free of overgrown, dry vegetation.

Every year during the dry fire season (31 March to 30 September) fires have the potential of wrecking havoc across Midvaal's beautiful landscape, destroying property, land, fauna and flora which causes land degradation, soil erosion and ultimately pollution. Grass/ veld fires if not properly controlled and extinguished could lead to loss of life, severe injuries and loss of possessions. The Midvaal Fire Station has found that a large portion of these fires are caused by cigarettes, man made fires that get out of control or during firebreaks.

"All landowners and farmers must get permission during next year's grass season for their firebreaks from the Midvaal Fire Station. And to also be aware that firebreaks means cutting the grass/ veld rather than burning it," concludes Executive Mayor Nast.

**ENDS -**

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**Caption for photographs: Photo names from left to right**  
**Midvaal's Fire Protection Association:**

- 1 Mark Hughes
- 2 Themba Dlamini (Dept Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery)
- 3 Faan Botha
- 4 Roxy Du Toit
- 5 Charmain Humphrey
- 6 Regh Humphrey
- 7 Timothy Nast
- 8 James Grey
- 9 Ivan Parks
- 10 Anthony Bruno (Deputy Chief Fire)
- 11 Corne Heymans ( Fire operations Midvaal)
- 12 Jan Du Toit

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