

## **eThekwini Municipality embraces the future with electronic rates**

Many industries and businesses are turning to technological solutions to streamline systems and speed up processes. eThekwini Municipality is a leader in this forward-thinking trend within the property transfer process, and is embracing electronic solutions for rates clearances.

Obtaining a rates clearance certificate is an essential step in the successful transfer of a property, and this process has historically been the cause of many delays in registration. After a number of years of a sluggish property market, transfers are once again on the rise, and all parties involved in the property transfer process including sellers, buyers, estate agents and attorneys, benefit from a smoother, more efficient process.

With many municipalities striving to speed up the process for obtaining rates clearance figures and certificates, eThekwini Municipality has taken charge of the situation in the KwaZulu-Natal region. The municipality is upgrading their electronic system for rates clearances, which promises to be an incredibly positive step in moving the council forward.

“Delays in settling rates clearance and obtaining a rates clearance certificate can have major repercussions for all parties involved in the transaction; sellers suffer interest losses, conveyancing attorneys allocate extensive time and money to following up with council offices, and buyers are unable to accurately plan their move into their newly purchased property,” explains Cher Chapple, General Manager of Korbitec Municipal Services. “eThekwini Municipality’s updated software solution will provide welcome relief across the board and the efficiency of the system means that the property transaction process will be simple, efficient and cost-effective.”

As of August 2013, eThekwini Municipality has upgraded their rates clearance system, which ensures the security and integrity of information and documentation supplied, while offering attorneys a significantly easier means of acquiring rates clearance figures and certificates. Attorneys are able to complete this process electronically through their conveyancing software, eliminating manual processes.

Not only will this updated system improve the overall workflow for the municipality, but it will also provide attorneys with a timeous method for obtaining rates clearance figures and certificates and ensure property ownership information is updated as soon as possible.

By enabling this form of electronic communication with the council, eThekwini Municipality has shown their dedication to the public by delivering a better service to consumers. This is a significant step in following the example of other first-world countries where the process of property transfers has been reduced in time to a matter of a few days.

With eThekwini and a number of other South African councils setting the precedent for taking municipalities into the future with efficient electronic systems, all parties will soon be able to enjoy simpler, more time-effective property transfers.

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