



Under current circumstances, only high-risk patients will be tested. Photo for illustrative purposes.

No symptoms, no test says lab after backlog

Due to high volume of samples received daily, only high risk and symptomatic people will be priority for Covid-19 tests.

Sinesipho Schrieber

People who have been in contact with confirmed Covid-19 cases, but have shown no symptoms, will for the time being not be tested for the virus.

This as private laboratories such as Ampath and Lancet try to catch up with a severe backlog in tests.

Instead contact persons showing no symptoms were advised to self-quarantine for 14 days and only test when they show any symptoms, said Ampath CEO Dr Mick Forder in a statement.

“The rapid spread of the virus in the province and throughout South Africa threatens to overwhelm both public and private medical facilities and services, including private pathology laboratory services,” he said.

Forder said although Ampath continued to ramp up Covid-19 testing capacity, the volume of Covid-19 samples received over the last week impacted negatively on the

turnaround-time.

Forder said under current circumstances, it would prioritise testing to only high-risk patients.

“Due to the volume of samples received daily, ill hospitalised patients, healthcare workers, symptomatic patients and high-risk vulnerable patients with comorbidities will be our first priority for Covid-19 testing.”

Furthermore, the lab requested doctors to only refer symptomatic patients for Covid-19 testing as a temporary measure until it can process all the referrals.

According to Ampath, the backlog pushed results to between 48 and 96 hours.

“This will depend on the distance from collection site to performing laboratory and the volume of tests at the laboratory.

“Other patient result turnaround-time could be over 96 hours.”

Initially, the results at the labs took about 24 hours for people to receive them.

“We apologise in advance for the delayed Covid-19 test turnaround times and we assure you we will continue in our efforts to ramp up capacity to reduce this going forward.”

In a statement, Lancet laboratories said it would prioritise the testing of health workers, hospital inpatients, pre-admission testing, symptomatic patients and high-risk patients with comorbidities.

Dealing with the backlog, Lancet said it would not prioritise patients seeking to retest after 14 days of the initial tests, low-risk contacts requesting testing eight days after of exposure and low-risk contacts.

Department of Health spokesperson Dr Lwazi Manzi said the department was to shift from its mass testing strategy under rapid growing Covid-19 cases and target hotspot areas.

This after the Covid-19 ministerial advisory committee flagged that mass testing strategy close to peak season could lead to resource constraints and a large testing backlog.

Last week, the Gauteng Health MEC Bandile Masuku reported a 30 000 backlog in the department’s laboratories.

Masuku said the department was working with private laboratories to alleviate the backlog, as the province has a high number of cases.

Lifelong friends donate R100 000 to Pta animal shelters

Carli Koch

Lifelong friends Leonie Loods and Mariette de Jager have donated a whopping R75 000 to Wollies animal project and Woodrock animal rescue.

A charity event in aid of the animal shelters was set to take place in April, but due to the coronavirus the event was forced to be cancelled.

More than 500 tickets were sold for

the champagne breakfast featuring South African pianist, entertainer, producer and author, Rocco de Villiers.

“Unfortunately, the event was cancelled. Most ticket holders said that we do not have to pay them back and rather split the money for the animal shelters of choice,” said De Jager, adding that R25 000 was also raised for Husky Romi Rescue and Wolf Sanctuary in the Free State.

“We share the same love for animals and

pets never seem to disappoint.

“I have a special place for pets and Leonie is fond of wolves and huskies.

“We decided to donate the money to Wollies, Woodrock and Wolves of Reitz as they are ‘no-killing’ shelters.

“An animal needs to be given a second chance - just like we humans have,” said Loods.

Vet bills and purchasing of medication are some of the shelters’ biggest expenses.

“We have over 400 animals in our care. Sometimes we feel so alone. But looking at this donation made me realise there are so many looking after us and care for the welfare of animals,” said Fiona Manuel of Woodrock.

Wollies founder Cilla Trexler, who provides for the many dogs and cats temporarily housed in the shelter, said that the community did not realise the daily

abuse and neglect of animals.

“We are very grateful for this donation as we provide for the many dogs and cats. We will be able to pay some of the vet bills and medication,” said Trexler.

Trexler and Manuel were blown away by the money raised as they were only told to meet up with Loods and De Jager for a cup of coffee.

“We did not expect this and were so surprised at the amount of money raised. We are blessed with people like Leonie and Mariette,” Manuel and Trexler said.

Lucky draws such as flannel animal blankets, all the way from England, a Persian carpet worth R7 500, a Paul Mitchell hamper and a pottery bowl from well-known ceramic artist Rhoda Henning, were up for grabs.

A dog design and Scottie quilts were also part of the lucky draw.

INVITATION TO COMMENT AND REGISTER
NOTICE OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT & WATER USE AUTHORISATION PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED MINING OF QUARRIES 4, 5, 6A, & 6B ASSOCIATED WITH THE UPGRADE OF NATIONAL ROAD R573 (MOLOTO ROAD), GAUTENG PROVINCE

Notice is hereby given in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 (as amended) published in Government Notice (GN) No. R982 in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) that the South African National Road Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) is intending to undertake an Environmental Authorisation process for the mining of Quarries associated with the proposed upgrading of National Road R573 (Moloto Road), Gauteng Province. A Water Use Authorisation is also required in terms of Section 21 of the National Water Act No. 36 of 1998, as Quarries 4, 6A & 6B, fall within a Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Regulated Area. It is proposed that these Quarries will be mined for gravel, road pavement materials, sand, stone and aggregate that will be used as construction material to satisfy the proposed road construction needs. The Quarries that will require a Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment process are as follows:

- Quarry 6A is situated on the Remainder of Farm Doornpoort 295JR. The site centre geographic coordinates are 25°37'35.67" S, 28°17'08.25" E; and
- Quarry 6B is situated on the Remainder of Farm Doornpoort 295JR. The proposed site is situated west of Quarry 6A with the N1 separating both sites. The site centre geographic coordinates are 25°37'44.23" S, 28°16'15.04" E.




A Basic Assessment process will be required for the following quarries:

- Quarry 4 is situated on Portion 2 of the Farm Jakkalsdane 243 JR. The proposed site is situated within the boundaries of the Moloto training facility of the South African Police Service. The site centre geographic coordinates are 25°31'11.31" S, 28°37'14.03" E; and
- Quarry 5 is situated on Portion 46 of the Farm Boekenhoutskloofdrift 286 JR. The site centre geographic coordinates are 25°31'43.87" S, 28°30'59.59" E.

The sites will be treated as individual sites and a separate Environmental Application Process will be undertaken for each site. The need for the Scoping and EIA process as per the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 as amended is triggered by Listing Notice 2 (Activity 15) and Listing Notice 3 (Activity 12) whereas the need of a Basic Assessment process is triggered by Listing Notice 1 (Activity 27) and Listing Notice 3 (Activity 12) respectively. A Water Use Authorisation Process (WUA) will also be undertaken as per the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) for Section 21 (c) and (j) water uses as the proposed Quarries 6A, 6B & 4 as well as the existing access roads fall within a 500m of the delineated edge of a wetland.


GA Environment (Pty) Ltd has been appointed as Independent Environmental Assessment Practitioners to undertake the Basic Assessment and the Scoping & EIA as well as the Public Participation Process for the project. All Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) must be provided with an opportunity to participate in the EIA Process for the proposed project. All parties who wish to participate in the process by commenting, registering as I&APs or obtaining more information on the proposed project can contact **Kirithi Peramaul** on: Tel: 011 312 2537, Fax: 011 805 1950, E-mail: environment@gaenvironment.com or kirithip@gaenvironment.com or Post: P.O. Box 6723 Halfway House 1685.

PLEASE REGISTER YOUR INTEREST IN THE PROJECT BY NO LATER THAN 8th SEPTEMBER 2020.

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Mariette de Jager, Cilla Trexler (Wollies) and Leonie Loods.