**PRESS RELEASE**

Ensuring compliance with evolving waste management regulations

***13 July, 2015:*** *Although South Africa has made some great strides in addressing key issues experienced in waste management over the past 20 years, the industry remains problematic, unsustainable and unable to achieve legislative goals and targets in its current state.*

According to 2012 statistics released by the Department of Environmental Affairs, an approximate total of 108-million-tonnes of waste is generated nationwide. General waste accounts for around 59-million-tonnes, unclassified waste 48-million-tonnes, and hazardous waste the remaining one-million-tonnes. Of all this waste, only ten percent is recycled – the rest is landfilled.

With a continuously growing population and economy, waste generated in South Africa is expected to double to approximately 216-million-tonnes by 2025. “Our current lack of recycling facilities and great dependency on landfills – most of which are not compliant – means that we are rapidly running out of space to contain our waste,” says I-CAT Environmental Services manager **Rachelle Stofberg**.

Additional challenges include; increased complexities of waste streams, historical backlogs of waste services and a limited understanding of waste flows and SA’s national waste balance. Under-pricing is a major issue in local waste management, and there are also few compliant hazardous waste management facilities.

In response to these challenges, the National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS) was developed and subsequently implemented by government in 2012. It is a legislative requirement of the National Environmental Waste Act (NEMWA) of 2008, in order to achieve the following objectives;

* Promote waste minimisation, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste
* Ensure the effective and efficient delivery of waste services
* Grow the contribution of the waste sector to the green economy
* Ensure awareness of the impact of waste on people’s health, wellbeing and the environment
* Achieve integrated waste management planning
* Ensure sound budgeting and financial management for waste services
* Provide measures to remediate contaminated land
* Establish effective compliance with an enforcement of the Waste Act

A variety of tools have been developed to assist in achieving the goals set out in the NWMS. These tools include inter alia:

* Waste Classification and Management System
* Norms and Standards
* Licencing
* Industry Waste Management Plans
* Extended Producer Responsibility
* Priority Waste
* Economic Instruments

The Waste Classification and Management System provides a methodology for the classification of waste and provides standards for the assessment and disposal of waste for landfill disposal. To this effect, the Waste Classification and Management Regulations came into effect in August 2013.

Under the Regulations, all waste generators are required to classify each waste stream according to the SANS 10234 Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

SANS 10234 establishes criteria for the classification and labelling of hazardous substances and mixtures, including waste, to ensure safe transport and disposal. Under SANS 10234, it must be established whether the waste is hazardous based on physical, health and environmental hazardous properties (hazard classes), and the degree or severity of the hazard posed (hazard categories).

Stofberg indicates that most of the timeframes for achieving goals set out in NWMS have not been met. “In cases where particular standards have been developed, we are observing a slow progression by industry to comply with the latest regulations and standards.”

She adds that hazardous waste is also not being classified in accordance with SANS 10234 nor classified within 180 days of generation. “General, hazardous and recyclable waste are still being mixed. Unfortunately, this demonstrates little commitment to compliance.”

Stofberg attributes this lack of compliance from industry to a variety of factors, including; a lack of understanding of the new regulations and the incorrect interpretation of roles, responsibilities and compliance timeframes associated with regulations. “This is further compounded by financial costs associated with new waste management infrastructure, record keeping, and SANS 10234 classifications, together with limited compliance enforcement from the regulating authorities.”

Certain compliance, such as the NEMWA Waste Classification and Management Regulations, must be complied with within three years of promulgation. This means that mandatory compliance is little more than a year away. I-CAT offers a comprehensive range of services to assist its clients in complying with the new Waste Classification and Management Regulations. These include;

* Waste licencing applications
* Integrated waste management plans
* SANS 10234-accredited waste classification and management
* Integrated waste and water management plans
* Waste assessment for landfill disposal
* Industry waste management plans
* Waste inventory management in accordance with the National Waste Information System

“I-CAT Environmental Solutions adds measurable value in assisting various operations in the industrial and mining sectors, by offering specialist services in waste classification and management, environmental compliance monitoring (water, dust, noise), environmental authorisation processes, and comprehensive annual audits and reviews,” Stofberg concludes.

To find out more about I-CAT’s waste management solutions offering, visit [www.i-cat.co.za](http://www.i-cat.co.za)

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**Notes to the editor**  
To download hi-res images for this release, please visit [http://media.ngage.co.za](http://media.ngage.co.za/) and click the I-CAT link to view the company’s press office.

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