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Media Release

For Immediate Release

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From Tragedy to Action: Joburg Targets Rogue Property Owner in Major Crackdown

The City of Johannesburg has escalated its enforcement operations in Ormonde following the tragic building collapse that claimed the lives of nine people. This decisive action forms part of the City's commitment to safeguard residents and ensure strict compliance with municipal by-laws.

Acting on instructions from City Manager, Dr Floyd Brink, multi-disciplinary teams conducted targeted inspections on properties linked to the same owner, operating under New Order Investments. Preliminary findings have revealed a deeply concerning pattern of widespread non-compliance across more than 30 properties in the area, including hotels, office parks, and residential buildings.

During the operation:

- Three properties inspected alone were found to owe approximately R19.5 million to the City.
- Two office parks were shut down, and one construction site was closed immediately due to serious by-law violations.
- Three properties had water and electricity services disconnected due to illegal connections and absence of proper metering.
- A further investigation is underway into a property suspected of unlawfully sourcing electricity.
- Three formal compliance notices and two closure notices were issued.

Of grave concern, the City uncovered irregularities in the approval of building plans, which are currently under investigation. These irregularities have resulted in losses exceeding R10 million, reinforcing the need for stricter compliance and oversight, and appropriate action is being taken.

The City is particularly alarmed by evidence that some buildings under construction are already being occupied, placing lives at immediate risk.

"This level of lawlessness is unacceptable. We cannot allow a situation where nine lives are lost and there are no consequences. We are acting decisively to prevent further tragedy," said Dr Brink.

Dr Brink has instructed a full-scale forensic investigation into all properties linked to the owner, with findings expected to be concluded and communicated by mid-May. The City is also pursuing urgent legal action, with court proceedings already underway.

While the City acknowledges the unfortunate impact on tenants and businesses affected by closures, it emphasises that the protection of human life remains the highest priority.

“It is deeply regrettable that innocent tenants and workers are affected, however, the cost of non-compliance cannot be measured against human life. We urge the property owner to urgently address all compliance issues to restore safe operations,” added Dr Brink.

The City of Johannesburg remains resolute in its mission to enforce by-laws, restore order, and protect its residents. This operation sends a clear message: non-compliance, especially by repeat offenders, will not be tolerated.

Dr Brink continues to lead from the front, ensuring that the City responds to critical issues in real time, with urgency and accountability.

Ends

Issued by the City of Johannesburg

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