

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Old Mutual's Mutualpark Realises The Shared Value Opportunity Of Recycling Polystyrene
The Polystyrene Association and Mutualpark join forces to increase corporate recycling



Above: Doné Rankin-Rowley, Contracts Manager at Old Mutual's Mutualpark seen here with Adri Spangenberg of the Polystyrene Association, standing in front of large bales of polystyrene ready to be collected and recycled

Cape Town, 23 July 2018. Old Mutual's Mutualpark in Cape Town is one of the largest corporate head offices in South Africa. With more than 9 000 employees working at this 166 000 m² office space, it is to be expected that a lot of waste would be generated at these premises on a daily basis. However, operating as a Responsible Business is at the heart of Old Mutual's strategy and is embedded into their operations, culture and shared value strategy. The essence of shared value is to ultimately create mutually beneficial value - not only for Old Mutual's shareholders in terms of being a profitable business but also for the benefit of all stakeholders, including the communities in which Old Mutual operates.

Environmental sustainability is one of the five pillars of Old Mutual's Responsible Business strategy and thanks to the concerted efforts of the Mutualpark Waste Management programme, the company has managed to divert waste from landfill to more optimal and useful source streams. Moreover, it strives to educate visitors and employees alike about the importance of recycling. Old Mutual as a leading responsible business in the investment, savings, insurance, and banking sector has become a shining example of how to find opportunities and innovative ways to live and work that are sustainable and environmentally conscious.

"We conducted a waste audit at Mutualpark in 2015, after which Old Mutual developed an integrated waste management policy which formed part of our application to the Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA) to be recognised as a Green Building. Upon completion of this submission, Old Mutual was proudly awarded a 5-star rating under the existing building rating category – making the company the largest, existing building to achieve the level of environmental excellence in the Southern Hemisphere," says Executive General Manager, Heloise van der Mescht.

According to Van der Mescht, Old Mutual acknowledges and embraces the value of an effective waste management strategy and for this reason began to separate and divert its waste into correct streams at source.

“This strategic approach to find better, more environmentally friendly and sustainable ways of working, has assisted us to have more control over our resources. It has allowed us to run better, more cost efficient operations and enabled us to reduce areas of risk, while simultaneously being committed to being environmentally responsible,” she says.



Above: One of the many recycling bins seen throughout Mutualpark

One of the environmentally responsible areas that Old Mutual is currently pioneering in the field of recycling is their recent partnership with the Polystyrene Association of South Africa. According to Adri Spangenberg, CEO of the Polystyrene Association, Mutualpark has various cafeterias and food outlets on its premises.

“Old Mutual employees, as in many companies, utilise polystyrene packaging such as hamburger clamshells and coffee cups for their take-away lunches and refreshments throughout the day. This was an obvious area for responsible intervention and consideration,” Spangenberg says.

A few months ago Old Mutual did try to switch to alternative food packaging and take-away containers, but these more environmentally friendly alternatives worked out to be far more expensive and were regrettably not a financially viable option for the onsite food outlets.

“We also found that many of the other packaging options were not as effective and in many cases were not readily recycled,” Van der Mescht stated. “In our search for a viable alternative, we were delighted, when 18 months ago, we discovered that there is a market for post-consumer polystyrene and that it is recycled into a wide variety of different products. It was on that basis that we were ready to go back to the polystyrene and our partnership with the Polystyrene Association began,” she says.

The polystyrene waste that is generated from the Mutualpark premises gets cleaned by a dedicated team of workers on site, who then ensure that the packaging is collected and baled. Approximately 50 bales of polystyrene are collected every 6 weeks by Greenlite Concrete for use in lightweight concrete and screeding applications. The left-over food waste is also attended to and sent to a nearby fly farm in the Western Cape. In addition, the Polystyrene Association has committed to assist Mutualpark with ongoing educational campaigns aimed at reaching employees and visiting customers as well as the surrounding communities in Cape Town about the importance of recycling polystyrene.

“We are also hoping to identify an Old Mutual beneficiary in need of a new building that can be built with their polystyrene donations. Other large corporates who want to follow in Mutualpark’s footsteps are welcome to contact us to discuss ways in which we can encourage their employees to also become responsible corporate citizens and avid recyclers who not only benefit the environment, but their communities as well,” Adri concludes.

For more information, visit www.polystyrenesa.co.za

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Issued on behalf of the Polystyrene Association of SA

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