

# MEDIA STATEMENT

Building Number 4, No. 7 Government Boulevard,  
Riverside Park Extension 2, Nelspruit, 1201  
Private Bag X 11215, Nelspruit, 1200  
Tel. 013 766 4271/4132/4148

---

**Date: 05 November 2014**

**Attention: Editors / Executive Producers/ Reporters**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **KHOLWANE URGES CONSUMERS TO SPEND WISELY DURING THIS FESTIVE SEASON**

---

**Mbombela** – Mpumalanga MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr. Sikhumbuzo Eric Kholwane has appealed to consumers to spend their hard- earned cash wisely during this festive season.

MEC Kholwane said consumers need to consider cash as the cheapest option for payment as it is interest free. The credit option has additional cost implications such as finance charges and interest.

“I acknowledge that the festive season is around the corner and it is perceived as the time for giving, but as you spend your hard-earned money you must do it responsibly considering the obligations you will have after the festive season, like paying for school fees, uniforms and others”, said MEC Kholwane.

To strengthen efforts to fight and protect consumers the Department of Economic Development and Tourism has earlier this year established a second consumer court which is dedicated to service both Nkangala and Gert Sibande District municipalities. This consumer court will join the Ehlanzeni Consumer Court which was established in 2009.

“We believe that by establishing these consumer courts in the Province, we will be able to empower consumers to know and enforce their rights and responsibilities. In addition they will also assist to protect consumers from unscrupulous and unfair business practices” said MEC Kholwane.

MEC Kholwane also urged consumers to be very careful with advertising messages on radios, television newspapers and other forms of advertising, used to communicate such messages.

“As I speak, businesses are already targeting and overwhelming consumers with heavy marketing ploys in the form of lucrative advertising and other forms of merchandise promotion, such as the “Buy now and pay later”, their intention is to cash-in on your hard-earned income”, so be very careful of such messages”, concluded MEC Kholwane .

The Department of Economic Development and Tourism through the Consumer Office offers the following tips to consumers:

- Cash is the cheapest option –it is interest free, you can negotiate discounts and shop around for better prices.



- Credit has additional cost implications – when buying on credit, remember that finance charges and interest apply.
- Read contracts or agreements carefully before signing – your signature is your “yes” to what is written on the agreement, and is legally binding. Never sign a blank document!
- Be aware of NO Return, NO Refund Policies when purchasing items, -Know your consumers rights to redress.
- Always keep your original packaging and receipt (till slip) – you may not be able to return default goods or exchange items without it.
- Check if the goods you buy have a warranty/ guarantee – this will ensure that you can get faulty goods repaired, or exchanged.
- Always pay your creditors on time :store accounts , insurance , medical schemes
- Always shop around for best deals and prices before you buy.
- Always be careful about the buy now and pay later sales strategy
- Do not spend beyond your means – save for upcoming January expenses such as school, fees, stationary and other items.

Consumers are encouraged to use the following numbers and street address to register their complaints:

Telephone : 013 766 4802  
 Email : [consumer@mpg.gov.za](mailto:consumer@mpg.gov.za)  
 Street Address: 30 Brown Street, Nedbank Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor

**#END#**

***Issued by the Communication Directorate  
 Mpumalanga: Economic Development and Tourism  
 For media enquiries, contact: Mohau Ramodibe on 082 771 9950/ 013 766 4148***