

MEDIA RELEASE
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For immediate release



ONE-STOP CONVENIENCE – Celebrating the opening of the new FreshStop at the Cookhouse Service Station in time for the festive season travelers. (Photo Credit: Maven Connection)

TRAVELLER'S STOP REVAMP FINALISED IN TIME FOR FESTIVE SEASON

4 December 2017 – WHEN Blue Crane Route Mayor Bonisile Manxoweni opened the revamped Cookhouse Service Station last week [SUBS; Thursday 30 November 2017], the R5-million investment in the small Eastern Cape town was not his only reason for celebration.

For Councillor Manxoweni, who leads the local municipality covering Cookhouse, Pearston and Somerset East, it was a moment to reflect on his personal journey, speaking on the same forecourt where he spent more than a decade working as a petrol attendant while saving up to further his education.

Joking that he had debated wearing his old uniform for the opening event, Manxoweni commended Caltex Eastern Cape Marketer (CECM) for its investment in a community hard hit by poverty, high unemployment and crime.



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“Investment such as this is often the catalyst to further growth and development in areas like this. I pledge the support of the Blue Crane Municipality to this partnership as we would like to ensure that it succeeds and grows,” said Manxoweni.

All jobs at the service station were retained in the upgrade, which saw CECM investing R3.5-million and FreshStop R1.5-million in modernizing the forecourt facilities and adding a FreshStop convenience and fresh food store, Crispy Chicken outlet, Lavazza coffee bar, and upgraded restrooms with wheelchair access.

Apart from plans to upgrade the fuel forecourt in the near future, FreshStop Cookhouse offers customers a range of fresh fruit and vegetables, a selection of grocery items and a Grab ‘n Go section for fresh sandwiches, Shamrock and Piemans pies, doughnuts, muffins, smoothies and snacks.

In addition, the store has opened a Barista-operated Lavazza Coffee station and the 1st Crispy Chicken outlet in the area.

FreshStop director Joe Boyle said the economic benefit of the newly upgraded site went further than permanent employment at the service station itself, as the contractors and other service providers had also contributed to the local economy throughout the construction period.

Well-known Bedford locals and successful business couple, Wolfgang and Sylvia Gaiser, took over management of Cookhouse Service Station (previously known as Subway Service Station) in the first quarter of 2017.

With over 30 years' experience in business, the couple was well prepared for the challenge to turn the site around in time for the festive season.

Within hours of the opening at 6am last Thursday, the bustling forecourt and aisles filled with locals and travelers bore testimony to the attraction of one-stop convenience at the service station, conveniently located at the intersection of the busy N10 and R63 routes.

The revamp is the largest investment in the area to date by CECM, since the original Subway service station was the first to be converted to a Caltex site by CECM in 2007.

FreshStop's Boyle noted that the new FreshStop store was one of three to be opened on the same day, bringing the total amount of FreshStop outlets to 269 stores nationally.

Sharon Parry, representing CECM, said that a special commendation should go to the various contractors and maintenance team for ensuring that the forecourt continued operating throughout the construction period. She also said that as part of the CECM commitment to the community it will be reconstructing the Welcome sign to the small town of Cookhouse.

As part of the FreshStop offerings three of the staff was selected to go on a Lavazza barista course and passed with flying colours. Not one for shying away from getting into the swing of things, Sylvia followed and is now a fully qualified barista as well.

While sipping a cup of freshly brewed coffee, longstanding resident and teacher, Aretha Vermeulen said that she was very excited to now have a one stop shop on her doorstep. "This is absolutely amazing to know we can now pop in at any time for freshly baked food, good coffee and a choice of fresh fruit and veggies at any time and that it is all in one place! The soon to be opened ATM is also a huge plus because till now we would have had to travel to Somerset East to draw money."

ENDS.

(Words: 671)

Issued by Maven Connection on behalf of Caltex Eastern Cape Marketer.

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EDITORS NOTE:

Caltex Eastern Cape Marketer (CECM) – master franchisor of over 100 Caltex service stations in the Eastern Cape – has invested over R500-million in just over a decade in revamps, upgrades and building new sites, to ensure that locals and travellers have access to Caltex service excellence across the length and breadth of the province.

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FreshStop - FreshStop, named International Convenience Retailer of the Year 2013, is South Africa's fastest growing 24-hour convenience store brand. FreshStop stores are located at 38 Caltex forecourts in the Eastern Cape and feature a variety of innovative departments and products that focuses on the ever-increasing, time conscious demands of consumers.

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