

## Shark Attack

Normally a Shark Attack creates media frenzy, capitalizing on the "Jaws" myth. Humans are not in the shark's food chain and there is always a reason why a shark bites a human.

This the first time a shark attack has been low key and probable cause given

Sewage behind attack? Tue, 27 Jan 2009 17:41

### ***Fact***

A shark attack in which a lifeguard was killed at a Port St Johns beach may have been indirectly caused by untreated sewage in the water, reported the Daily Dispatch on Tuesday. "It is a well known fact that tiger sharks - and some other species such as bull sharks - are attracted to areas where untreated effluent/sewage is released into the ocean and rivers," environmental consultant Conroy van der Riet told the newspaper.

### ***Reality***

On Sunday afternoon, Sikhanyiso Bangilizwe (26) died minutes after he was attacked by a tiger shark at Second Beach in Port St Johns. Van der Riet said he thought the rise in shark attacks in Port St Johns "may be because of the content of the untreated effluent/sewage, the presence of prey species also attracted by the effluent/sewage, or a combination of both". Sharks had a wide diet and would eat "almost anything", said Van der Riet. Chemicals found in the guts of many species - including humans, attracted sharks. "There are also many documented stories of tiger sharks appearing when ships throw their effluent overboard," he said.

### ***The question of water quality***

Van der Riet said water around East London was safer than that in the Transkei region, where the Port St Johns beach is located. "The effluent here (East London) is relatively well treated before being released, thus I don't think it would pose such a significant threat as in the Transkei area, where there is a lot of soak-away systems and a lack of water-borne sewage treatment facilities," he said. East London coastal and environmental services director Dr Alan Carter also told the newspaper that the presence of sewage in water could attract sharks. "Sewage attracts bait fish, which in turn attract sharks. It is worth noting that one of the recommendations from the International shark attack file on how to decrease the already small chance of becoming a victim of a shark attack, is 'Don't go into waters containing sewage'," said Carter.

### ***Denial***

However, Port St John's municipal manager Zola Hewu denied that sewage was spilling into the ocean. "I am not sure what brought the shark to this area but it is definitely not the quality of the water... If that was the case then there would have been more (attacks)," he told the Daily Dispatch. Sapa

### ***Reality***

Now days in South Africa many towns and cities the waste water treatment systems have collapsed due to a major skills shortage and people appointed to positions with out capacity to do the job. The sewage exists and **Port St John's municipal manager makes a political statement that has no foundation.**