

South African public libraries damaged or destroyed during unrest and protest [2005 – 2012]

DATE	LIBRARY	DAMAGE	CAUSE	ARRESTS	COST	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SOURCE
December 2005	Gugulethu Community Centre, Khutsong township, Merafong municipality, Gauteng (at the time, North West).	Burnt to the ground, along with a library and computer center.	Unrest and protest over the changing of provincial boundaries.	None reported.	Estimated at R8 million.		Citizen; "Residents' struggle 'hijacked'" [22 December 2005, p 6]
December 2005	Khutsong Municipal Library, Khutsong township, Merafong municipality, Gauteng (at the time, North West).	Burnt to the ground.	Unrest and protest over the changing of provincial boundaries.	None reported.	Estimated at R1 million.	"I destroyed the library because the government had to be corrected for a big mistake it made." Donald Thekiso, who led a mob which burned Khutsong's municipal library to the ground.	Sunday Times; "The Khutsong rebellion" [15 March 2009] The Star; "Khutsong family's memories reduced to ashes" [20 December 2005]
3 April 2009	University of Zululand Library, KwaZulu Natal	Library and computer lab damaged after students stoned them.	Unhappiness of the composition of the Student Representative Council	Case opened, no arrests made.	Unknown		Mail & Guardian; "Mayhem at Zululand varsity as students go on rampage" [4 November 2009]
June 2009	Mashishini Community Library, Mashishing, Thaba Chweu municipality, Mpumalanga	Significant damage; cause unknown.	Unrest and public protest, at the disappearance of some R3.2 million from council coffers.	Not reported.	Building: R1 600 000 Furniture and equipment: R120 000 Books: R800 000		Parliamentary Reply; Question 153; 19 February 2009. SA News; "New mayor for Thaba Chweu" [21 January 2011]
29 June 2009	Ethandukukhanya Community Library, Piet Retief, Mkhondo municipality, Mpumalanga	Significant damage; cause unknown.	Unrest and public protest	Seven people arrested for public violence. Ultimate consequences for those responsible for damage to library not reported.	Building: R2 500 000 Furniture and equipment: R380 000 Books: R1 124 000	Delivering a new school in 2012, subsequent to the violence of 2009, Premier David Mabuza explained the protester's outrage as	Parliamentary Reply; Question 153; 19 February 2009. SAPA: "2 protesters shot dead" [30 June 2009]

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						follows: "Indeed praise the Lord for this, because in the past you were affected by the evil spirits and demons which led you to behaving badly. Your previous actions indeed distanced you from God."	Speech by Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza [14 September 2012]
28 September 2009	Sakhile informal settlement, Standerton, Lekwa municipality, Mpumalanga	70% of building destroyed by fire.	Public protests, demanding the resignation of the mayor and councilors.	65 people had been arrested and charged with public violence. Ultimate consequences for those who damaged library not reported.	Building: R900 000 Furniture and equipment: R250 000 Books: R680 000		Parliamentary Reply; Question 153; 19 February 2009. SAPA; "Rocks, trash block township" [28 September 2009]
13 October 2009	Siyathuthuka community library, Belfast, Emakhazeni Municipality, Mpumalanga.	Library burnt to the ground. Some books rescued.	Public protests.	18 people were arrested and charged with public violence. Ultimate consequences for those who damaged library not reported.	Building: Cost not known. Furniture and equipment: R100 000 Books: R750 000		Parliamentary Reply; Question 153; 19 February 2009. SAPA; 'Marchers may smash your windows' [13 October 2009]
9 February 2010	Siyathemba township, Balfour, Mpumalanga	Burnt to the ground.	Public protests, in order, according to one protestor "to get government's attention". Another protestor stated: "We had to do it, my chief. These people (government) don't listen to us. We had to show them that we mean business. Our main targets were government properties."	Not reported.	Building: R2 500 000 Furniture and equipment: R380 000 Books: R1 120 000	Police fired rubber bullets when between 800 to 1000 people became "irritated" during a meeting outside the Siyathemba Community Hall.	SAPA: "Protestors burn Mpuma library" [9 February 2011] Parliamentary Reply; Question 153; 19 February 2009. City Press; "Why we burnt Siyathemba library" [21 February 2010]
19 May 2010	Mayibuye Secondary School, Ehlanzeni	The library, laboratory and all windows at the	Pupils accused the school principal of	Not reported. A case of public violence and	Unknown.		SAPA; "Mpuma educ dept condemns

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	municipality, Mpumalanga.	school were damaged when "violent" pupils threw stones at police trying to disperse them with rubber bullets.	witchcraft after he failed to attend a pupil's memorial service some time ago. The school had a 3.4% matric pass rate at the time.	malicious damage to property was being investigated.			violence at Mayibuye" [19 May 2010]
15 April 2011	Meqheleng library, Meqheleng township, Ficksburg, Setsoto municipality, Free State.	Burnt and looted. Only a "handful" of books survived.	Pupils, enraged by the death of Andries Tatane during public protests, looted and set fire to the library.	45 people arrested for public violence. Ultimate consequences for those who damaged library not reported.	Estimated at R760 000	Tatane once taught pupils, wanting to improve their science and maths, at the Meqheleng library.	City Press; "Tatane's death a hit, family believes" [17 April 2011] The Star; "Cele apologises to grieving Ficksburg family" [20 April 2011] Mail & Guardian; "Disillusioned voters snub Ficksburg poll" [20 May 2011] The Citizen; "Ficksburg Erupts in Mob Violence" [15 April 2011]
22 June 2011	Windsorton, Northern Cape	Burnt to ground.	Residents were apparently not happy with the appointment of the local mayor and some councillors after the recent local government elections.	None reported. Two cases of arson opened.	Unknown		SAPA; Municipal buildings damaged in protests [23 June 2011]
21 March 2012	Ratanda Library, Heidelberg, Lesedi Municipality, Gauteng	Burnt to ground.	Municipal workers strike. Some were demanding the removal of the mayor, others wanted investigations into what they said was rampant fraud and corruption, and a small	None reported.	The total estimated value of the damaged amounted to R2 957 615.00.	Ironically, the protests took place both on Human Rights Day and during SA Library Week, which runs annually from 17-24 March 2012. The theme for 2012 was: "Develop @ your	Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA); Press Statement [21 March 2012]

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			number vowed to continue protesting until President Jacob Zuma or an official of nearly his stature came to the township.			library". The Ratanda Library served a community of some 70 000 residents and had a collection of 11 807 catalogued lbooks. These books were completely destroyed, as well as a photocopy/fax machine and 8 brand new computers for library patrons, 3 admin computers, a large screen television and of course furniture.	
30 April 2012	Matoporong township, Reddersburg, Kopanong municipality, Free State.	Library stoned, damaged.	Public protests.	48 people arrested for public violence. Ultimate consequences for those responsible for damage to library not reported.	Unknown.	Protesters were angry about an unsatisfactory response to a memorandum handed to the Kopanong local municipality three weeks earlier.	SAPA; 48 held after protest; [30 April 2012]
2 May 2012	Phiritona Library, Heilbron, Ngwathe Municipality, Free State.	Significant damage to property; building and contents damaged by petrol bombs.	Public unrest.	53 people were charged with malicious damage to property, arson and sabotage. Only 17 appeared in court and were released on R500 bail. Ultimately, no one was held responsible for the library damage.	Unknown	The library was previously damaged during public unrest in August 2007, again by petrol bombs. R50 000 in damage was done.	Parliamentary Reply; Question 153; 19 February 2009. The Daily Sun; "Angry residents protest for water and power!" [3 May 2012]
16 May 2012	Selobelo township, Carolina, Mpumalanga.	Library set alight and partially burned down	Public unrest and protests.	25 people arrested for public violence. Ultimate consequences for those responsible for damage to library	Unknown.		SAPA; "25 Arrested in violent Mpumalanga protest" [17 May 2012]

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3 June 2012	Tlotlang Thuto Middle school, Bona-Bona, Morokweng, Ganyesa, North West province.	School, including library burnt to the ground.	Public protests, generally over the condition of gravel roads.	not reported. 12 people arrested for arson, public violence and malicious damage to property. Ultimate consequences for those who damaged library not reported	Unknown.	It is alleged that the community members broke the burglar door of the school kitchen, took out two gas cylinders and placed them in each class. They opened them and set the classroom alight.	The New Age; "School burnt down over poor roads" [16 June 2012] SAPA; "Schools burnt, 29 people arrested in NWest protests" [3 June 2012]
24 June 2012	Welgeleë Library, Olifantshoek, Gamagara Local Municipality, Northern Cape.	Burnt to the ground.	Public protests.	None reported.	Unknown.	The library had a collection of 40 000 items. These books and audiovisual materials were completely destroyed, as well as a photocopy/fax machine and 6 computers for library patrons, 1 admin computer, a television, fax machine and of course furniture. All the educational toys and games of the Toy Library were also destroyed in the fire.	Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA); Press Statement [24 June 2012]