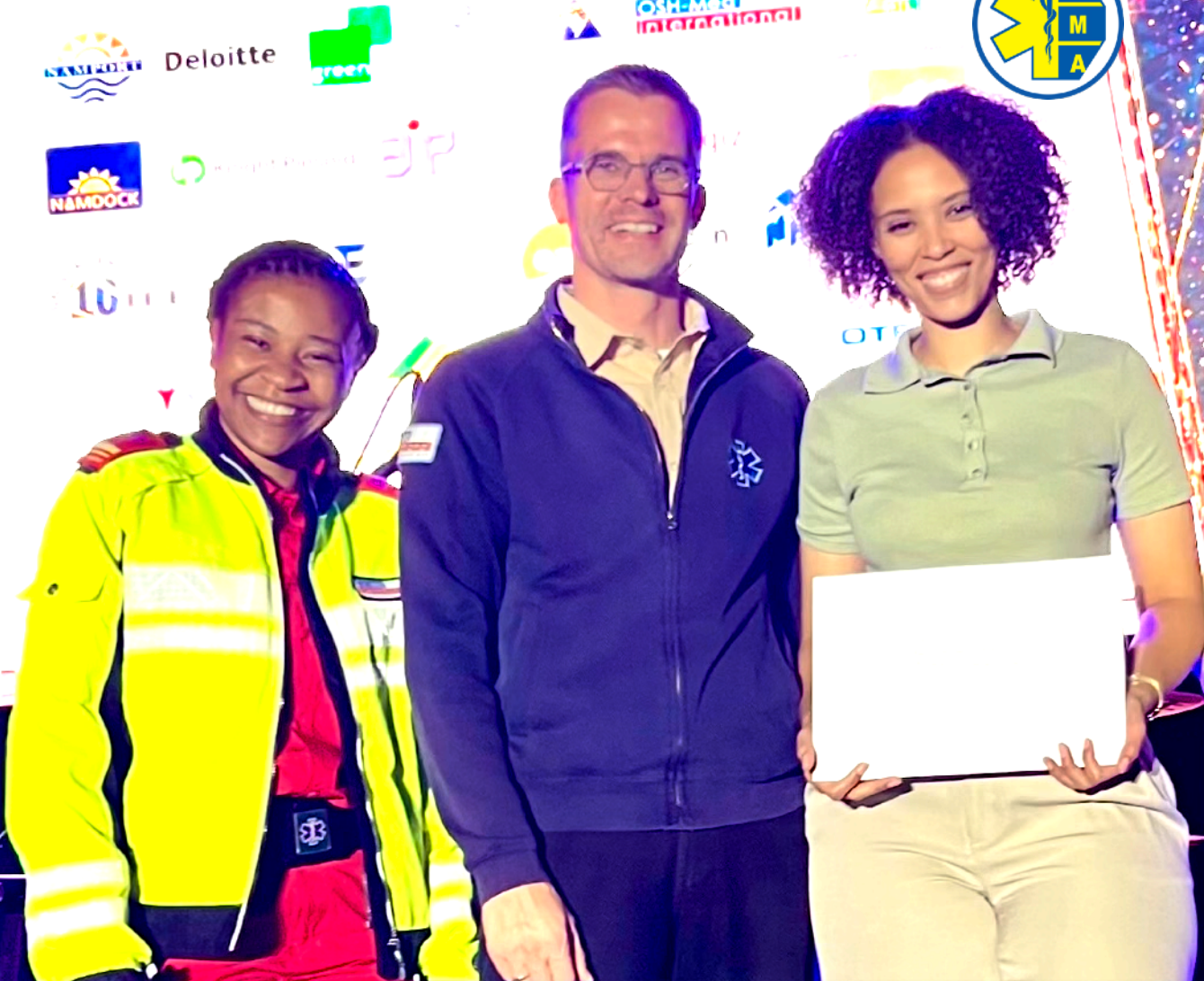


OSHMed Magazine

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by



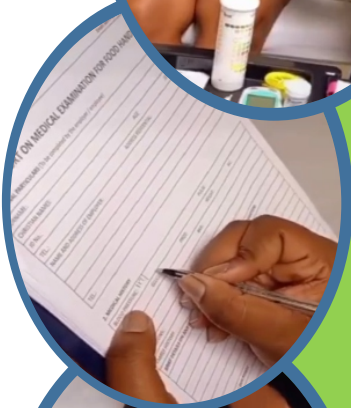
FROM TOP STUDENT TO LIFESAVER

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From Top Student to Lifesaver: Zoe Swartz Set to Join the Ranks of Namibia's ALS Elite

WINDHOEK – In the high-stakes world of pre-hospital emergency care, where seconds often dictate the boundary between life and death, one name is currently shining brighter than the rest: **Zoe Swartz**.

Fresh off a monumental win as the **Best Student of the 3rd Year** at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), Swartz is not just hitting the books –she is hitting the sirens. Currently serving as an Emergency Care Technician (ECT), Swartz is officially scheduled to transition to **Advanced Life Support (ALS) Paramedic** status on **May 7, 2026**.

A Pedigree of Academic Excellence

Swartz's journey through NUST's rigorous **Bachelor of Emergency Medical Care**

(BEMC) program has been nothing short of exemplary. The three-year, NQF Level 7 degree is notorious for its "trial by fire" approach, combining heavy theoretical loads in pathophysiology and anatomy with gruelling **Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)** shifts.

To emerge as the top student in a program that requires physical endurance tests, psychological interviews, and countless weekend shifts is a testament to Swartz's dedication.

"The BEMC program at NUST isn't just about passing exams; it's about proving you can maintain clinical precision under extreme pressure," noted a faculty representative. "Zoe has consistently demonstrated that she possesses both the intellect and the heart required for this profession."

Dual Roles: Practitioner and Educator

While many students focus solely on their studies, Swartz has been an active force in the Namibian medical community. She currently balances two vital roles:

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- **Emergency Medical Assistance (E.M.A.):** Serving as an ECT, providing critical frontline care.
- **OSH-Med International:** Acting as an **Instructor**, where she passes on her knowledge of occupational health and safety to the next generation of responders.



Her colleagues at both [E.M.A.](#) and [OSH-Med International](#) have expressed immense pride in her recent accolades. In a joint statement, the teams described her as an indispensable asset to their organisations.

The Road Ahead: May 7th

The transition from ECT to ALS Paramedic marks a significant leap in clinical responsibility. As an ALS Paramedic, Swartz will be authorised to perform advanced interventions, including complex airway management and the administration of a wider range of emergency medications—skills that are vital in a country as geographically vast as Namibia. A Proud Community

As the countdown to May 7th begins, the Namibian medical community watches with anticipation. Swartz represents the new vanguard of healthcare professionals—highly trained, academically decorated, and battle-tested in the field.

For the teams at E.M.A. and OSH-Med, the feeling is unanimous: they aren't just graduating a student; they are celebrating a leader.

“We are incredibly proud of her achievements,” said Fabian Martens from OSH-Med. **“To see her grow from a dedicated student to a top-tier ALS Paramedic is a win for the entire country’s emergency services.”**

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Quenching Namibia's Thirst: Is Your Water Truly Doing Its Job?

WINDHOEK – *In the driest country south of the Sahara, water is more than just a beverage; it is a lifeline. As temperatures across the Khomas and Erongo regions continue to soar, Namibians are increasingly faced with a choice at the supermarket aisles: Should they reach for a bottle of local mineral water like Oasis or AquaSplash, or is the kitchen tap sufficient?*

A recent deep dive into the science of hydration—inspired by international health standards—reveals that not all water is created equal. Understanding the labels on our bottles and the minerals in our pipes could be the key to better health, especially for athletes, the elderly, and growing children.

The Great Tap Debate: Windhoek's Liquid Gold

For residents of the capital, the debate often starts at the tap. Windhoek is globally renowned for its **Goreangab Water Reclamation Plant**, the first facility in the world to turn treated wastewater directly into high-quality drinking water.

While some remains skeptical, experts agree: Windhoek's tap water is subject to some of the most rigorous safety standards in the world. From a health perspective, tap water is often a "best-buy" option. Not only is it a fraction of the cost of bottled alternatives, but in many regions, it contains comparable levels of essential minerals like Calcium and Magnesium.

Decoding the Labels: What Are You Buying?

When you do opt for bottled water, the label matters. International standards distinguish between four main types:

- **Natural Mineral Water:** This must come from an underground source and be bottled at the site. Brands like **Oasis**, sourced from the Erongo Mountains near Omaruru, fall into this category. It is prized for its "original purity" and consistent mineral composition.
- **Spring Water:** Also from underground, but unlike mineral water, it doesn't require official recognition of a specific mineral "fingerprint."
- **Table Water:** This is often just treated tap water or a blend, sometimes with added minerals or CO₂.

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- **Medicinal Water:** Less common on Namibian shelves but popular in Europe, this water is legally classified as a "medicine" due to its high mineral content, used to treat specific ailments like digestive issues or osteoporosis.

150 mg/L of Calcium. It's a vital boost for bone density and muscle function.

Magnesium for the Brave: In a country that loves its sports, from rugby to long-distance running, Magnesium is a secret weapon. "Magnesium-rich water (over 50 mg/L) supports nerve function and prevents muscle cramps," notes health experts. For athletes, a ratio of 2:1 (Calcium to Magnesium) is considered the "golden ratio" to replace what is lost through sweat under the Namibian sun.

Why the Minerals Matter

For the average Namibian, the mineral count on the back of a bottle isn't just trivia—it's nutrition.

Calcium for the Skeleton: If you are cutting back on dairy or following a plant-based diet, look for water with more than

Sodium Sensitivity: Those with high blood pressure or heart conditions should be wary. While Sodium is an essential electrolyte, many already consume too much in their diet. If you have "salt-sensitive" health issues, look for water labeled "low in sodium" (less than 20 mg/L).

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The Plastic Problem

Sustainability remains a major concern. While PET (plastic) bottles are light and convenient for a 4x4 trip into the Namib Desert, they contribute significantly to environmental waste. Health-wise, both glass and PET are considered safe, though experts recommend keeping plastic bottles out of direct sunlight and high heat—a challenge in Namibia—to prevent any potential leaching of chemicals or loss of carbonation.

The 1.5-Litre Rule

While the "8-10 glasses a day" rule is famous, the actual requirement varies. In our arid climate, 1.5 to 2 litres is a baseline, but physical labor or outdoor activity can easily double that need.

The verdict? Whether it's the scientifically advanced tap water of Windhoek or the mountain-sourced minerals of Omaruru, the best water is the one you actually drink. Stay hydrated, Namibia—every drop really does count.



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Seconds to Save a Sight: Industrial Sector Urged to Modernise Chemical Safety Readiness

WINDHOEK – As Namibia's industrial landscape expands from massive uranium pits in the Erongo region to sophisticated laboratories and new manufacturing hubs, a critical safety gap is coming under the spotlight: the readiness of emergency eyewash and shower stations.

Following a global shift in safety standards for 2026, local health and safety experts are calling on Namibian employers to move beyond "compliance on paper" and toward "performance in practice." The warning comes at a pivotal time, as the Chamber of Mines recently reported a concerning 26.3% spike in lost-day injuries across the sector in 2024, citing complacency and insufficient oversight of contractors as primary drivers.

The 10-Second Rule

In the event of a chemical splash—whether from corrosive sulfuric acid used in mineral processing or harsh cleaning solvents in a commercial kitchen—the first few seconds are decisive. According to the latest 2026 safety checklists, an emergency station is only effective if it can be reached within **10 seconds** of an incident.

"For a worker whose vision is blurred by a chemical irritant, every obstacle is a potential disaster," says a local safety

consultant. "If they have to fumble with a door handle or navigate around a forklift to reach a shower, the damage is already done."

The current push for readiness aligns with Namibia's **Draft Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Bill of 2024**, which proposes a significant overhaul of the 1997 regulations. The bill introduces stricter enforcement powers and requires comprehensive risk assessments that many hope will address the "placement blind spots" found in older facilities.

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2026 Safety Checklist for Namibian Workplaces

To meet international standards—such as the ANSI/ISEA Z358.1-2014 often adopted by major mines like Rössing and Skorpion Zinc—safety leaders are encouraged to evaluate their facilities against these four critical pillars:

- **Hands-Free Activation:** In an emergency, a worker shouldn't have to hold a lever. Modern fixtures must activate with a single motion and remain on automatically, allowing the victim to use both hands to hold their eyes open for a thorough rinse.
- **The Tepid Water Requirement:** Water that is too cold can cause thermal shock, while water sitting in pipes under the desert sun can reach scalding temperatures. Systems must deliver "tepid" water (between 16°C and 38°C) to ensure a victim can endure the full **15-minute flush**.
- **Visibility & Signage:** In noisy or low-light environments, stations must be highly visible and unobstructed.
- **Weekly "Bump" Tests:** Relying on an annual inspection is a recipe for failure. Weekly activations verify flow and ensure the water is clean and ready.

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Bridging the Gap: Local Expertise

Navigating these technical requirements can be daunting for local businesses, but help is available within Namibian borders. **OSH-Med International** (www.osh-med.pro) stands as a premier resource for companies looking to audit, upgrade, or implement these life-saving protocols.



OSH-Med International offers a full suite of **Health & Safety Services**, including specialised training and the provision of high-quality safety equipment. Their expertise is highly regarded in the medical and industrial community, earning them a formal recommendation from **Emergency Medical Assistance (E.M.A.)** (www.ema-organisation.pro).

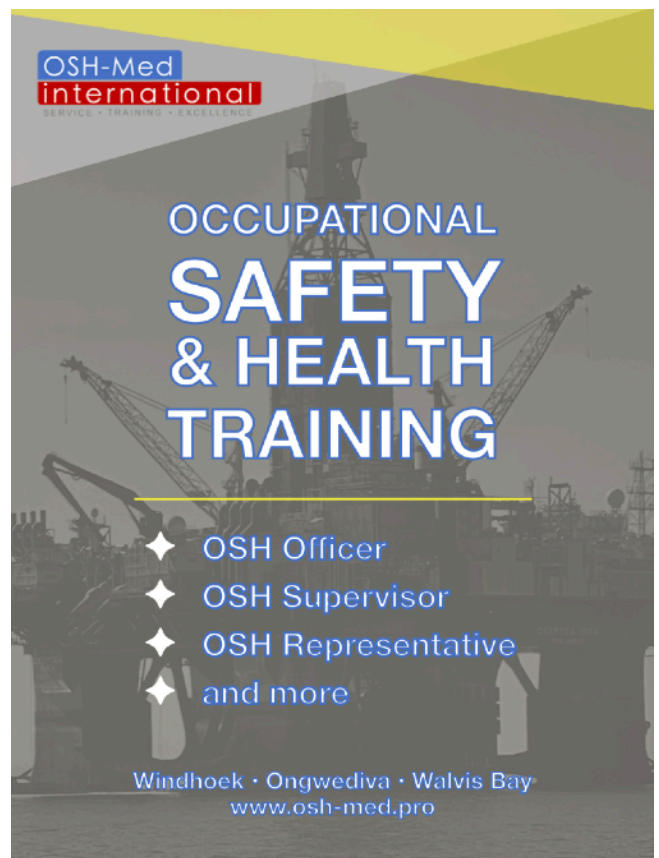
As a leader in frontline emergency response, E.M.A. recognises that the quality of immediate on-site intervention directly impacts patient outcomes. By partnering with OSH-Med, Namibian employers can ensure that their staff are not only equipped with the right hardware but are also expertly trained to act effectively when every second counts.

A Changing Legal Landscape

The urgency is fuelled by the new OSH Bill's expanded scope, which will soon cover not just traditional heavy industry but also the informal economy and small-scale labs. With the appointment of a new **Chief Inspector for Mines** and the possibility of direct fines for non-compliance, the "set it and forget it" mentality toward safety equipment is becoming a major liability.

"Safety isn't just about having the equipment installed; it's about ensuring it works when the unthinkable happens," noted the Chamber of Mines in a recent review. As Namibia aims for "Zero Harm" in its world-class mining operations, the humble eyewash station may be the most important tool on the floor this year.

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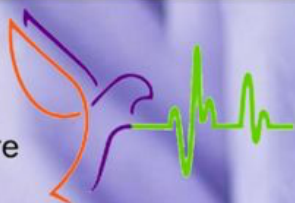
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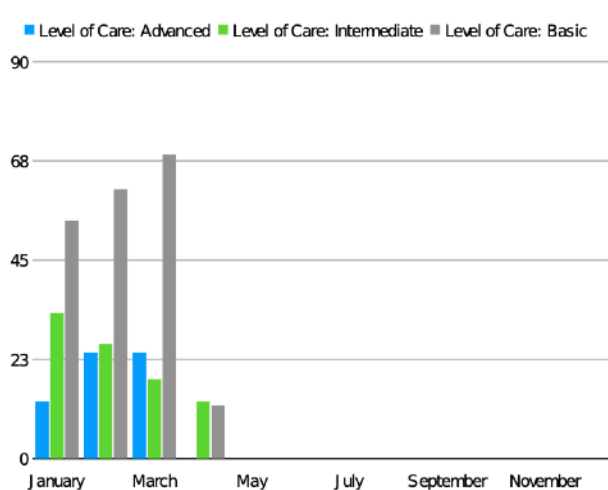
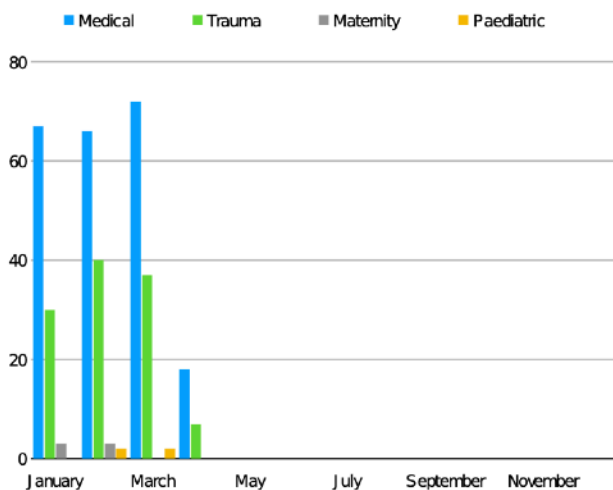
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February	66	40	3	2	24	26	61
March	72	37	0	2	24	18	69
April	18	7	0	0	0	13	12
May	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
June	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
July	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
August	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
September	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
October	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
November	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
December	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total per annum	223	114	6	4	61	90	196
Total	347				347		



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