



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **DWS & Cobra partnership for water-wise communities**

11 July 2018

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and Cobra, a company which manufactures taps and plumbing fittings for the local market, have joined hands to empower communities to be water-wise and play a major role in water conservation to ensure that every drop counts in our water scarce country.

The Department entered into a partnership with COBRA in 2016, on matters of water and hygiene. The partnership was motivated by the fact that the company is committed to offering an extensive range of water-saving products. As part of the agreed relationship, COBRA committed to training water and sanitation forum members on how to fix the leaks and also to take the forum members to a site visit or tour to the Krugersdorp plant. This partnership clearly shows that public and private entities working together can ensure water security, especially in our dry and water scarce country. Water is life and development relies mainly on water availability, so it is crucial that we all hold hands and work together for the benefit of current and future generations.

As part of the partnership, Cobra hosted the water and sanitation forum from Thembisile Hani Local Municipality in Mpumalanga on 10 July 2018. The forum members were reminded of the importance of fixing leaks and trained on the effective ways of identifying and fixing leaks. They were also taken on a site tour of the Cobra plant to get a better understanding of how taps work. The forum members were encouraged to share their newly acquired skills with community members to root out leaks in their communities and ensure there is no unnecessary loss of this precious resource.

In his address, Mr Andy Camphausen of Cobra encouraged the forum members to play an active role in the fight against water wastage and advocate for water conservation in their communities to ensure water security in our water scarce country. "Our business is mandated from the father of our nation, Madiba, who said education is the most powerful weapon that will change the world. In this light, we welcome the forum members of communities, together with municipalities and DWS for participating in this short, yet powerful training regarding respect for water and sanitation. They will also witness how South Africans manufacture taps by hand for the sustainability of South Africa as a whole", he said.



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Water and sanitation forums are crucial as members become water and sanitation ambassadors in their communities. Water and Sanitation forums are meant to ensure government has direct interaction with different communities on issues that affect them, where they will come out with agreed resolutions, being ready to reduce increasing numbers of service delivery protests mainly due to lack of communication and feedback. These forums also promote the two-way flow of information about provision of reliable water and sanitation services to communities in terms of envisaged developments/plans. They iron out challenges and report on progress, thus creating an enabling environment for stakeholder participation/engagement and empowerment on issues of governance, encouraging active participation of local community members on water and sanitation matters.

The forum chairperson, Mr Sthembiso Given Mahlangu, thanked the Department and COBRA for the training and exposure. “The training was good and exposed us to a lot about water conservation and what we can do. This forum will bring change in our communities as well as the municipality, especially in relation to leakages which are wasting a lot of water”, he said.

**Themba Khoza**