



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Evaton community members commit to make proper sanitation part of their lives

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The community members of Evaton West, north of Sebokeng in the Emfuleni region of Gauteng, has vowed to make sweeping changes to its sanitation and hygiene practices – thanks to the celebration of a Sanitation and Hygiene Campaign by the Gauteng Provincial Office of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).

The campaign took place at the New Life Centre Ministries on Friday, 31 May 2019. A number of stakeholders, including the Emfuleni Local Municipality, Metse-a-Lekoa and the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, participated in the campaign.

One of the objectives of the campaign was to ensure communities access proper sanitation services as an inalienable Constitutional right and to provide essential information on how sanitation affects everyday life.

Issues of sanitation are high on the minds of the Emfuleni Local Municipality residents as the area is facing unprecedented water pollution with the Vaal Dam bearing the brunt of the pollution.

Addressing members of the community, DWS's Chief Development Expert, Ms Lungile Zulu, expressed concern that children under the age of five (5) were dying needlessly as a result unhygienic practices and urged residents to take care of their toilets.

“A great number of children are dying unnecessarily because of unhygienic practices at homes. These deaths could be avoided by simply washing one's hands before preparing food and keeping our toilets clean,” Ms Zulu advised the community members.

She said it was time people took responsibility for their own lives, reiterating that government could only do so much.

Mr Lehlohonolo Ntema from Metse-a-Lekoa sensitised the community about the dangers of stealing lids that cover manholes, saying this conduct posed a threat to communities and especially children.

Mr Ntema called on community members to be vigilant against thieves who were bent on putting the lives of others at serious danger. He also raised concern that residents were using the manholes with no lids to dump rubbish, leading to the sewer network system to block.

He said: “Members of the community have an obligation to look after the manholes. People who are stealing lids covering the manholes and those who are dumping in them are our own family members. We must make sure that we stop this unbecoming conduct because it is the very community here that is affected.”

A local resident, Mr Tshepo Mofokeng, thanked the department for the campaign, saying campaigns of this nature were needed so that community members were reminded of their responsibilities.



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“It is well and good to expect government to provide proper sanitation and quality water but we also have a role to play to ensure that the infrastructure we are given is protected. Government cannot provide services and also protect the infrastructure we use, said Mr Mofokeng.

His sentiments were shared by another resident, Ms Patience Gumede, who expressed outrage at the stealing of lids of manholes and the use of opened manholes as dumping sites.

Ms Gumede said the situation of dumping in the manholes was so serious that even dead babies were thrown into these manholes, making it hard for people who are working on these manholes to cope with their work.

“I think we must regard to the workers that see these things every day. They also have families and they deserve to have our respect and the only way to show respect to desist from dumping rubbish in the manholes,” said Ms Gumede.

Hosia Sithole