



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

DWS condemns vandalism and theft of water and sanitation infrastructure

30 November 2017

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has noted with concern a number of incidents that are suspected to be acts of water infrastructure vandalism and theft in various parts of Gauteng Province. These acts have had a negative impact on the unbridled supply of water and sanitation services to residents, and some have resulted in the pollution of water resources.

In addition the misuse of sewer infrastructure has become prevalent in most parts of the province, especially in underdeveloped areas where foreign objects (nappies; rubble, etc) are thrown into the system.

The Department recognises the constitutional responsibility of municipalities in terms of water supply and sanitation services. Nonetheless over time the Department intervenes where there are sewer system failures through programmes such as Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) and Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG). In case where there is serious neglect by municipalities, the Department takes regulatory measures to enforce compliance.

The Department has noted serious gaps pertaining to failure of municipalities in educating communities on the correct use and protection of the infrastructure. The Department therefore urges municipalities to enhance their efforts to sensitise the public on using the infrastructure responsibly.

To safeguard the infrastructure, the Department further calls the municipalities to strengthen security around the infrastructure. In this regard, it is incumbent upon municipalities to open criminal cases where anyone has misused, vandalised or stolen the infrastructure.

The Department further calls upon all communities to work cooperatively with their local municipalities, refrain from damaging the infrastructure and report suspicious activities to the law enforcement agencies.

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