



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### MEDIA STATEMENT

#### **Municipalities and water boards owe department billions**

07 September 2017

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) told the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Appropriations (SCOA) that municipalities and water boards owes the organisation more than R7 billion.

This revelation was made during a briefing to SCOA on Wednesday 06 September 2017.

The Deputy Minister, Mrs Pamela Tshwete explained to SCOA that irregular and wasteful expenditure by the department resulting in a negative impact on its 2016/17 budget and performance. Deputy Minister Tshwete explained that the department could not turn off taps as there was no substitute for water.

The department told SCOA that municipalities owe R3,8 billion and that water boards were in arrears to the tune of R3.2 billion. The department also had to intervene where municipalities were not able to deliver.

Gauteng municipalities owe the department approximately R3 million followed by Western Cape local authorities at approximately R23 million while Mpumalanga municipalities are in the red to the tune of R19 million owed to the DWS.

Limpopo municipalities owe more than R14 million, KZN municipalities more than R4 million and Free State municipalities' outstanding bills stands at R8 million. Northern Cape municipalities owe the department close to R2 million, North West municipalities more than R6 million, while Eastern Cape local authorities owe more than R18 million.

Most of the debt resulted from appointments of service providers during emergencies as a result of the drought situation that affected the entire country. Due to the challenges that affected municipalities in the provision of water, the department had to act proactively to appoint service providers, mainly water boards, to supply water through water tankers and boreholes to the affected regions.

Failure to pay for water services by municipalities and water boards hinders the department to execute its mandate. Water and sanitation services' provision is dependent on the payment of services.

Everyone must pay for water services.

**End**

**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation**



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**Departmental Spokesperson: Media Liaison Sputnik Ratau on 082 874 2942**

**For more information contact: Mbali Mahaye at 082 601 5674.**

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