



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

The Department of Water and Sanitation to work with other departments to accelerate service delivery in Mopani District

16 August 2017

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) will join hands with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform to fast-track the delivery of water in Tzaneen and outlying areas in order to improve the quality of lives among the locals.

DWS' Deputy Director-General for Infrastructure, Zandile Mathe, today committed the department during a an oversight visit by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation to Mopani to see progress made on the delivery of water to the communities of Tzaneen and Giyani since their last visit in 2015. Today's meeting was also attended by the Mayor of Mopani District Municipality, Nkakareng Rakgwale and the Greater Tzaneen Municipality Mayor, Maripe Mangena and councillors.

Members of the Portfolio Committee expressed their concern about little progress that has been made in the delivery of water and sanitation since their last visit two years ago. In addition, they expressed concern that local residents relied on boreholes for their water when Mopani District, especially in Tzaneen, had four dams, namely Tzaneen, Magoebaskloof, Tours and Tabina.

On Tuesday the 15th, the parliamentarians visited Tours and Tabina Water Treatment Plants and later met with communities. They were disappointed to find that Tabina plant was malfunctioning because of illegal connections. They also visited Lephephane Bulk Water Supply Scheme where they were told that a contractor had disappeared without paying sub-contractors who have employed local people.

Mathe also said that the raising of the Tzaneen and Nwamitwa dam walls would ensure supply of water to the residents of Lenyenye, Nkowankowa and N'wamitwa villages. She said there was a memorandum of understanding between DWS and the two other departments that they would enhance without delay in order to coordinate and hasten service delivery.



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She also said one of the reasons for the delay was because Mopani District Municipality did not have a Municipal Manager who could drive the process of service delivery in the area. She promised that the raising of the two dam walls will be completed in the next financial year.

She further undertook to work closely with members of the African Farmers Association of South Africa (AFASA) to help them access water as emerging farmers. DWS will fast track the issuing of water use license in terms of the National Water Act to help emerging farmers in Mopani to access water for their crops. This was after a member of AFASA told the portfolio committee that his colleagues did not have access to water because of the slow pace of issuing of water licenses.

Presenting before the portfolio committee, the head of the DWS in Limpopo, Lesiba Tloubatla, said that Mopani fell under the jurisdiction of Olifants Proto-Catchment Management Authority, and it was the driver of the water allocation programme in the area. Long and short term strategies had been developed and were to be implemented in the Olifants Catchment Management Area. The Short term strategy was aimed at helping all water users, including municipalities and irrigation schemes, with the aim of ensuring sustainable water service delivery through Water Conservation and Water Demand Management. The programme will also help the agricultural sector to strengthen its partnership with DWS and historically disadvantaged individuals.

The long term strategy is focussed on compulsory licensing as indicated in the National Water Act as well as the National Water Resource Strategy (NWRS). It is the social responsibility of DWS to help Resource Poor Farmers and to ensure that the water resources of the Water Management Authorities are used efficiently and are allocated equitably.

ENDS.

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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