



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

24 July 2018

DWS lifts water restrictions in the Olifants River System

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) wishes to announce its decision to lift water restrictions imposed on the Olifants River System in Gazette no 1152 published on 31 October 2017 .

The decision to lift the water restrictions is in line with the Government Gazette which stipulates that should the system recover to 85 % and above, the Regional Head must lift the water restrictions. Following seasonal rain which led to higher inflows into the Clanwilliam Dam, this dam significantly increased to 99.7%.

For a period of three years, the Olifants River System and other water systems in the Western Cape were severely constrained by the lower-than normal rainfall that had drawn down the dam levels. In a bid to curb excessive use and stretch water security the DWS imposed water restrictions for both domestic/industry and agricultural use.

Due to severe drought in the region, the department in consultation with all water users in the Olifants Catchment and imposed restrictions in October as follows: 40% on industrial use, 50% on domestic use and 60% on agricultural use.

The lifting of these restrictions applies to both Cederberg and Matzikama municipalities. The Clanwilliam dam supplies these towns with water: Citrusdal, Clanwilliam and Vredendal. The water restrictions are lifted with effect from the 11 July 2018.

Update on the Western Cape Water Supply System (WCWSS)

The latest dam levels assessment of 23 July 2018 shows the combined average dam levels for the Western Cape Water Supply System (WCWSS) are at 56.08% as compared to 54.75% last week. Theewaterskloof Dam, the largest dam in the system has risen to 41. 27 % compared to 20. 93 % same time last year.

DWS will re-assess the Western Cape Water Supply System situation by the end of August 2018 and advise water users on appropriate steps going forward.

Adapting to the new normal

It has become clear that water shortages, floods due to climate change are becoming a new norm and presenting the challenge of how we become resilient to this. The department has resolved the critical actions below:

- Less reliance on surface water and explore the usage of alternate water sources



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- Intensify storm water management through urban design using green technology
- Explore additional storage options in the system including aquifer recharge and constructed wetlands

The Department of Water and Sanitation wishes to advise water users to continue using water sparingly and avoid excessive use. This will assist in conserving the water that we have and ensure adequate water supply.

End

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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