



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

The DWS remains seized with finding solutions to the pollution in the Vaal River

04 September 2018

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), and stakeholders, namely Rand Water, the Gauteng Provincial Government, together with the Sedibeng District and Emfuleni Local Municipalities remain seized with the intention of finding resolutions to the issues of pollution of the Vaal River.

There is appreciation of the fact that the Vaal River and Vaal Dam, as critical parts of the Integrated Vaal River System (IVRS), must be kept as free of pollution as possible; this is considering the centrality of the IVRS to the economy of Gauteng, the country, the SADC Region and ultimately the African continent.

Government, as led by Minister Nkwinti and MEC Moiloa, together with stakeholders, convene regular meetings with the affected communities to inform them of on-going progress. Technicians are back on site and are attending to issues notwithstanding that it will take a while to have the System working optimally. The DWS has availed an amount of R20 million to Emfuleni LM in this regard.

The functioning of Module Six, which Rand Water is working on, will bring further capacity on stream for the treatment of effluent. The Emfuleni Local Municipality is currently working to return Modules Two – Five to full functionality. Normality will return once all modules operate optimally.

Optimal water resources management including the protection of our rivers from pollution and monitoring water quality remains at the top of the ideals of the DWS. Protecting our water resources requires a community-led approach to protecting our rivers, wetlands and catchments. In this regard, we encourage the public to be actively involved in the management of water resources.

All of us must strive to improve access to clean water, build healthy communities, increase water availability by removing alien invasive plants, build environmentally conscious communities, have pollution-free rivers, as well as conserve water and fix leaking taps.

Whilst all of the work as indicated continues, we encourage affected communities not to drink or swim in water from polluted dams and rivers, especially when there is foam in the water or a bad colour or smell. Water supplied through municipal taps is still safe to drink.

The DWS will also avail itself for any and all interaction with the South African Human Rights Commission as it does oversight on the matter.

END

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For more information contact: Sputnik Ratau on 082 874 2492 (DWS)

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