



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### MEDIA STATEMENT

#### **The Department of Water and Sanitation intervenes in the Modimolle, Limpopo, drought situation**

13 March 2018

Officials of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) will descend on water-stricken Modimolle and Mookgopong towns of Limpopo as part of the DWS commemoration of the annual National Water Week next week.

The department has partnered with Modimolle-Mookgopong Local Municipality and Coca-Cola to visit the two towns on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018 because of the alarming water situation that is currently playing out in the area. In the past month water levels at Donkerpoort Dam and Frikkie Geysers Dam have plunged to 14 percent and 12 percent respectively, leaving Mookgopong with approximately 49 days of drinking water.

Consequently, the municipality has taken stringent measures towards the reduction of the use of water from 125 litres to 97 litres per person per day. In addition, the municipality has put aside R18 million for the replacement of its ailing water infrastructure.

The DWS officials, drawn from Pretoria and Polokwane, will lead a strong multi-stakeholder team to visit schools, shopping centres and an old age village in Modimolle to educate locals about the importance of water conservation in all aspects of life. The team will visit five primary and three high schools in Phagameng Township and the suburbs of Modimolle. The officials will blitz their hosts with leaflets and documents containing information on water saving tips as well as understanding the local water by-laws.

Furthermore, several meetings are scheduled with farmers, car wash owners and local business people across the spectrum. A similar blitz is scheduled to take place later in Mookgopong.

The Modimolle blitz comes after fears that the town may experience a complete lack of water worse than what was envisaged for Cape Town. Following various interventions to mitigate the water crisis in the Mother City, the much-vaunted absolutely dry day has been prevented.

The DWS hydrologists have tested an estimated 105 boreholes in Modimolle district that include Vaalwater, Zandrivier, Roedtan, Byzonder, Zandrivier, Hartebeest and Nooitgedacht. They found that an estimated 90 percent of these are high-yield boreholes that are privately-owned. However, it is not clear how many of the private boreholes are registered with the department in terms of the National Water Act.

The other challenge in the region is that even though most farmers have registered their boreholes in terms of the Act, some have exceeded their water allocation that is stipulated in their respective water use licence. DWS will bring along to the blitz officials of the Enforcement and Monitoring Unit (the Blue Scorpions) who will conduct a validation and verification exercise among farmers to check for compliance.

**ENDS**



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