



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA STATEMENT

Criminal case opened against Chris Hani District Municipality over pollution

22 August

The Department of Water and Sanitation in Eastern Cape has instituted a criminal and civil cases against the Chris Hani District Municipality to force it to clean-up the Great Fish River.

The department applied for a 'Structural Interdict' which compels the municipality to report to civil court on the progress it is making on rehabilitating the polluted river.

The Department issued the first Directive in terms of the National Water Act to the Chris Hani District Municipality in Cradock in 2016 to apply for authorisation for the Water Waste Treatment Works and to stop the rampant pollution from occurring. The Directive forced the municipality to rehabilitate the affected area as well. Subsequently, the municipality submitted an action plan which the department did not approve as it did not adhere to the requirements of the Directive.

Two more notices were issued last year to submit an action plan with immediate actions to address the current status of the non-compliances with the waste water works. The municipality did not respond to the notice.

In April 2019, the Eastern Cape Regional Office referred the matter to Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement (CME) Unit in the national office for application for a court interdict. An environmental Inspector that was sent by the department to the plant found several irregularities that hinted at noncompliance.

The Department is establishing an Anti-Pollution Task Team that will conduct a nation-wide assessment of the status of water quality in the country. In addition to this, a re-launch of the Green and Blue Drop Reports is being revisited as a bid to improve water quality in the country.

End

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