



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA STATEMENT

Department of Water and Sanitation vows to end illegal Sand Mining activities

02 September 2019

The Department of Water and Sanitation in KwaZulu-Natal will host a workshop on Environmental Crimes and Legislative Framework with a focus on Illegal Sand Mining activities on Tuesday, 10 September 2019 at Zululand South African Police Service (SAPS) Cluster Offices, Unit A in Ulundi.

The Department will engage with different stakeholders with Zululand District Municipality in a bid to educate them about sand mining and corrective measures that could be imposed against those illegally doing it. South African Police Services, Traditional Leaders, Department of Mineral Resources and Local Government are some of the key stakeholders that have been targeted for this workshop.

Recently, the Department received a referral complaint from the Department of Mineral Resources regarding an alleged unlawful water use through sand mining taking place in Spekboom River. An inspection was conducted by Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement officials from the department and it was confirmed that people conducted illegal sand mining activities.

As a result of this, the Department has seen an opportunity to converge all stakeholders and educate them before any penalties can be imposed.

The DWS as the custodian of South Africa's water resources has to promote effective and efficient water resource management to ensure sustainable economic and social development. Unlawful water use activities through illegal sand mining in rivers have become common in KZN and it is a serious concern.

Taking sand from a river requires authorisation in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998) and it is an offence to take sand from a river without having the necessary authorisation. Any person who fails to comply with the provisions of the National Water Act and its regulations is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine and/or imprisonment.

The DWS is implementing a zero tolerance approach towards unauthorized water use by anyone to ensure permissible water use. The Department hopes that the workshop will enlighten stakeholders to be aware of such activities and inspire compliance on matters regarding unlawful water use through sand mining activities.

End

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