



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## MEDIA STATEMENT

### Raising awareness about good sanitation, health and hygiene

13 May 2019

Sanitation is one of the most important aspects of community well-being because it protects human health, extends life spans, and provides benefits to the economy. During the month of May, the Department of Water Sanitation (DWS) celebrates Sanitation month with an aim to increase awareness on the importance of sanitation, health and hygiene to one's daily lifestyle.

Sanitation is the hygienic means of promoting health through prevention of human contact with the hazards of wastes as well as the treatment and proper disposal of sewage wastewater.

Since the beginning of May, DWS in KwaZulu-Natal has been conducting sanitation, health and hygiene awareness campaigns focusing on schools. The aim is to make learners aware of sanitation issues and to create champions within their schools that will also become agents of change in their own communities. The campaign encourages learners to adopt simple healthy habits that can prevent illnesses.

Sanitation and hygiene in schools creates an enabling environment which secures children's dignity, safety, health and attendance in classes. Schools are the best places to promote health and hygiene and raise awareness about good hygiene habits.

Hand washing is by far the best way to keep kids from getting sick and to prevent the spread of germs. To stop the spread of germs; make regular hand washing a rule before eating and cooking, after using the bathroom, after blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing etc.

Using proper toilets and hand washing, preferably with soap, prevent the transfer of bacteria, viruses and parasites found in human excreta which otherwise contaminate water resources, soil and food. This contamination is a major cause of diarrhoea (the second biggest killer of children) and leads to other major diseases such as cholera.

During Sanitation Month awareness, the DWS in KwaZulu-Natal has visited various schools within UGu district. The department will also be visiting schools within districts such as Harry Gwala, UMkhanyakude and uThukela.

**End**

**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation**

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Department of Water and Sanitation South Africa



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