



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

To: All Media

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National Water Week 2010 : Together we can do more to save water

South Africans must do more to save water. That's the call from Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs Ms Buyelwa Sonjica as the country gears up to celebrate National Water Week (15-21 March 2010). Water Week is an annual campaign that mobilizes citizens to appreciate the value of water as a scarce natural resource and this year it focuses on the important aspect of water conservation and demand management. Other important objectives of the campaign include the following:

- Educating the public about their responsibility in water conservation initiatives
- Raising awareness around the need to protect and conserve the country's water resources.
- Highlighting the contribution that water makes to social and economic development.
- Re-emphasizing the important role water plays in sustaining all forms of life in South Africa and the linkages between water services, water resource management, water quality management and water conservation and water demand management.

President Jacob Zuma reminded South Africans during his State of the Nation address that South Africa is not a water rich country and thus called on all of us to change our attitudes and behavior towards the way we use water in households, industries and in agriculture. South Africa is among the 30 driest countries in the world and as such water is a scarce commodity that is finite in nature. Currently the water sector is faced with many challenges among these is

the ageing infrastructure, drought conditions in some parts of the country, water losses, illegal water use and pollution.

The Department is engaged in a series of initiatives that seek to ensure that South Africa does not run out of water in the future, however these efforts will not be enough if the citizens do not make water conservation part of their daily lives. As such, the theme for Water Week 2010 is "Working Together We Can Save More Water".

As part of the programme to celebrate Water Week, Minister Sonjica will lead a number of events planned across the country. The following highlights constitute some of the main events during water week:

- **Monday 15th** – Water Week Launch Event in Umthatha – The state of our rivers has been an area of concern for the Minister and as such, a river clean up campaign will be launched where members of the community will be brought on board as part of the Working for Water Programme to work on the clean up project for a period of two years.
- **Wednesday 17th** - The Minister will have a media briefing in Cape Town for the official release of the 2010 host cities drinking water quality management audit report. This is a report on the audits conducted by the department on the drinking water quality management practices of all 2010 FIFA host cities.
- **Thursday 18th** – The Minister will conduct an inspection at an Acid Mine Drainage treatment site along the western basin to unveil interventions towards mitigation of the Acid Mine Drainage problem.

For more information on the programme for the week, please visit our website on www.dwa.gov.za and direct all media enquiries to:

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