

Water Week - a reminder to use SA's water wisely

Themba Khoza writes:

National Water Week, which runs from March 21 to 27 this year, is a reminder to use water wisely as South Africa is a water-scarce country.

Water is important and central to all aspects of life. Basically, nothing survives without it. It is life and has no substitute.

National Water Week is a critical focus week that strengthens the call for responsible citizenry to conserve water and protect resources. We need to use every available drop of water wisely, especially due to irresponsible actions and behaviour.

Wise water use and water resource protection are important to ensure reliable and sustainable supply and water security for current and future generations. This is a call for all of us to use the available water in a sparing manner and conserve as much as possible. Water conservation is simply about using water wisely and sparingly, preventing losses by fixing leaks and reporting them to the relevant authorities, and preventing the pollution of resources.

Water conservation is the key to water supply security. Everyone can conserve water, from individuals in households

to businesses and industries. Water conservation means preventing water wastage and losses. Responsible behaviour will ensure there is no wastage. Water conservation acknowledges that every drop counts.

National Water Week also incorporates two important days: Human Rights Day on March 21 and World Water Day on March 22. These two days are crucial and

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intertwined with water, as access to water is a basic human right and World Water Day is a call to action, especially to governments, to prioritise water provision for all. World Water Day is also a clarion call and reminder to ordinary people to respect water and ensure that everyone has access to it. The theme for World Water Day this year is "Groundwater: Making the invisible visible", to highlight the importance of

groundwater as another important source of water.

Groundwater is important to augment surface water as a source, especially in countries like ours that receive less than the world average rainfall. We must protect our environment to prevent the contamination of groundwater, to access quality water.

Pollution negatively affects the quality of water, making it unfit for use, or worse, deadly. Pollution leads to the unnecessary loss of essential water, leaving communities with less. Pollution is also deadly as it leads to waterborne diseases, kills aquatic life, is unsafe for livestock and irrigation and destroys the environment.

Being a responsible citizen means not turning a blind eye to water infrastructure vandalism, such as illegal connections and pipeline damage. Let us report those carrying out acts of infrastructure vandalism to the authorities.

Let National Water Week be a reminder to conserve water and protect our resources to ensure the reliable and sustainable supply of quality, clean and healthy water. The security of South Africa's water supply depends on us, so let us be responsible citizens and water users.



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