



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

2010 -11- 09

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS


NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2901 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mr. M J Ellis (DA); is attached for your consideration.


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 9/11/2010

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


MRS B E E MOLEWA, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE: 2010/11/14

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2901

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 22 OCTOBER 2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 32)

2901. Mr M J Ellis (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether, with reference to her reply to question 1695 on 24 June 2010, any progress has been made with the implementation of a policy to eliminate or reduce phosphorus in detergents; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether any timelines have been determined; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) No, my Department does not have a policy to eliminate or reduce phosphorus in detergents.

The Water Research Commission (WRC) has funded and completed research into this topic in the form of Project K5/1768: *Investigation of the positive and negative consequences associated with the introduction of zero-phosphate detergent*. This project was started in 2007 and completed early this year (2010) and the full report can be obtained from the WRC website. My department still needs to engage with the WRC on the results of this study and the possible effects on the eutrophication of some of our dams.

- (2) There are no definite timelines set for the development of this policy. As per the recommendations in the WRC Project K5/1768 suggest engagement with detergent manufacturers which will be a quick process. It will also be necessary that in spite of the possible benefits to the environment, the replacement costs of phosphate in commonly used household detergents should be investigated especially the possibility of products such as soaps and washing powders becoming more expensive to poor communities.

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