



water affairs

Department:
Water and Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

2010 -12- 02

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS


NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES: QUESTION 408 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mrs N W Magadla (ANC-KZN) is attached for your consideration, please.


ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL

DATE: 2/12/2010

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


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

DATE: 2010/12/14

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 408

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 29 October 2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 31)

408 Mrs N W Magadla (ANC-KZN) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

Whether she has been informed of the water backlogs caused by the poor state of condition of the (a) Umzimkhulu and (b) Kokstad Water Purification Plants; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what has been done to improve the quality of water within these areas?

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REPLY:

Yes, I have been informed of the water backlog within the Sisonke District Municipality, which is unrelated to the Umzimkhulu and Kokstad Water Purification Plants.

It must be noted that the quality of water produced by purification plants is monitored regularly and reported monthly. In addition, the condition and management of water purification plants are assessed by the Department on an annual basis as part of the Blue Drop Assessment Process.

(a) Arising from the 2010 Blue Drop Assessment Report, Umzimkhulu Water Purification Plant has shortcomings in their Management Systems, Operational Staff Capacity and Asset Maintenance. These shortcomings resulted in sub-standard water quality ie 50% microbiological compliance and 99.9% physical and organoleptic (taste and smell) compliance over the past 12 months. The Sisonke DM has commenced with an upgrade of the Umzimkhulu Water Purification Plant and it is envisaged that the upgraded plant will be commissioned by April 2011.

The Department has provided technical assistance to the Sisonke DM through the Siyenza Manje Programme (a partnership between the Department and the Development Bank of South Africa). Further, the Department is also providing assistance to the Sisonke DM through the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs' Local Government Turn Around Strategy in a project to assist with the planned training of Plant Operators. Municipal laboratory staff have thus far been trained by Umgeni Water while the Sisonke DM is setting up laboratory facilities which will enable them to monitor and improve process control and treated water quality.

(b) Arising from the 2010 Blue Drop Assessment Report, Umzimkhulu Water Purification Plant has shortcomings in their Management Systems, Operational Control, Operational Staff Capacity and Asset Maintenance. In addition, the water losses in the distribution system leading to interruptions in supply in some areas were also noted. It should be noted that the quality of water produced by the Kokstad Water Purification Plant has over the past 12 months shown a 94.1% microbiological compliance and 95.1% physical and organoleptic (taste and smell) compliance.

During 2009, the Department completed an assessment of the water demands and the options to meet the demands in the Kokstad supply system. This investigation revealed that water losses in some areas were unacceptably high. I am aware that additional water can be supplied if the abstraction and rising main from the local river to the plant are doubled in size; however, sources of funding for this work are being investigated.

Lastly, I would like to advise that (by end of January 2011) the Sisonke DM will be commissioning an upgrade of the plant which will increase its capacity from 9 megalitres per day (MI/day) to 18 MI/day. Further, a water loss reduction project has been implemented where the leaking cisterns in 3000 houses have been repaired or replaced. The project is envisaged to be extended to the low cost housing areas in Kokstad and thus far, all planning related processes have been completed.

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