



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Reference: 6/2/2/6

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2100

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2100. Mrs M R Mohlala (EFF) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation:

Whether his department has any responsibility, in the event of municipal failures, to assist communities who grapple with severe sewage spillages; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what (a) relief has been provided to the residents of (i) Dikgatlong, (ii) Sol Plaatje and (iii) Magareng in the Northern Cape who have been grappling with severe sewage spillages for an extended period of time, (b) measures will his department take to alleviate the constant stench and provide relief to the specified residents who have been enduring the dire circumstances for years, (c) mechanisms are in place to hold the municipalities accountable for their failure to address the persistent sewage spillages and (d) measures will his department take to ensure that the necessary repairs and maintenance are carried out promptly to prevent further environmental and health hazards?

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MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

- (a) The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) is responsible for bulk water supply in the country and plays role of regulator of water and sanitation services and water resources. In the event of municipal failures, the DWS provides support to municipalities as Water Service Authorities and providers who grapple with sewage spillages. There are interventions in place to provide relief to the residents of (i) Dikgatlong, (ii) Sol Plaatje and (iii) Magareng in the Northern Cape summarised in the table below:

Local Municipality	Challenges	Intervention	Total Project Cost
Dikgatlong	<p>Blockages in sewer lines and manholes (in cases by foreign material into sewer systems)</p> <p>Dysfunctional pumpstations and loadshedding interruptions</p> <p>Barkley West WWTW is partially functional.</p>	<p>The Barkley West Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) was recently refurbished along with the pumpstations</p> <p>DWS is currently funding the Dikgatlong construction of VIP's</p> <p>Construction of the Windsorton-Holpan bulk water supply.</p> <p>Upgrading of the Barkly West WWTW. This project is still in a planning stage.</p>	R 47 009 295
Sol Plaatje	<p>Blockages in sewer lines and manholes (in cases by foreign material into sewer systems)</p> <p>Dysfunctional pumpstations</p> <p>Homevale WWTW is partially functional</p> <p>Poor operation and maintenance of sewer infrastructure</p> <p>Refurbishment and maintenance required was not within municipal financial capabilities.</p>	<p>DWS is funding the construction of the Carters Ridge outfall sewer line and sewer pump station.</p> <p>Refurbishment of the Homevale WWTW</p> <p>Replaced the Gogga pumpstation to Homevale sewer outfall pipeline</p> <p>Refurbishment of the Gogga pumpstation</p>	R 57 366 501

Local Municipality	Challenges	Intervention	Total Project Cost
Magareng	<p>Waterlogging in areas due to blockages in sewer lines and manholes</p> <p>Poor operation and maintenance of sewer infrastructure</p> <p>Notices and Directives only partially effective</p>	<p>DWS provided funding emergency repair works to the Warrenton WWTW and surrounding sewer pump stations</p> <p>Refurbishment of the inlet works, aeration basin, clarifier, maturation ponds, chlorine, WAS / RAS pump station, auxiliary electrical works, sludge drying beds, flood lighting and vacuum pump station.</p> <p>Refurbishment of the Ikhutseng and Warrenval pump stations</p>	R 48 911 542

- (b) It is the responsibility of the municipalities to provide proper sanitation services and a healthy environment. The Department regulates through the Green Drop best practise system and investigates non-compliance through administrative enforcement. Wherever necessary, DWS also provides funding and support to municipalities that apply for available grants earmarked for addressing water services infrastructure challenges.
- (c) Department ensures protection of water resources, which can be achieved by initiating rectification measures against the identified non-complaint water users and polluters. When municipalities fail in their mandate to ensure compliance in terms of wastewater and effluent spillages, various legal frameworks can be initiated to address the contraventions. In instances where a water user fails to comply with any of the license conditions, the Department first exercises administrative enforcement actions in the form of Notices and Directives in accordance with the National Water Act. This is meant to afford the water users an opportunity to rectify non-compliances within certain timeframes.

When users are non-responsive, the Department proceeds with either or both criminal and civil enforcement actions. Criminal sanctions can also be instituted against the municipalities guided by Criminal Procedure Act on violations related to wastewater and effluent spillages. Section 151 of the National Water Act provides legal basis for laying of criminal charges against the municipalities that are intentionally or negligently pollute water resources or engage in unlawful water usage. Offences under Section 151 of the National Water Act can be used to address pollution of water resources, making it a criminal offense to discharge pollutants into water resources without the necessary authorisation

- (d) Support is provided through health and hygiene awareness campaigns, and financial support through the WSIG and the RBIG. The administrative enforcement requires rehabilitation of impacted areas. Where municipalities fail to rectify and rehabilitate, the Department can take legal action.


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DRAFT REPLY: RECOMMENDED/ NOT RECOMMENDED/ AMENDED


DR SEAN PHILLIPS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 19/06/23

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DRAFT REPLY: APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED/ AMENDED


MR SENZO MCHUNU, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

DATE: 22/06/23