



## **water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO 2231**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 02 JUNE 2023**  
**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 21)**

**2231. Ms P Marais (EFF) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation:**

Whether he has been informed that only one of the seven wastewater plants that exist in Bloemfontein is operational; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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## MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) regularly conducts inspections and audits on the operation and maintenance of the Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTWs) in all Water Services Institution (WSIs) within the Free State. The inspections aim to assess whether WWTWs are operated and maintained in a manner that does not pose risks of pollution resulting in contamination of water resources and increasing risks to human health and the environment.


There are seven (7) WWTWs owned by Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality serving Bloemfontein area. From these WWTWs, three (3) are operational, three (3) are partially operational and one is non-operational. The three operational and three partially operational WWTWs discharge wastewater which is not compliant to the General Limits for wastewater, and therefore there is potential to pollute water resources and the environment. The 2022 Green Drop report has found two WWTWs to be at a critical state, while the remaining five are at a very poor state. The table below provides details on the status of the 7 WWTWs:

Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW)	Operational Status	Detailed operational information
Bloemindustria	Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor operation and maintenance practices</li> <li>• Plant does not discharge, however there are no boreholes to monitor ground water pollution</li> <li>• No operational flow meters</li> </ul>
Bainsvlei	Partially Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No operational degritter at inlet works</li> <li>• One sludge recycle pump not in operation</li> <li>• No operational process monitoring done</li> <li>• Sludge lagoons overgrown with weeds</li> <li>• No disinfection of final effluent before release</li> <li>• Poor operation and maintenance practices</li> <li>• No operational flow meters</li> </ul>
Bloemspruit	Partially Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WWTW consists of 3 parallel modules. Only modules 1 and 3 are partially operational. Module 2 is completely out of operation</li> <li>• One mechanical screen non-functional</li> <li>• 2 out of 3 screw pumps are operational</li> <li>• Only 1 primary settling tank of 6 from module 1 is operational</li> <li>• Only 2 primary settling tanks of 6 from module 3 are operational</li> <li>• Blocked nozzles at Bio-Filter rotating arms.</li> <li>• 3 humus tanks of 4 out of operation for module 1</li> <li>• 6 Humus tanks of 8 is out of operation for module 3</li> <li>• No disinfection prior to discharge</li> <li>• Sludge drying beds not in operation and overgrown.</li> <li>• Flow meters not operational</li> </ul>
Sterkwater	Non-Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WWTWs completely non-Functional due to cable theft and poor operations. Raw wastewater is diverted to the storm water channel close to Renoster Spruit</li> </ul>

<b>Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW)</b>	<b>Operational Status</b>	<b>Detailed operational information</b>
Northern Works WWTW	Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinfection of final effluent is not consistent</li> </ul>
North-eastern	Partially Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degritter not operational</li> <li>• 2 of 3 screw pumps not operational</li> <li>• 2 of 3 automatic screens not operational</li> <li>• Defuse aerators not all operational</li> <li>• Mixers 5 and 8 out of operation</li> <li>• Unavailability of primary settling tanks cause solids to carry over to the activated sludge process.</li> <li>• Sludge lagoons full of sludge and discharging premature super natant water.</li> <li>• Lack of sludge dry beds to dry sludge.</li> <li>• No final water disinfection.</li> <li>• No operational flow meters</li> </ul>
Welvaart	Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WWTW was just restored to functionality in June 2023</li> </ul>

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DRAFT REPLY: RECOMMENDED/ ~~NOT RECOMMENDED~~/ AMENDED

  
**DR SEAN PHILLIPS**  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

DATE: 19/06/23

DRAFT REPLY: APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED/ AMENDED ✓

  
**MR SENZO MCHUNU, MP**  
**MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION**

DATE: 22/6/23