



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 829

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 17 NOVEMBER 2023
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 47)

829. Mr M A P De Bruyn (Free State: FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation:

Whether, with reference to a reply to Question 744 by the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment on 10 November 2023, his department has launched an urgent investigation into the raw sewage that is allegedly being spilled into Gariep Dam by the Kopanong Local Municipality; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, (a) what were the findings, (b) what steps have been taken to address the situation and (c) what are the further relevant details?

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MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

- (a) Following receipt of the letter from the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment to the Minister of Water and Sanitation (DWS), dated 03 July 2023, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) conducted an inspection on 07 July 2023 at the Gariep Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW); the two sewer pump stations (Hydro Park and De Stijl Hotel) and the sewer network.

The WWTW was found to be dysfunctional and raw sewage was observed flowing from the WWTW into the nearby Pan. The Hydro Park pump station was also found to be vandalized and dysfunctional. The pump station is flooded with sewage and raw sewage from this pump station was observed flowing into the Gariep Nature Reserve, and the Gariep Dam. De Stijl Hotel pump station was operational and there was no sewage spillage observed.

- (b) DWS met with the Kopanong Local Municipality leadership on 22 September 2023 to address the challenges of sewage spillages in Gariep Dam. The municipality submitted an action plan dated 28 September 2023, to DWS which contained short-, medium- and long-term measures to address the challenges. The DWS followed up on 01 November 2023 regarding progress

with implementation of the action plan and provided inputs to the action plan. The municipality responded to the DWS on 20 November 2023 indicating that it is unable to comply with implementation of the action plan due to financial constraints. The municipality has however indicated that a business plan was submitted to CoGTA to request approval to use 10% of its Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) to address sewer challenges. Approval is still awaited from CoGTA.

It should be noted that on 30 August 2023, the Free State provincial government invoked an intervention into the municipality in terms of Section 139(1) of the Constitution read with Section 63 (1) and 2(b) of the Water Services Act, 1997. This was done to address the serious financial crisis experienced by the municipality and improve service delivery which includes water and sanitation services. The intervention will also incorporate development of a mandatory Financial Recovery Plan by the National Treasury.

- (c) Two directives dated February 2018 and December 2019 were issued by DWS for the Gariep WWTW and Gariep Dam pump station respectively. The criminal case or interdict process which was opted as the next enforcement stage has been put on hold due to interventions proposed for Kopanong LM in terms of section 139 of the Constitution and section 63 of the Water Services Act.

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



**DR SEAN PHILLIPS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

DATE: 24/11/23

DRAFT REPLY: APPROVED/ ~~NOT APPROVED~~/ AMENDED



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

DATE: 28/11/23