



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Reference: 6/2/216

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 6

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 10 FEBRUARY 2023
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 1)

6. Ms M Dlamini (Mpumalanga: EFF) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation:

(a) What measures have been taken to close off the beaches in East London following the sewerage spillage, (b) why was the sewer infrastructure not maintained and (c) what processes are followed when checking the cycle of maintenance for sewerage?

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MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

1. In the event of a sewage spillage and water pollution, the BCMM as a Water Services Authority and a Water Services Provider, is obligated to warn the public and close any beaches, to undertake daily water quality samples and only open the beaches when two successive 'satisfactory results' are received.

- (a) The following measures were put in place following five sewage spill incidents that occurred in January:
- Beach closures took place
 - Warning noticeboards were placed at all public access points and placed at both sides of normal (popular) bathing areas.
 - Lifeguards on duty, further warned and informed the public.

- Where sewer spillage incidents were due to vandalism, damaged infrastructure has been repaired and security improved
 - Where there were blockages, these have since been cleared and operations have resumed
- (b) BCMM does ensure that sewage pump stations are routinely checked and maintained and many pump stations are visited daily to clear screens. The stage 5 and stage 6 loadshedding is causing sewage spills to occur due to lack of electrical supply, and increased failure of switch gear. Vandalism is a growing concern and severely impacting on service delivery in some areas. However, it is noted that many sewer blockages are taking longer to resolve because of illegal dumping of refuse along the access roads (The increased incidence of illegal dumping may be a result of BCMM closing garden refuse sites and not having any transfer stations for garden refuse). Additional machines and trucks are required to clear access roads of illegally dumped waste and high vegetation growth before repairs can commence.
- (c) The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) does not routinely inspect pump stations and outfall lines, as these components are not licenced like the wastewater treatment works are. DWS officials follow up when incidences of sewer spillages occur and are reported. All sewerage infrastructure is assessed by DWS along with the management and maintenance programs when the Green Drop and Green Drop Pats assessments are done annually.

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DRAFT REPLY: RECOMMENDED/ NOT RECOMMENDED/ AMENDED


DR SEAN PHILLIPS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 17/01/23 ✓

DRAFT REPLY: APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED/ AMENDED


MR SENZO MCHUNU, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

DATE: 24/02/2023