



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Vaal Dam holds hope for Gauteng water

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As South Africa continues to experience decreasing dam levels, the Vaal River System is pumping sufficient water to the Vaal Dam to keep water flowing in Gauteng which is the economic hub of the country.

A report released by the Department of Water and Sanitation this week indicates that the Vaal Dam water level stood at a reasonable 93,9% compared to miserable 36% at the height of the drought last year. Generally dam levels are dropping at 1% week-on-week.

At the height of the drought in November 2016 the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms Nomvula Mokonyane released volumes of water from Sterksfontein Dam to supplement dwindling resources in the Vaal System. The lack of water in Vaal Dam was posing a serious economic threat to Gauteng's economy, a situation that would have had a negative impact on the country's economy. Consequently, various municipalities in the province had to impose stringent water restrictions to save the little water that remained during the natural disaster

However, heavy downpours came down in January this year that filled the Vaal and many other dams to the brim and municipalities later lifted water the restrictions.

In Eastern Cape the Algoa System which has five dams has decreased slightly from 33,3% to 32,7% compared to 72,2% last year. The system includes Nelson Mandela Bay which is currently experiencing serious water challenges that have forced the Metro to impose severe restrictions in and around Port Elizabeth. The Amathole System with 6 dams serving Buffalo City Metro (East London) decreased from 63,5% to 63,2%. Last year this time it was at 82,2%.

In the Free State the Bloemfontein System with 4 dams serving mainly Mangaung, decreased by 1,2% to 45,0% from 46,2% compared to 31,3% during the same time last year. The Crocodile West system in North West that has six dams serving mainly Tshwane, Madibeng and Rustenburg, also experienced a slight decrease from 98,6% to 98,2% The system was recorded at 95,2% last year.

The Umgeni Dam system with 5 dams serving mainly eThekweni and Msunduzi decreased to 60,3% from 61,0%. The system was at 47,9% during the same time last year.

Despite some heavy rains in parts of KwaZulu-Natal, Umgeni system with 5 dams that are serving mainly eThekweni and Msunduzi, decreased from 61% to 60,3% this week. The system was at 47,9% during the same time last year.

The latest dam level recordings reflect a slight decrease week-on-week which shows a drop from 70,4% last week to 69,9% this week.

The report coincides with the Clear Rivers Campaign which is spearheaded by the Department of Water and Sanitation in honour of Nelson Mandela. The campaign is aimed at educating the public about the importance of keeping clean rivers and dams with the aim of



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accessing more water to various communities. and turning them into dumpsites must stop. The pollution of rivers and dams has a negative impact on the quality of water.

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