



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS's clear river campaign at work to give a clean bill of health to Klip River

31 July 2017

The Department of Water and Sanitation and various stakeholders punched above their weight when they cleaned the Klip River in Eldorado Park to give it a new lease of life.

The cleanup campaign, which took place on Friday, 28 July 2017, was the result of cooperation between the department and the local radio station, Eldos FM. The station alerted the department to the river pollution which resulted in the communities around the river experiencing a stench.

Apart from the department and Eldos FM, a wide array of stakeholders took part in the campaign. The department designated its Clear Rivers Campaign to coincide with July, a month dedicated to Nelson Mandela to encourage the public to volunteer 67 minutes of their time to clean rivers, stream and wetlands.

The stakeholders took part in the campaign included Plastic SA, World Wildlife Fund, Coca Cola, University of Johannesburg, City Parks, Pikitup, the Departments of Education and Health, Joburg Water, City of Johannesburg Emergency Services, City of Johannesburg and Enviromentorz.

The department's Gauteng Provincial Head, Mr Sibusiso Mthembu, said the cleanup campaign was part of his department's work to concientise communities to keep the rivers clean, emphasising that continued pollution of rivers would result to biodiversity being compromised.

He said treating of water resources that have been polluted costs much more than it would have been had care been taken not to throw away rubbish on the streets, stressing that this rubbish eventually ended up into the rivers and streams.

Mthembu expressed his excitement about the communities turn out for the cleanup campaign, saying he was moreover grateful to the schools that had made a few learners available to take part in the campaign.

A grade 11 learner from the Lancea Vale Secondary School who took part in the cleanup, Sifiso Makhathini, said being part of the campaign was a joyous occasion because for him the stench that came from the river affected them.

"Some of our school mates use this pass through area when they go to school or return home. So, it is important that it is kept clean because we can end up having all sorts of illnesses. Taking part in the cleanup makes me very proud because I am helping not only my school mates but the community," said Sifiso.

Two community members, Granville Sparks and Shaliek Abdullar, who also participated in the cleanup, echoed each other's sentiments about the cleanup initiative.

They thanked Eldos FM for taking the initiative to talk to the department to assist in addressing the situation, vowing to prevent pollution in the river.



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The two said as children they used to play around the river and what it has become because of pollution was something that the community should work to improve.

They said: “When people enter Eldorado Park, they say they are entering smeldos because of the terrible stench that emanates from the river. We must work hard to change this situation. It is up to all of us to make sure that we keep this river clean and are able to enjoy the benefits that come out of it.”

Hosia Sithole