



## **INTERNET ARTICLE**

### **Water conservation awareness receives thumbs-up**

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Adoption of water conservation practices is essential to save water. This was the message during the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Water and Sanitation (KZN DWS) stakeholder engagement on water conservation awareness that was held on 27 September 2017 within Umuziwabantu Local Municipality in Harding.

The purpose of the stakeholder engagement was to address community members on issues pertaining to water conservation, rainwater harvesting methods, grey water, illegal water connections, as well as vandalism.

Setting the scene for the engagement was DWS Water Sector Support Bheki Ngubo who said the department is working hard to ensure that South Africans receive clean drinkable water. He cautioned that it is up to the community members to ensure that once the department has placed water infrastructure, it is up to the community to look after it. Ngubo was stressing on vandalism and theft of water infrastructure that is causing lots of inconvenience to community members.

“As we all know that KZN is facing drought, UGU District is one of the districts that is currently hard hit by drought. This is why today we are here to engage with you community of Munizwabantu to remind you that drought is still here and to advise you to adopt water conservation practices. The municipality is currently rolling out a water programme across the district and we are again calling upon community members to fix and report all leaks in order to minimise water loss in our water network” said Sibonelo Shange from UGU district Municipality.

Sibonelo Bhengu highlighted that the DWS has been helping the district with the municipality by establishment of a water and sanitation forum within Umuziwabantu. The forum was created as a way of improving communication between community and government in addressing water and sanitation issues especially in areas where there had been protests, to give a voice to the people.

DWS Urban and Rural Water Management Deputy Director Siboniso Ndlovu gave an informative presentation on grey water.

“We all know that water is life. The human race needs water to survive, to work, to eat and to live healthily. However, hundreds of litres of clean water go down the drain that can be reusable as grey water. Reusing grey water at home is just one of the ways you can choose as a more sustainable lifestyle. Take for instance if you have collected 20litres and have used 5litre to wash dishes, would it not be fair to use that water to clean floors within the house,” he said.

Ndlovu highlighted that as long as grey water is utilised responsibly and correctly, it is safe. The idea behind effective grey water management is to reuse the waste water within 24 hours, this eliminates the growth of bacteria in the water and ensures that the water is still pleasant smelling and hygienic.



## water & sanitation

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“As a member of community member, we really appreciate the time taken by government to visit us; it makes us feel important and appreciated. In honest truth, what these officials are saying is true. It’s the little habits that we use to do back in the days that helped us to save water that we have now forgotten. More than anything, I am happy to know that we now have a forum where we can address our water issues” said Senzo Shezi one of the community member during the engagement.

The stakeholder engagement was attended officials from the DWS, Ugu District Municipality, local councilors, leaders from local traditional houses, ordinary community members as well as Umuziwabantu water and sanitation forum members.

**Mbali Mahaye**