



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Heatwave is affecting the country's water resources

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The current scorching heatwave in most parts of the country is having a negative effect on the country's water resources. Most dams whose dam levels were high last week are reported to have lost 2% of water through evaporation.

Most dams have dropped their levels from 73,2% to 71% this week, thanks to persistent hot temperatures in major parts of the country over the weekend. Intolerable temperatures also affected different sporting codes as the soccer derby between Soweto giants was interspersed with water breaks. In rugby the Currie Cup final in Cape Town was also compromised by the hot weather.

Cape Town has been in the grip of a heatwave since last week.

The extreme heat is also affecting the Cape Winelands, West Coast district, Little Karoo, southern Namakwa district and coastal regions of the Northern Cape. Maximum temperatures soared to the upper 30s and lower 40s in these regions.

The heatwave started with a Bergwind circulation on Monday. During Bergwind conditions, warm continental air warms up as flows from the interior towards the coast.

The Bergwind conditions were also severe along the south coast with numerous temperature records being broken for the month of October

However, meteorologists are predicting cooler temperatures later this week as heavy showers are expected in parts of the country. During high temperature citizens are warned against unnecessary exposure to the sun as this may result in them suffering skin diseases.

The current dam levels are, however, a vast improvement from the same period last year when most parts of South Africa were recovering from a severe drought. A total 10 dams across the country registered their levels at 100% and more during last weekend's downpours.

At a workshop to review the department's readiness for the summer rains, hydrologists estimated that the coming festive season will receive less than normal rains because of a weak El Nino. A strong El Nino phenomenon accounts for a wet season that is often accompanied by floods in affected areas.

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