



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **Eldorado Park gets behind DWS's Clear River Campaign**

24 July 2018

Lesley Adams, from Eldorado Park's extension 9, grew up in the area and as a child he has always loved to play in the park where the Klip River passes.

But for the past years he has not been able to enjoy his surroundings because of the pollution of the Klip River.

But all this will soon change – thanks to the Department of Water and Sanitation's annual Clear Rivers Campaign. The campaign is an initiative by the Department and is aimed at encouraging active citizenry by appealing to communities to play an active role in cleaning rivers, streams, canals and ecosystems.

The campaign saw the community around the Klip river take taking the cudgels to clean-up on Saturday, 21 July 2018.

The campaign takes place in the month of July in which the iconic Nelson Mandela was born. As part of celebrating the former statesman's birthday, communities are encouraged to spend 67 minutes of their time to do public good.

"This campaign is providing us with the opportunity to take back our space because as the community we have begun to neglect this area. We dump everything here, but we have now decided to take ownership of our spaces. One of the ways we are doing this is starting with the 67 minutes for Mandela," said Adams.

Adams said part of the clean-up was to make the youth aware of how to use the river and be water wise, saying that he was hoping that from the campaign they would be able to get together to continue the clean-up at least once a month.

Ms Leanne-Ann Modley, who is a lecturer at the University of Johannesburg, said the water quality in the area was very bad, adding that it was the responsibility of the community to take care of the river and that they should not wait for the Department of Water and Sanitation to be active.

She said: "Every time you throw a paper on the floor it ends up in the river. So, it is not the Department or Pickitup that is responsible for what is happening in the community. Yes, they need to assist us but at the end of the day we are responsible for the state of our rivers," adding that the community needed to take responsibility for its actions.

Ms Modley said the clean-up was not a once-off thing but formed part of the Greening the Jungle Campaign, the aim of which was to green the environment and get to a point where open spaces and parks were clean and making them safe for the community.



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Mr Brian Coolman from Environmentorz, which is one of the community organisations taking part in the clean-up, said their taking part in the campaign was to help clean-up the river but that there was still much to be done. He said the river needed to be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure that the pollution was effectively dealt with.

DWS's Adopt-a-River Coordinator, Ms Tebogo Mashiane, expressed satisfaction at the turnout of the community members to take part in the clean-up.

Ms Mashiane said the clean-up was necessitated by the challenge of people dumping directly into the river and that a heap of waste was blocking the river from flowing, stressing that the river was now devoid of life.

“What we are hoping to achieve through the Clear Rivers Campaign is that we change human behaviour because it is the root cause of the pollution. People start by dumping on the ground and storm water channels and this waste finds its way into the sewer systems and in turn the sewer system will experience spillages,” Ms Mashiane said.

She said the main challenge in the Klip River was the raw water going into the river and the solid waste which she said was the single biggest problem.

Ms Mashiane said going forward there was a need to conduct a door-to-door campaign to sensitise the community about the dangers of pollution. According to her, this would help restore the river to its former state.

**Hosia Sithole**