



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Washing hands at critical times is a must

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The Department of Water and Sanitation – in partnership with the Department of Health, Correctional Services, South African National Defence Force, Pelenomi and Rosepark Hospitals Services – celebrated Global Handwashing Day in style on 15 October 2018 by doing door to door education in Wepener, Free State.

Global Hand Washing Day is celebrated annually and is a campaign to motivate and mobilise millions around the world to wash their hands with soap at critical times amongst children, caregivers and the general South African public, to curb preventable life threatening infections related to poor hygiene, and poor water and sanitation such as diarrhoea.

The identified households each received soap, toilet paper as well as informative pamphlet on how to wash hands in the proper fashion. Ms Ziyanda Xokozela, the Sanitation Manager at the Department of Water and Sanitation's Free State Office, said that the door to door campaign was a resounding success. "My wish is that we instil a habit of washing hands in the community and that may communities pass the message along to those we were not able to reach", she said.

This campaign can be credited with reduction of mortality rates related to diarrhoeal diseases in the community. "Many people believe that washing their hands with just water is enough, but using soap can remove germs which are then rinsed away with running water", said Xokozela.

"Hands should be washed after visiting the toilet; after handling baby nappies and before handling food or feeding a child. Hand washing from a common vessel should be discouraged at schools and in mass gatherings such as funerals and parties as this habit is likely to increase the rate of infections. Running water is preferred instead of still water", advised Xokozela.

The department and partners will continue doing handwashing activations all over Free State.

Larry Crisp