



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS Mpumalanga and Dipaleseng Local Municipality Celebrate Global Handwashing Day in Nthoroane

31 October 2025

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Mpumalanga Provincial Operations, in partnership with Dipaleseng Local Municipality, commemorated Global Handwashing Day with the community of Nthoroane on 27 October 2025 at the Nthoroane Community Hall. The event highlighted the importance of regular and proper handwashing as a key practice for maintaining good health and preventing disease.

Observed annually on 15 October, Global Handwashing Day serves as a global reminder that washing hands with soap remains one of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs and illnesses. This year's theme, "***It might be gloves. It's always hand hygiene.***", underscored that while gloves may offer protection in certain settings, they are never a substitute for proper handwashing with soap and water.

Opening the event, Patrick Ntabeni, Director: Water and Sanitation Services Support at DWS Mpumalanga, emphasized that sanitation goes beyond toilet facilities.

"Sanitation is not only about flushing toilets. It's about thinking of the next person who will use the same facility. Even when gloves are used, proper handwashing remains essential. We are here to educate and demonstrate good hygiene practices, and we urge everyone to share what they learn today with others," he said.

Mr Ntabeni also promoted the Department's Water and Sanitation Education Programme, encouraging schools to participate actively in hygiene awareness efforts.

Representatives from the Department of Health, Maditaba Motloun and Ms Mettie Manzana, delivered a health talk on maintaining a healthy lifestyle and demonstrated the correct handwashing technique. Mnyamane from the Department of Education commended DWS for bringing the initiative to the community, noting the importance of engaging learners to become ambassadors for good hygiene at home and in their schools.

Learners from local schools reinforced the message of hygiene through drama, poetry, and music, blending education and entertainment to drive home the importance of handwashing.

Delivering the keynote address, Acting Executive Mayor Cllr Ahmed-Nazir Carrim highlighted hand hygiene as one of the most effective and affordable ways to prevent diseases such as diarrhoea and cholera.

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“Statistics show that regular handwashing with soap can reduce diarrhoeal diseases by half and respiratory infections by at least one-third. This simple act saves millions of lives each year. As a municipality, health and hygiene remain central to our service delivery agenda,” he said.

Cllr Carrim reaffirmed that access to water and sanitation is not only a health issue but also a matter of dignity, equality, and human rights.

“Ensuring that people can practice good hygiene is an act of social justice. We are committed to investing in clean water, sanitation, and hygiene education,” he added.

He also stressed the importance of collaboration across sectors, urging schools, community organisations, and residents to support public handwashing initiatives and protect water infrastructure.

“Clean hands protect lives. When we wash our hands properly, we show respect and concern for others. Let’s make handwashing a daily habit, at home, at school, and in our workplaces,” he said.

To promote hygiene practices, participating schools received handwashing soaps, cleaning materials, toilet paper, paper towels, and water buckets with taps. The community was also provided with water-saving pamphlets, reminding them that South Africa is a water-scarce country and encouraging the wise use of water resources.

The event closed with a collective call for responsible citizenship and continued promotion of clean hands and healthy lives.

Themba Khoza

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