



MEDIA ADVISORY

Minister Majodina to mark World Water Day through handover of series of refurbished wastewater infrastructure that are part of Matjhabeng Municipality's sanitation refurbishment & upgrading intervention, in Free State

19 March 2026

The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms Pemmy Majodina together with Deputy Ministers David Mahlobo and Sello Seitholo will mark the **World Water Day** in Matjhabeng Local Municipality in the Lejweleputswa District in Free State, on Sunday, 22 March 2026, through a handover of series of completed water and sanitation infrastructure projects which are part of the ministerial intervention to address collapsed waste water systems in the municipality.

The Ministry will be joined by the Free State MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements, Saki Mokoena and Matjhabeng Local Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr Thanduxolo Khalipha, and members of Vaal Central Water Board.

Minister Majodina will hand over more than 20 refurbished and upgraded sanitation infrastructure including a Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) and pump stations in and around Welkom and Odendaalsrus within the Matjhabeng Municipality, which form part of the sanitation infrastructure currently undergoing refurbishment and upgrades in the municipality to address the challenges of sewer spillages that has plagued the areas for a long time, affecting the environment and polluting water resources.

Matjhabeng Municipality faces a severe sanitation infrastructure challenges due to prolonged poor maintenance and vandalism which resulted in 9 out of its 11 WWTWs, 42 pump stations as well as over 1500 kilometres of sewer networks blocked overtime leaving sections of the municipality in the major towns such as Welkom, Virginia, Allanridge, Ventersburg, Odendaalsrus and Hennenman covered in raw effluent and widespread sewerage overflows.

Following a ministerial directive in 2022 to assist the municipality to address the challenges, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) appointed its entity, the Vaal Central Water to undertake a programme to refurbish and upgrade the current sanitation infrastructure of the Matjhabeng utilising the department's Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG).

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Water and Sanitation
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Although some of the scope of work is still ongoing, sizable progress such as completed pump stations has been made in an endeavour to eliminate persisting sewer issues in Matjhabeng Local Municipality.

Minister Majodina's handover of the completed sanitation infrastructure projects demonstrates government's commitment to protect water resources and provide dignified sanitation to all households in South Africa, and to emphasise that access to safe drinking water and sanitation is a fundamental human right and a critical enabler of gender equality in line with the year's World Water Day theme: '**Water and Gender**' with the slogan '**Where Water Flows, Equality Grows**'.

Media is invited to attend as follows:

Date : 22 March 2026

Sites visit

Venue : Thabong Waste Water Treatment Works (meeting point)

Time : 09:00

Community Engagement

Venue : Far East Multi-Purpose Centre – Thabong, Welkom

Time : 12:00

For media confirmations, please contact: Mr Larry Crisp at 082 554 7271 / crispl@dws.gov.za or Mr Sanku Tsunke at 066 299 2915 / tsunkes@dws.gov.za

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Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

For more information, contact Ms Wisane Mavasa, Spokesperson for the Department of Water and Sanitation on 060 561 8935 or mavasaw@dws.gov.za / Ministerial Spokesperson, Mr Cornelius Monama on 083 271 0808/ monamac@dws.gov.za

For Vaal Central Water: Ms Lindiwe Mnguni at 067 419 9629/ lindiwem@vcwater.co.za

Matjhabeng Local Municipality: Tshediso Tlali on 072 133 4424.

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