

**Season's Greeting**  
**Message by Ms BP Sonjica, MP, Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry**  
**15 December 2005**

The end of year holiday season is upon us and many people are travelling to visit their families or off on holiday. I am appealing to all South Africans, in this time of celebration, to use water sparingly.

We should reflect, during this period, on the importance and value of water and use it wisely. With many areas experiencing an influx of visitors over the holiday period, water shortages could develop, unless everyone remembers the need to conserve water.

I appeal to you too, to exercise caution on beaches and at dams. Water brings life, but as past tragic incidents show, it can also be dangerous and must be treated with respect. Let us be vigilant and prevent drownings during the festive season. Let us remember that small streams can rapidly turn into raging torrents after heavy rainfall. Treat our rivers with respect and care.

Holidaymakers at the country's dams should not mix alcohol and water sports. Driving boats and jetskis while drunk can be just as dangerous as driving a car – to yourself and to others. We must support and obey the instructions of the police water wing and other officials - such as voluntary lifesavers at the coast - who help to keep our holidays safe. Do not swim in areas where warning signs say no swimming is allowed.

In whatever you do, avoid polluting our water. Put your litter in rubbish bins, or take it away with you.

Thank you for all the support to the Department during 2005. I am looking forward to even stronger relations in 2006. I wish you all a pleasant festive season and a prosperous 2006.

Ms Buyelwa Sonjica, MP  
Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry