



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS MS R T MABUDAFHASI, MP DURING THE HANDING OVER OF CERTIFICATES TO PROCESS CONTROLLERS AT GEORGE MUNICIPALITY IN WESTERN CAPE

19 MARCH 2013

Programme Director,

Your Worship the Executive Mayor of Eden District Municipality, Cllr Van der Huisthuizen;

Your Worship the Mayor of George Local Municipality, Cllr Charles Stander;

Councillors,

Government officials;

Esteemed guests;

Graduates;

Members of the media;

Ladies and gentlemen

Good Morning

Water is the foundation for social and economic development. Every South African has a responsibility to make adjustments to their consumption of this very critical and scarce resource.

During this week South Africans from all walks of life, both young and old will commemorate the Human Rights Day and will also join the people of the globe in celebrating World Water Week.

We are here today to congratulate a team of men and women who have completed the Water Process Controllers training programme. This event coincides with our National Water Week which aims to raise awareness among South Africans about the role of water in socio-economic development including the need to get all South Africans to use water more responsibly.

The theme for the 2013 National Water Week is **“Water is Life – Conserve it, Respect it and Enjoy it.”**

The Department of Water Affairs commend all the partners involved in making this dream come true, this is a major milestone. “Working together we can do more”.

The role of the department as a regulator is to provide needs based support to local government from source to tap to ensure compliance to our Regulations. Thus the implementation of the incentive based regulation programme known as Blue Drop and Green Drop Certification programme to reward those municipalities who are doing excellent work. It is designed to move municipalities from poor performance to full compliance. This cannot be achieved without Water Process Controllers at municipal level.

This is a remarkable milestone as the lack of water process controllers and shortcomings in terms of formal qualifications has been a big concern for us. Gradually we are addressing the shortage of skills in the water management at municipal level. However I would like to acknowledge the experience and dedication of those that have been holding the fort doing the job even though they did not have formal qualifications.

The municipalities needs to prioritize the formal training of the existing water process controllers and recruitment of new ones as water treatment works is a twenty four hours operation which needs a fully fledged team all times.

I want to ask the water process controllers here today, what does it mean to have this certificate? To me, it is an outward symbol of your internal achievement. The certificate is something tangible -- where you have sensed that “this is something that I must do for myself”, yet it is an achievement that your family and workmates can also feel proud of.

To quote Madiba, as he wrote in a letter to his wife Winnie Mandela while he was still on Robben Island, “a saint is a sinner who keeps on trying”.

Very few people achieve their goals without some hardship and sacrifice.

The same applies to our own character and the world we work in, we should never stop learning. We should never stop questioning. But in order to achieve this certificate, your effort must be about more than satisfying curiosity, it must be about sharpening your ability to learn, to put in some extra sacrifice, to keep on thinking and testing answers until you get things right.

Learning is a collaboration, so in a way, because you have learned, you are now in a position to help others to learn. You have set an example, and as you carry on with the habits you now have, of reading and doing assignments, this opens up the world to other kinds of learning.

Congratulations to all the graduates, this is a start not the end – we expect you to register for more courses until you become Experts in this field. We expect to see drastic improvements on the management of Water Treatment Works. I am very pleased by the involvement of women as development and support of women is and will be my passion for life.

Lastly I would like to express my appreciation to Mayors for agreeing to partake in this project, this indicates your commitment in water resource management entirely. The officials of the Department are at your service at anytime you need them, they will support you. A big thank you to all officials for their commitment and hard work, you continue to make us proud.

In conclusion, I would like to make an appeal to the Mayors and Municipal Managers, communities to prioritise Water Conservation, lets join hands on the War on Leaks lets fight until we don't see them anymore.

Let us all be ambassadors of Water Conservation, Patriots and save the scarce resource of our country and by doing that we will have enough water for our development plans and liberate our people from the chains of poverty.

Congratulations to the 141 Process Controllers who are receiving their National Qualifications (NQF 2&3).

“Water is Life – Conserve it, Respect it and Enjoy it.

I thank you.