

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY HONOURABLE DEPUTY
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL
AFFAIRS, MS REJOICE MABUDAFHASI DURING
THE WAR ON LEAKS EVENT IN CARNARVON,
KAREEBERG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, NORTHERN
CAPE**

THURSDAY, 11 APRIL 2013

Executive Mayor of Pixley Ka Seme: Cllr John Lolwana;

Mayor of Kareeberg Local Municipality: Cllr N Titus;

Councillors;

Members of the community;

Members of the media;

Ladies and gentlemen

Good afternoon

South Africa is ranked amongst the thirty driest countries in the world. Although South Africa's current water supply is adequate to meet the country's current needs, there could be a problem in meeting future needs if we do not act now to secure effective and timeous smart water-management options.

The government has a great track record in delivering clean water to the majority of the people. For many South Africans, under apartheid, the lack of access to water had an outrageous assault on their health, their development and their dignity.

The delivery of water to all sectors of our population is paramount in restoring human dignity and addressing the injustices of the past.

Today we are here in Kareeberg Local Municipality to declare War on Leaks. Municipalities are incurring loss of revenue through unaccounted for water exacerbated

by leaking pipes and taps. Water leaks are a major cause of concern that if not arrested timeously it might lead to disaster.

This is further deepened by President Zuma's call to reduce water loss by half in 2014. Hence we introduced the War on Leaks Project which aims to eradicate leaks at household level, educate users about water conservation, fixing leaks, creating jobs for young people and skills development.

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2013 as the year of International Water Cooperation.

This year the Department of Water Affairs commemorated the National Water Week under the theme: Water is life, Respect it, Conserve it, Enjoy it. The aim of National Water Week campaign is 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.

National Water Week is essentially an *annual awareness campaign* of the Department of Water Affairs; which together with communities countrywide, seeks to focus on water as a *scarce and precious commodity* in our country, which must be conserved and respected. Water is also to be recognised as a catalyst for economic development, without which there will be widespread unemployment and economic decay.

South Africa is already faced with scarce water resources and is further threatened by high levels of pollution in dams and rivers. We are also faced with water wastage that occurs in our homes, schools, businesses as a result of leaking taps and pipes.

Through our public awareness and education we are implementing the 2020 Vision programme which is a school based and community outreach programme.

This programme continues to educate grades R to 12 learners about integrated water resource management, climate change and environment including water related careers.

The respectful use and conservation of water starts with our children, but this does not mean that adults cannot adopt water saving practices. Whilst it is our children and our youth who are in the learning phase, our adults are the ones who are active in commerce and industry, and who will also share the responsibility of guiding our young people to implement good water practices for tomorrow.

Having a positive mindset towards saving and conserving scarce water resources, we can all go a long way to preserving this scarce resource for generations to come. Please allow me to share the following water saving tips, techniques and practices with you today;

- ✓ Flush toilets only when necessary. - Install a multi-flush or dual-flush mechanism in the toilet.

A multi-flush device allows the user to choose exactly how much water goes to waste when pressing the handle. A dual-flush device has a short flush button for liquids and a longer flush button for solids.

- ✓ Plant water-wise indigenous plants. Help us to eradicate alien plants.
- ✓ Water gardens only in the early morning or the evening and only when necessary.
- ✓ Install garden drip irrigation on flower beds and sprayers on lawns.
- ✓ Turn-off the tap while brushing teeth, shaving or soaping hands.
- ✓ Take shorter showers and use less water if you bath.
- ✓ Repair dripping taps by replacing the washer. If a tap is dripping at a rate of 1 drop per second, you could be wasting up to 10,220 Liters per year!

- ✓ If your toilet handle constantly stays in a downward position this means that water is constantly running. Replace or fix the handle to avoid wasted water

- ✓ Collect rainwater for re-using on the garden or washing the car. Wash the car on the lawn so that water that falls to the ground whilst washing the car is used to water the lawn. Use a bucket to wash the car rather than a hose pipe.
- ✓ Waste water from the cooking process must be used to water the garden. When washing vegetables, throw the water onto the garden rather than down the drain.
- ✓ Use a broom instead of a hosepipe when cleaning driveways or patios.
- ✓ Insulate hot water pipes so that not too much water is wasted when waiting for water to get hot.
- ✓ Report leaking pipes in the streets to the municipality (Kareeberg LM) the minute that you become aware of these leaks.
- ✓ Fix the leaking pipes that are on your property yourself, and do this as soon as possible.

Every citizen in South Africa has a duty to spread the word when it comes to water conservation, let's make every day a water day.

The Department of Water Affairs is encouraging all South Africans to focus on the need to restore and preserve the integrity of this most precious resource, water. South Africans must take responsibility to make sure this scarce resource is managed in an effective and sustainable manner. Remember to report the misuse of water and other faults to the nearest municipal offices or call the Department's toll free number at 0800 200 200.

In terms of the awareness, we all need to:

- ✓ *Raise awareness around the need to conserve and protect water resources.*
- ✓ *Highlight the Department's plans and achievements as custodian of the country's water resources.*
- ✓ *Ensure water is put firmly on the national agenda.*
- ✓ *Encourage everyone to use water sparingly at all times.*
- ✓ *Call upon all citizens to ensure each person uses water wisely and sparingly at all times.*

✓ *Remind citizens that South Africa is a water scarce country and that water is a finite resource.*

In conclusion, I would like to appeal to every South African to take practical steps to conserve and protect our water resources. Let us report water leaks whenever we see them.

“Water is life - Respect it, Conserve it, Enjoy it”

I thank you