



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION, MRS PAMELA TSHWETE, DURING THE EVENT TO HAND OVER WATER TANKERS IN THE MALUTI-A-PHOFUNG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, FREE STATE PROVINCE.

08 JUNE 2016

Programme Director
Executive Mayor of Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality
Executive Mayor of Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality
Councillors
Marena who are amongst us today
National, provincial, local government and Water sector entities' officials
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

Introduction

It is always a great honour to be amongst people on the ground, where delivery of basic services are delivered as expected. This is an auspicious gathering indeed.

Today is also an apt day to be talking about water as today marks World Oceans' Day, where the highest collection of water on our planet is based. This day continues to reflect on the message that water truly is a catalyst to all socio-economic development.

As we know that over the last two seasons the country has experienced even lower than our own average rainfall. South Africa being a water scarce country, we are experiencing the worst drought that the country has seen in almost more than two decades. The Free State as a province is one of those that have been most affected, together with KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, North West and the Northern Cape.

The area within which we are has a number of water sources which have been badly affected by the current drought. As we were on the tour to the different areas earlier, I was shocked at the desperately low level at the Fika Patso Dam, a critical source for the municipality. I am informed of other sources that are assisting the locality during this period, e.g. the Sterkfontein Dam is helpful during the drought, as well as Makwane Dam which unfortunately as we know also has limited supply during drought.

The truth of the debilitating drought that we are experiencing is a reality that all of us must continue to appreciate. I appreciate all the efforts that the



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District and Local Municipalities are leading in the attempt to bring relief to our people. I wish to request our councillors to continue engaging the communities within which they work; this we must do in order to ensure that all messages of efforts towards relief are continuously relayed to our people. That is what the central role of all public representatives is all about.

The design capacity of the Fika Patso Water Treatment Plant stands at 40 megalitres per day. Through the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) we are now in the process of upgrading the Makwane Water Treatment Plant to 10 megalitres per day. Fika Patso Water Treatment Plant's infrastructure is being retrofitted with new facilities to address the known water quality challenges. This retrofitting will also assist towards responding to the growing demands and optimise operations and treatment processes for the area.

Drought Management and managing water in times of drought

As I indicated earlier, South Africa is in the clutches of the strongest El Nino on record and food production and water supplies are under threat. Research based on a record of more than 100 years, shows that eight of the ten strongest droughts in Southern Africa have occurred during the mature phase of an El Nino and that half of these droughts have been severe. Should the drought prolong and intensify we can expect that there will be impacts on all sectors of the economy, society and our natural ecosystems.

During drought periods, water supply is prioritised in accordance with the assurance of supply for the various water use sectors. Basic human needs and water requirements of strategic users such as power stations and major industries are less curtailed. The department is also in the process of building new dams to ensure enough storage of water. It is therefore important that drought interventions must not only continue but must be accelerated.

Executive Mayors, even as the current efforts are underway by the department and your municipalities to reduce the impact of the lack of water, I encourage you to continue giving the leadership as has been happening. The officials and all technocrats will give the necessary support as expected.

I truly believe that as a collective, we will overcome this current constraint to all development. As consumers we all need to be conscious of the consequences of our actions with regard to water use. Some tips for water saving are:

- **Fix leaking taps, toilets and pipes;**
- **Re-use water for flushing toilets and gardening;**
- **Collect water from rainfall;**



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- **Plant indigenous plants;**
- **Don't leave taps running;**
- **Don't leave the tap running when brushing teeth.**

Let us continue with all we are doing and are about. As the weather Services indicate that we will still be in this current situation for a while, we have to prepare ourselves for the next rainy season, that when the rains come we will be in a situation to ensure that all preparations are in place for the containment of the expected rains.

**I thank you,
Kea leboha!!!!**