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**Author:** THEMBA KHOZA

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THEMBA KHOZA

## Clean water is life!

SOUTH Africa is water scarce and one of the driest countries in the world, and, with climate change a reality, it is crucial we treasure each and every single drop of water.

The environment plays a major role in the quality and quantity of water we have. A clean and safe environment ensures clean, safe and quality water, meaning less water is lost through pollution. It is therefore crucial we keep our environment clean and healthy.

We must ensure we protect our environment from pollution as it leads to environmental degradation, thereby leading to polluted water.

It is disturbing to see that our water resources have been turned into dumping sites where all kinds of waste are disposed. This is a dangerous practice as it makes the water unfit for human use, crops and animals and destroys the aquatic life and the ecosystem.

The pollution of our water resources negatively affects the quality of water in the system leading to waterborne diseases.

Our surface water sources are overstretched and getting depleted. The pollution of the environment negatively affects our groundwater resources, especially now as we look at groundwater as our critical alternative resource to ensure the security of supply and access for all.

Dumping waste at street corners and in open spaces is also detrimental to the environment as the waste ends up in water when it rains. It is therefore critical we all become responsible citizens and take care and ensure a clean, safe and healthy environment.

Municipalities must play their role in ensuring communities have designated dumping sites and that waste is regularly collected.

A clean and healthy environment leads to quality water and healthy communities as it prevents the spread of diseases. A polluted and dirty environment is a breeding ground for all kinds of diseases which then calls for all of us to play an active role in protecting and keeping our environment clean and healthy.

The assurance of clean quality water is in our hands as the environment is polluted by human beings. Let us change our behaviour and attitude and ensure that waste is dumped at designated places. Let us build and entrench a culture of cleanliness in our communities and we will enjoy a healthy environment and good water quality. Every drop counts.

As much as pollution negatively affects the environment and water quality, the pollution of water resources also makes communities vulnerable to flooding as the waste blocks and disturbs the natural flow of rivers. Floods are disastrous and lead to damage to property and often lead to the loss of life.

Municipalities must ensure communities have reliable waste removal services and designated waste disposal sites to protect the environment.

Industries must also come to the party and ensure there are no chemical spillages that are detrimental to the environment and water resources from their operations. The relevant authorities tasked with protecting our environment and water resources must ensure that polluters pay.

As we celebrate National Water Month under the theme "Water and Climate Change", it is crucial to note that climate change is a reality and negatively affects our water availability and we need to adapt, especially as we live in a dry and water scarce country.

*Themba Khoza is from the  
Mpumalanga Provincial Office,  
Department of Water and Sanitation*