

Every drop of water counts

South Africa is water scarce and is one of the driest countries in the world, meaning every drop counts and must be treasured.

Climate change is upon us and is adding to the water security challenge through drastic weather changes, leading to reduced rainfall and high evaporation.

This calls for every citizen to use the available water wisely.

There's one major problem that's sometimes not given the attention and urgency it deserves: water loss.

Many litres of precious water are lost daily in the bulk supply systems and in households, meaning billions of rands are lost every year.

South Africa experiences major water losses in most municipalities.

Precious water is lost through leakages and pipe bursts.

What makes the situation worse are the delays in repairing the affected pipelines.

The major problem aggravating this challenge is poor maintenance.

Lack of maintenance means waste water treatment plants malfunction, leading to the discharge of raw sewage into water resources.

It's about time that municipalities and water suppliers placed more emphasis on water infrastructure maintenance and ensured that the infrastructure operated optimally to reduce water losses.

Water losses also happen in our households.

As such, each and every member of society has the responsibility to ensure that not a single drop of water is lost.

■ *Themba Khoza*