

OPINION

Access to water is a basic human right

THEMBA KHOZA

WATER is life. Access to water is essential for survival. As a source of life, everyone must have access to water.

Having celebrated Human Rights Day on March 21, we need to remember that water is a basic human right and that everyone must have access to the source of life. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa recognises the importance of access to sufficient water for everyone.

Chapter eight of the Constitution recognises the right to sufficient water for everyone. The right of access to sufficient water is accorded to everyone in section 27(1)(b) of the Constitution. Having celebrate Human Rights Day, it is crucial that we remember and prioritise those who still have no access to clean and quality water in their areas.

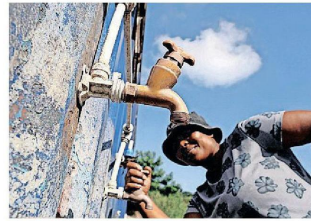
Governments have the responsi-

bility of ensuring access to water for every citizen as a basic human right. It is therefore crucial that governments prioritise access to water to ensure universal access for all citizens. Governments must ensure that citizens enjoy their basic human rights.

The world celebrated World Water Day yesterday, just after National Human Rights Day, to show the importance of access to water for all. World Water Day is a reminder to governments to prioritise water provision for all citizens.

As with every right, there are responsibilities attached. It is, therefore, the responsibility of every citizen to ensure that we all have access to water by using the available water in a wise and conservative manner, preventing wastage and the pollution of the water resources.

Basically, it is important to use



CHAPTER eight of the Constitution recognises the right to sufficient water for everyone, the writer says.

water in a manner that takes into consideration that others must also get a share of this important resource. Everyone has the responsibility to ensure that there is no infringement of the right of others.

South Africa, as a water-scarce

country, requires all citizens to be responsible and to make water conservation a norm and efficiently use the available water thinking of the residents downstream.

As we celebrate Water Month at the end of the rainy season in most parts of the country, it is critical that we all strengthen water conservation efforts and initiatives and use the available water in a more wise and efficient way for security of supply.

It is our responsibility to ensure safe water for everyone by preventing the pollution of water resources. Water pollution is a serious threat to the right of access to safe water, and can lead to the spread of disease. Water is life. It is everyone's responsibility to protect the right to safe water.

* Khoza is with Communication Services at the Department of Water and Sanitation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Themba Khoza', enclosed within a hand-drawn circle.

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