



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**16 October 2021**

### **THE STATUS QUO ON WATER AND SANITATION IN KGETLENGRIVIER LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr. Senzo Mchunu, convened a meeting earlier this evening, 16 October 2021, with amongst others, representatives of the Kgetleng Local Municipality, Executive Committee Members of Magalies Water and the DWS North West provincial officials. The purpose of the meeting was for the Minister to establish the status quo on the bulk water supply and sanitation systems in Kgetlengrivier.

This media statement seeks to provide clarity of the work which the appointed implementing agent – Magalies Water has done to date, in line with the directives of the High Court of South Africa -North West Division in December 2020. Since Magalies Water took control of the water and wastewater treatment plants after the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021 court judgement, the water utility has amongst others, implemented the following:

- Deployed 24-hour security to all the sites, to ensure the safety of the infrastructure and sustained bulk services to communities.
- Assigned Production Manager and Process controllers at Koster Water Treatment Works and Waste Water Treatment Works to capacitate the on-site expertise in the operation of the plants; and
- Conducted regular water testing to ensure that water quality meets the acceptable standards for water consumption through Magalies Water's Laboratory Management services.

Further to that, this statement is aimed at addressing the residents of Kgetlengrivier Local Municipality on the current status of water and sanitation in their area, whilst also correcting the inaccuracies contained in an article published by News24 on 11 October 2021, titled: "Why residents of two North West towns are back in court, in a bid to resolve water woes".

In the said article, unsubstantiated allegations were made to the alleged incapacity of Magalies Water to deliver as the Implementing Agent appointed by the municipality, and issues pertaining to payment of invoices for work done by the Kgetlengrivier Concerned Citizens (KCC) were also spoken of. What the article omitted to report on, were the constant court interdicts applied for by the KCC against Magalies Water - which hamper on the progress of projects and the payment arrangements reflected in the contractual agreement KCC entered into, wherein the provincial government through the department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA) - and not the municipality - would bear the





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responsibility of paying invoices submitted by KCC. What the article further neglected to report on, was the vandalism caused to a pump at the Swartruggens Dam, as a result of a gunshot, which then affected the supply of water.

In apprising the Minister on the status of water and sanitation in the area, the Kgetleng Municipal Manager, Mr. Joseph Mogale and Magalies Water Chief Executive, Mr. Sandile Mkhize, advised that a detailed plan containing short and long term measures had been devised, addressing amongst others, the upgrading of the Swartruggens Water Treatment Works plant and Waste Water Treatment Works. In respect of future projects, it was reported during the meeting, that Phase 3 of the Pilanesberg Bulk Water Supply project was underway, which project would see the supply of bulk water to Swartruggens, Koster and Derby.

In closing the meeting, the Minister sternly said the following: “We object to people playing to the gallery on a sensitive and emotional matter such as water, and those who seek to project the water sector, inclusive of the municipality and the Department of Water and Sanitation in a negative light and we therefore consider this matter as closed! Where people do not have water, we as the Department of Water and Sanitation, must ensure that this is corrected. The next phase will include improvements in respect of the current water treatment works and wastewater treatment works as reported on by the Water Board and the municipality, therefore guaranteeing water to every resident in the area!”.

**End**

**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation**

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