

MEDIA STATEMENT

Hazelmere Dam wall remains intact even after the dam breached the 100% mark due to heavy downpours in KwaZulu-Natal

12 April 2022

The Department of Water and Sanitation in KwaZulu-Natal would like to assure community members situated downstream of Hazelmere Dam that the dam wall is intact even after the dam spilled due to the persistent heavy downpours on Monday, 11 April 2022.

The dam reached 100% capacity in the past 24 hours and started spilling on Monday evening. The Department together with its entity, Umgeni Water, have since released water from the dam to prevent the dam wall which is still under construction from flooding the gallery through anchor cable recess openings in the dam's spillway crest which might affect the dam's stability

"An Emergency Evacuation Plan has been activated in conjunction with the province's Provincial Disaster Management Centre and we continue to monitor water levels to ensure that we act speedily should water levels increase and communities downstream have to be evacuated," said Wally Ramokopa, a Director in the Dam Safety Regulation Unit within the Department.

The Department continues to monitor water levels on an hourly basis and has alerted communities located downstream of the dam to steer away from the infrastructure.

"The outlet pipes at the Hazelmere Dam have been opened at maximum capacity in order to lower the water levels. We really would like to caution communities that water levels on the uMdloti River will rise sharply as a result of the opened valves and plead for their cooperation should the urgent need to implement the evacuation plan occur," said Ramokopa.

He also gave an assurance that most of the country's biggest dams are designed to withstand floods and said there is no need for people to be alarmed for possible infrastructure collapse.

Ramokopa called on owners of smaller dams to monitor their dam levels for any potential of overtopping which may occur due to insufficient capacity to discharge water through the spillways. He said private dam owners should alert the emergency teams of communities residing downstream of the dams should the need arise.

"Our plea really is to communities situated upstream and downstream of the dam to be extra careful during this period. The evacuation plan is to safeguard the loss of life and nothing else. Of importance to us is to ensure that no one is impacted from the heavy rains and flooding," he said.

The Department has also sent a stern warning against building on floodplains as the repercussions are often irreparable.

WATER IS LIFE – SANITATION IS DIGNITY

SOUTH AFRICA IS A WATER SCARCE COUNTRY



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



End

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

For more information, contact Sputnik Ratau, Spokesperson for the Department of Water and Sanitation on 082 874 2942

For media releases, speeches and news visit the Water & Sanitation portal at: www.dwa.gov.za

WATER IS LIFE – SANITATION IS DIGNITY

SOUTH AFRICA IS A WATER SCARCE COUNTRY



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

