



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **Graduate Trainee Ayanda champions DWS's water conservation efforts**

29 January 2019

As part of a groundswell of young people dedicated to the management of South Africa's water resources, the Department of Water and Sanitation's Graduate Trainee, Ayanda Mtetwa, has nailed his colours to the mast to serve the water sector with distinction.

Alive to the reality that South Africa is ranked the 30th driest country in the world, Ayanda has committed himself to contribute to the management and conservation of the country's water resources.

Acting on his commitment and burning desire to champ this cause, Ayanda joined the Department in 2017 as a Chemical Engineering Technician through the Department's Learning Academy's Graduate Trainee Programme.

In this role, Ayanda is responsible for assessing active and more importantly, abandoned mines for possible generation of acid mine drainage (AMD).

An environmentalist to the core, Ayanda is part of a team that intervene to lessen the contamination of water sources by the acidic water flowing from the rising acidic water levels in abandoned mines.

The mines and especially the abandoned ones are causing damage to the country's available limited water source.

Working in the Chief Directorate: Mine Water Quality Management, Ayanda says he is inspired to contribute as much as he can in the management and conservation of this precious resource.

He says the mining sector has been aware of the generation of AMD since 1903 and that the Department has, since 2010, through the recommendations of Inter-Ministerial Committee on AMD in the Witwatersrand, been managing and regulating the impact of mine water.

"Being exposed to the AMD neutralisation plants in the Eastern, Central and Western basins within the Witwatersrand, I know very well that these 3 plants are the flagships of the Department. They contribute towards water security within the Witwatersrand basin and recognises the economic significance of the basin to the country's GDP," he says.

With a national diploma from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Ayanda graduated in December 2016. He says he is passionate about his work because it has brought him a different perspective about the role that is being played by water in almost all aspects of life, especially the economy.

"The world is heavily reliant on water resources and the need arises to find sustainable ways to protect and conserve this precious resource," adds the determined Ayanda.

He says there is a great need for young people to swell the ranks of those who are making efforts to manage and protect the country's water resources considering the impact of global



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warming and global emission standards and the role and responsibility of mining and petrochemical industry towards our water resources.

“These are some of the fundamental issues that one should consider when motivating young people in considering to opt for studies in chemical engineering or environmental studies,” says Ayanda as he proffers advice.

**Hosia Sithole**