



INTERNET ARTICLE

Dry conditions may force municipalities to introduce water restrictions

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As the country approaches full summer, its dam levels appear to be stabilizing under the rising temperatures that are threatening to affect them negatively through evaporation. In the past three weeks temperatures have soared to an average 30 degrees Celsius .

However, unless it rains heavily soon, vast parts of South Africa might be faced with dry conditions that are likely to leave residents with little or no drop to drink. Currently, dams across the country are dropping their levels at one percent week-on-week Should the hot conditions continue without the intervention of heavy downpours, municipalities across the country will be forced to introduce stringent water restrictions to alleviate the situation.

The situation is particularly dire in Nelson Mandela region of the Eastern Cape where the water-stricken municipality has declared Day Zero, indicating an extremely dry situation. The municipality has sent an SOS message for the government's immediate intervention. A weekly report on dam levels that was published by the Department of Water and Sanitation indicates that the average dam level in the province is teetering below half after recording 50,6%.

Also in the dire straits is the Mopani District in Limpopo where three local dams have dropped below 20%. There is virtually no water in Middel-Letaba Dam which recorded a measly 1,3% this week, while Tzaneen Dam which dropped from 11,4% to 10,5% this week. The absence of water in in Tzaneen has affected the citrus industry negatively and unless there is some form of intervention the region may be affected by severe drought conditions. Modjadji Dam dropped from 12,2% to 11,2% this week.

Although Free State has the largest quantity of water because of its big dams, in the past three the province's dam levels have plummeted from 87,3% to 75,3% this week. In the corresponding period Gauteng has also taken a knock from 99,6% to 97,1% this week. The two provinces are among the worst regions that are affected by soaring temperatures.

Northern Cape took a huge plunged when its dam levels dropped from 92,1% to 87,7% , while North West dropped from 65,9% to 63,9%. KwaZulu-Natal also dropped its levels from 55,5% to 54,9%. Dams in Zululand and Mkhanyakude disctrict are reportedly in a desperate situation as most towns have are facing serious water challenges.





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However, the situation is entirely different in Western Cape where winter rains have elevated dam levels to 87,2% this week. At this rate the levels are set to shoot through the roof by the end of the province's hydrological season. The abundance of water in the province is likely to boost the local economy astronomically as the wine industry will export more wine to overseas countries.

The Department of Water and Sanitation is encouraging all water users in the country to continue to save water and pray for the country receives early showers to alleviate the situation in dry regions.

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