



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **Minister Mchunu and Premier Makhura tackle water issues in Hammanskraal**

03 November 2021

On Friday, 29 October 2021, the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr Senzo Mchunu, said the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) would seek legal advice from the department's Legal Services with regard to the recommendation by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) to take over from the City of Tshwane Metro Council the responsibility of resolving water and sanitation services in Hammanskraal, North of Pretoria.

This commitment by the Minister follows this week's finding by the Commission that the Council had failed in their mandate of providing safe drinking water in the area.

Minister Mchunu was together with Gauteng Premier, David Makhura, and Councillor Eric Mashapa, who represents the area within Tshwane Metro Council at the meeting.

Minister Mchunu said the DWS would urgently erect a 5 km water pipe that would ensure that every Hammanskraal resident received clean drinking water. In addition, the DWS would study the recommendations of the SAHRC report and implement other recommendations within the prescripts of the law.

The department would work closely with Gauteng Provincial Government and invoke Sections 139 (7) of the Constitution and 63 of the National Water Act to fast track the process of supplying clean drinking water. The Minister emphasised that water was a constitutional right of the people.

"We are not here to talk about water because of the Local Government Elections. We believe that water is a right of every citizen of this country. If you don't see any immediate action from us feel free to report us to the President of the country through the Premier", Mchunu said.

He praised Magalies Water and Rand Water for their efforts to supply quality water to the people of Hammanskraal. However, he was deeply disheartened with role of Tshwane Metro Council in the endeavour.

Furthermore, the Minister said the SAHRC report on the role of the Council made it clear that the municipality had failed Hammanskraal residents on the water issue.

Premier Makhura said while water was the most serious problem that needs to be resolved, Gauteng provincial government has managed to extend Jubilee District Hospital and added 300 beds to the ICU, which primarily attended to COVID-19 infections.

"The fact of the matter is that the people of Hammanskraal were sick and tired of empty promises by the City of Tshwane. It's clear that the people of this area are not their priority", said Makhura.

Among other issues raised by the residents of Hammanskraal during the engagement was that of the billing system which is faulty and ends up issuing bills running into thousands of rands. Minister Mchunu promised to look into the erratic billing system by the Tshwane Metro Council once the DWS had addressed the quality of water in the area. This was after residents



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complained about exorbitant water bills that were followed by threats by the sheriff to repossess their houses due to non-payment.

He also undertook to bring to an end the corruption involving the water truck drivers who sell water that is supposed to be delivered freely to Hammanskraal residents.

**Khulekani Ngcobo**