

# INTERNET ARTICLE

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## Minister Mchunu emphasises the importance of quality wastewater

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The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr Senzo Mchunu has applauded the resuscitation of Green Drop Certification Programme, saying the programme is the best tool his department has in fulfilling its mandate as a regulator of the water and sanitation sector.

He was speaking at the awards ceremony held on Friday, 01 April 2022 in Tulbagh, Western Cape.

The awards ceremony which coincided with the release of the Green Drop report are meant to encourage Water Services Authorities (select municipalities), to ensure the overall improvement of municipal wastewater management.

Minister Mchunu welcomed the resumption of these awards which commenced in 2008 as an initiative by the then Department of Water Affairs prior to adjourning for approximately seven years.

“It is unfortunate that there was a break in our undertaking, but we have since resuscitated the programme” Minister Mchunu stated.

Laying the groundwork during the awards, Minister Mchunu highlighted that Blue and Green Drop programmes amongst others seek to get municipalities to measure themselves against international risk standards for drinking water quality management and wastewater quality.

The host Municipality Witzenberg emerged as the biggest winners on the day. Witzenberg Local Municipality scooped the following awards: Top three Best Performing Wastewater System, Top three Best Performing Municipality, and they also received a Green Drop certification since three out of four of their wastewater treatment plants are fully functional.

Other winners include: Inkomazi Local Municipality and Stellenbosch winning best progress category, this was an acknowledgement for improvement in wastewater systems performance since 2013.

Green Drop Certification programme went to the following recipients, City of Cape Town, City of Ekurhuleni, Drakenstein Local Municipality, iLembe District Municipality, Mossel Bay Local Municipality, Lesedi Local Municipality, Saldanha Bay Municipality, uMgungundlovu Municipality, and Witzenberg Local Municipality.

Furthermore, Water and Sanitation Minister Senzo Mchunu also announced that the Department has revitalised the Green Drop Certification programme to ensure the overall improvement of municipal wastewater management and he further emphasised the release of the 1st report since 2014 after which the audit of drinking water quality will be prioritised to inform the Blue Drop Report which is due in March 2023.

“The Department is focused on ensuring that compliance to legislation takes cause and remains dedicated to ensuring that risks revealed through these programmes are managed and abated in order to enhance the work of the Department as a water sector regulator” said Minister Mchunu.

As a parting shot, Minister Mchunu indicated that one of the key challenges that were observed during provincial working sessions in all provinces across the country which was also further cited by Mayors, was ageing infrastructure and vandalism and we intend to provide solutions as to how municipalities should be capacitated to address and ensure that they carry out their constitutional mandate.

**Fhatuwani Tshikulumela**