



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS empowers learners with career choices and water conservation awareness

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The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) made a meaningful impact during the Mondi Career Centre Career Week Exhibition held from 05 to 09 May 2025 in Mkhondo, engaging thousands of enthusiastic learners from the Gert Sibande District in Mpumalanga and parts of the KwaZulu-Natal Province. This initiative was a critical step in empowering young minds with career choices in the water and sanitation sector, while also encouraging them to become water ambassadors in their communities.

Through engaging presentations and interactive exhibitions, learners were introduced to exciting and diverse career paths within the water and sanitation industry. The DWS team highlighted how careers in this field not only offer stable employment opportunities but also allow individuals to contribute meaningfully to society by protecting one of our most precious resources: water.

DWS officials, including Mr Abednego Mboweni, Ms Sabo Makgaloa (Mpumalanga Provincial Office), and Mr Jan Mabena (Head Office), delivered crucial information about water conservation, demand management, and protection of water resources. They detailed various career options in the water sector, ranging from engineering and environmental science to water resource management, empowering learners to make informed decisions about their futures.

Interns Thandeka Shongwe and Njabulo Nkosi also played a vital role, developing their skills while presenting the Water and Sanitation Education Programme. Their involvement not only enhanced their confidence but also served as a model for learners, showing them the tangible benefits of pursuing careers within DWS.

Using the Water and Sanitation Business Chart, Mr Mabena walked learners through the water and sanitation value chain, demonstrating the complexity and importance of each role within the sector. He urged learners to share what they had learned with peers and family, encouraging responsible behaviour such as reporting leaks, avoiding pollution, and using sanitation facilities properly.

The exhibition sparked excitement among the learners, many of whom were surprised to discover the range of career opportunities available in the water sector. One such learner, Okuhle Ncube, a Grade 11 student from Empuluzi Secondary School in Mayflower, expressed his newfound interest:

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"I did not know there were so many career opportunities in the water and sanitation sector. Now that I am informed, I'll share this knowledge with others in my school and community. I'm motivated to become a water ambassador and promote water conservation," he said.

Ncube added: "Understanding that South Africa is one of the 30 driest countries in the world makes me realise the importance of protecting our water resources. I've learned a lot and hope more people benefit from such exhibitions."

Pamphlets with career guidance and water-saving tips were distributed, empowering learners to explore roles in the water sector and embrace environmental stewardship. Learners who actively participated in the sessions were rewarded with education-themed gifts, further reinforcing the message.

Ayanda Sithole from Mhlahlandlela Secondary School in KwaZulu-Natal also challenged her peers to take the issue of water conservation seriously:

"Today I learnt a lot about water and how we get clean water. What really struck me is that South Africa is a water-scarce country. We need to protect our water and avoid polluting our rivers and streams. I'm proud to become a water ambassador."

By integrating career development with environmental education, DWS is not only shaping the future workforce but also nurturing a generation of socially responsible citizens. Through initiatives like this, the Department continues to ensure that learners are equipped, inspired, and empowered to build a better, more sustainable South Africa.

Themba Khoza

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