



INTERNET ARTICLE

Newly Refurbished Piet Retief Water Treatment plant to ensure improved and reliable supply of quality water to the community in Mkhondo

24 March 2026

As part of the ongoing National Water Month commemorative activities, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) handed over the newly refurbished Piet Retief Water Treatment Works (WTW) to Mkhondo Local Municipality, under the Gert Sibande District, to assist the local municipality to improve access to reliable and quality potable water supply to the community.

The Piet Retief WTW project was funded to the tune of R52 million by the Department through its Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG), and Mkhondo Local Municipality, which is the Water Services authority (WSA) was appointed as the Implementing Agent. The project, which commenced in February 2025 and completed in March 2026 has created 8 jobs for locals and benefitted local businesses while on implementation and is expected to significantly enhance water supply to 26 000 households.

The project scope entailed the refurbishment and upgrade of the old Water Treatment Works with the capacity of 6 mega litres per day (ml/d) to 6,4 (ml/d) capacity, refurbishment of the existing abstraction pump station. the rising main pipeline, command reservoirs, a new fence and main gate including a septic tank were installed, a guard house was constructed, and a 1500kVA generator to supply electricity was installed.

The project forms part of the ongoing efforts by the Department to support municipalities to improve access to clean and reliable water services. It underscores the government's commitment to accelerating service delivery and ensuring reliable and sustainable provision of quality water for communities.

Ms Dudu Sifunda, the DWS Head of Operations in Mpumalanga outlined the purpose of celebrating the National Water Month and committed to continue working with the municipality and district to ensure that the community gets clean water. She expressed satisfaction with the project and urged the municipality to maintain the infrastructure "so that we don't come back as a department and find the infrastructure back to the initial stage".

The Executive Mayor of Mkhondo Local Municipality, Cllr Ngelosi Ndhlovu expressed her appreciation for the support by the Department of Water and Sanitation and has promised to take care of the infrastructure through proper operations and maintenance. "Through this refurbishment project funded by the Department of Water and Sanitation, we are now sure that the water that is supplied to the people of Mkhondo is of good drinking quality. We need to

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take care of our infrastructure to be able to cater for future generations. We are also pleading with the community to bear with us as we seek lasting solutions to the water challenges in Mkhondo”, she said.

In his address the Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District Municipality, Cllr. Walter Mngomezulu urged the community of Mkhondo to conserve water, fix leaks in their households, report leaks on the municipal bulk lines, and always guard and protect the infrastructure. He further emphasised that the local municipality should put measures in place to reduce non-revenue water, increase revenue collection and ringfence water services funds to ensure the infrastructure is maintained and operated correctly.

The handover of the refurbished water treatment plant is part of a series of activities to commemorate National Water Month throughout the month of March. The National Water Month is South Africa’s expansion of the World Water Day which is observed annually on 22 March and focuses its attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. The theme for this year is "Water and Gender", with the slogan “Where Water Flows, Equality Grows.”

The National Water Month commemoration helps the Department to deliver its mandate on challenges that the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan which include insufficient water, infrastructure maintenance and investment, recurrent droughts driven by climatic variation, inequities in access to water and sanitation, as well as deteriorating water quality.

Themba Khoza

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