

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 640

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(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 12)

640. The Leader of the Opposition (DA) to ask the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry:

- (1) (a) For which areas are Drinking Water Quality Summary Reports compiled, (b) how long will it take for such summary reports to be expanded across South Africa, (c) what are the purposes of these reports, (d) how is access granted to these reports and (e) who is currently having access to these reports;
- (2) whether, in light of the concern over the quality of drinking water in South Africa, she will consider giving free and open access to the monthly Drinking Water Quality Summary Reports; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1)(a) Summary reports are compiled for all the nine provinces. The table below indicates the number of Water Services Authorities (WSAs) in each Province submitting data on the Drinking Water Quality Regulatory System via the Electronic Water Quality Management System (eWQMS).

Province	WSAs
Gauteng	12
KwaZulu-Natal	14
Free State	21
Limpopo	11
Northern Cape	32
North West	13
Western Cape	30
Eastern Cape	17
Mpumalanga	19

- (1)(b) The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry is working towards the compilation of national reports which is envisaged to be available to the public in the second half of 2008. However, the individual reports in raw format are technical; not verified and may lead to misinterpretation of a highly technical topic and that is why we are working towards a condensed summary report of audited cases to share with the public.

- (1)(c) The purpose of the reports is for municipalities to report compliance on drinking water quality as this is a legislative requirement and also to allow them to take the necessary actions towards addressing any failures and shortcomings.
 - (1)(d) WSAs have been granted access to load their reports on to the system and therefore whoever wants to access the reports should do that with the permission of respective WSA.
 - (1)(e) The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry and the WSAs.
- (2) No. Access can not be given freely at this stage as the data that is in the system requires careful scientific analysis before interpreting the results and releasing the information. The Department needs to verify some of the data submitted by the WSAs. We are working towards publishing drinking water quality results, possibly in the second half of 2008.