



water & forestry

Department:
Water Affairs and Forestry
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 187 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Ms A T Lovemore (DA), is attached for your consideration, please.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 02/07/09

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

MS B P SONJICA, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE: 2009.07.17

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLYQUESTION NO 187

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 19 JUNE 2009
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 3)

187. Ms A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

Whether the cost of purifying raw water for domestic use by water services authority will increase; if not, how was this conclusion reached; if so (a) what purification process has been required and (b) what are the relevant costs for the metropolitan municipalities?

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Reply:

- (a) South Africans are witnessing an increase in the cost of all products produced through a combination of materials, energy and human resources and water is no exception. Add to this the fact that municipalities must generate sufficient income to also extend their water networks, refurbish ageing infrastructure and maintain water related assets and it will be clear that water tariffs must increase. In some cases, increases will be in line with inflation whilst in other cases increases will be linked to exchange rates where goods such as chemicals and mechanical or electrical equipment must be imported as well as increases in basic employment costs, etc

This is a question that has no simple answer as there are a number of water purification technologies on the market today available for treating water to potable standard and being used by the various Water Service Providers, Water Service Authorities, Municipalities and Water Boards. Different technologies or processes are used taking into consideration the quality of the raw water that needs to be purified and the nature of pollutants in the water as well as the costs of the selected process. A fairly standard process in South African plants includes sedimentation followed by filtration and lastly disinfection through chlorination, Ultraviolet (UV) Radiation or Ozone treatment.

- (b) Metropolitan municipalities source water through different ways. Tshwane, Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg for example purchase water directly from Rand Water and only do distribution whilst Nelson Mandela Bay and Cape Town use a combination of several systems and own sources. Whilst information on the purification costs for 2009/10 was not available, the following information was sourced from the annual reports of Water Boards which indicates that the cost to abstract, pump, treat and distribute water in bulk can range between R 1,50 and R 3,00 per cubic metre (one cubic metre equals to one kilolitre).