



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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Enquiries: Mr H. Muller
Telephone: (012) 336-6567
Reference: 2/1/5/1

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2187 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 6/9/10


DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


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

DATE: 11. 09. 2010

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2187

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 20 AUGUST 2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 23)

2187. Mrs A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether all wastewater treatment plants have been issued with permits to allow the discharge of effluent into the environment; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether compliance with permitted discharge standards is monitored; if not, why not; if so, what action has been taken to address trends of noncompliance with discharge standards at each specified plant;
- (3) whether this information for each wastewater treatment plant is available to the public; if not, (a) why not and (b) what are the relevant details of each plant's noncompliance with discharge standards during the period 1 January 2010 to 31 July 2010; if so, from whom?

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REPLY:

- (1) No. Not all the waste water treatment works (WWTWs) have licenses or authorizations (permits), usually due to the following reasons:
 - (a) Some municipalities that own the WWTWs have not yet applied for a licence;
 - (b) Many applications are not meeting the requirements to enable my Department to issue a license;
 - (c) Insufficient capacity in municipalities to submit the required information to allow for the processing and finalisation of the applications.Project Letsema, as a special project in my Department, has the aim to address the current backlog in licences.
- (2) Yes. My Department performs audit monitoring of wastewater discharges as part of its pollution controlling function (against the relevant authorization limits) but augments this with the introduction of the Green Drop Certification program. This regulation approach ensures that municipalities reveal compliance at higher frequencies as well as to be subjected to intense auditing which will inform the most appropriate form of regulatory action required.

Regulatory action is executed according to the Enforcement Protocol (which details the path for uniformity in regulation activity) to ensure that all avenues are explored prior to litigation, which is a last resort. There are various forms of regulatory interaction regarding municipal wastewater discharges that are at various stages of the mentioned protocol.
- (3) No, such detail information is not available to the public.
 - (a) Revealing details of such a high technical nature will lead to unnecessary additional administrative challenges and serious misinterpretation.
 - (b) What is available and was published for the first time in South Africa in the 2009 Green Drop Report is the summary of the performance of each of the 449 WWTWs that were assessed. The performance was evaluated under nine key criteria and a score has been published for each of the criteria including the "Waste Water Quality Compliance". (The report is available on my Department website under www.dwa.gov.za/greendropsystem and click on the News link)

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