

MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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**water affairs**

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS


**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2469 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: 7/10/10

  
DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

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

DATE: 14. 10. 2010

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO 2469**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 03 SEPTEMBER 2010**  
**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 26)**

**2469. Mrs A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:**

- (1) Whether she has investigated the flow of sewage and/or polluted water that is entering the Indian Ocean at the mouth of the Nahoon River; if not, why not; if so, (a) what was the outcome of this investigation and (b) what are the further relevant details;
- (2) whether her department monitors the quality of the water at the river mouth and in the surf zone; if not, why not; if so, what are the results of the monitoring that was carried out since 1 January 2010;
- (3) whether the Nahoon Beach is considered safe for recreational use; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) whether she has taken any action against a certain municipality (name furnished) in this regard; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW3039E

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**REPLY:**

- (1)(a) Yes, my Department has investigated the complaints of sewage pollution from the Nahoon River Estuary. As the estuary is located within an urban area (East London), it has a number of pump stations, sewer lines and storm-water drains on both sides. The investigation revealed that the storm water drainage from the Nompumelelo Settlement (Beacon Bay) is the major source of faecal coliform pollution in the Estuary.
- (1)(b) Pollution from Nompumelelo Settlement is a result of diffuse pollution and frequent sewer blockages in the community attributed to mostly foreign materials in the sewer pipes. The Buffalo City Local Municipality (LM), as a Water Services Authority for the area has a maintenance crew which services Nompumelelo Settlement community on a daily basis.
- (2) No, the Buffalo City Local Municipality's Scientific Services conducts weekly monitoring at 34 such sites from the Gonubie Beach to the Gulu estuary (inclusive of the Nahoon River estuary and its adjacent beaches). The Buffalo City Local Municipality tests for total coliforms, faecal coliforms, E coli and conductivity. To assist local authorities in managing the water quality of their beaches and coastal waters, my Department has revised the National Water Quality Guidelines for Recreational Use. These revised guidelines will allow for easier understanding and implementation of recommended target ranges and is in the process of being finalised for promotion among coastal municipalities.
- (3) Yes, Nahoon Beach does not pose a high risk for recreational use since 80% of the samples showed isolation of < 600 faecal coliforms/100ml as per the South African Water Quality Guidelines, vol. 2, 1996. It should be noted that Buffalo City LM has a co-operative governance approach to beach closures (Spill Committee) and the beach is closed based on the following three reasons;
  - Rain storm conditions, flushing urban areas, causing dirty water and elevated faecal Coliforms;
  - Known sewer spills causing elevated faecal Coliforms; and
  - Suspected shark activity often around the sardine run.

- (4) Yes, when incidences of pollution occurred, my Department always notifies and instructs the Buffalo City LM to address the issue and municipality is always responsible and cooperative on all the instruction from my Department.

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