



water affairs

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2356 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above mentioned question asked by Ms B D Ferguson (Cope) is attached for your consideration.


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 27/09/2013


DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


**MRS B E E MOLEWA, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

DATE: 2013/09/30



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2356

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 16 SEPTEMBER 2013
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 30)

2356. Ms B D Ferguson (Cope) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

Whether, with reference to the findings of the General Household Survey, July 2011, she has taken any action regarding the residents of (a) the Eastern Cape, (b) KwaZulu-Natal and (c) Mpumalanga who have consistently not been satisfied with the quality of their water; if not, why not; if so, what action?

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REPLY:

- (1) Yes, there is action taken in response to the findings of the General Household Survey of 2011 regarding the complaints of residents of the three Provinces about the quality of water. The actions in the respective Provinces are as follows:
- (a) Blue Drop Program and Blue Water Audits

The Department of Water Affairs (DWA) in the Eastern Cape Region ensures that all the Eastern Cape Municipalities that are Water Services Authorities (WSA's) participate in the Blue Drop System (BDS), the Annual Blue Water Service Audit and Regulatory Performance Measurement System (RPMS) to ensure progressive improvement in quality of water services. The Blue Drop Programme, which is an incentive-based regulatory programme, requires regular monitoring of each water distribution system, comparison of results against South African National Standards and monthly capturing of drinking water quality results on the BDS. This allows DWA to monitor the quality of Water Services across the Eastern Cape Province and allows corrective actions to be taken as soon as any non-compliance or poor performance is found. The Municipalities that are battling are supported by DWA through various programmes such as Rapid Response Unit, Municipal Water Infrastructure Grant (MWIG), Operations & Maintenance Business Plans. Below are the details of these programmes:

Develop Operation and Maintenance Business Plan

The DWA in the Eastern Cape Region realises that the WSA's normally do not plan the operation and maintenance of their water infrastructure but perform it on an adhoc basis. This leads to infrastructure dilapidating and bad water quality. The DWA developed guidelines for the development of Operation and Maintenance Business Plans during August 2010. The guidelines were circulated to all WSA's in the Eastern Cape Province and offered support to develop them. The WSA's are now aware of the importance of developing Operation and Maintenance Business Plans.

Establishment of Rapid Response Unit

The Rapid Response Unit was established during July 2011 so as the DWA could offer a more hands-on assistance to the Local Government. This unit enables the DWA to respond to crises and disasters and to implement proactive interventions aimed at pre-empting crises before they occur. The DWA targeted all WSA's with low Blue and Green Drop scores for proactive interventions.

- (b) In KwaZulu-Natal, the proportion of householders complaining about the safety of water has improved from 12,9% in 2005 to 7,7% in 2011.

This improvement is also reflected in the performance of the KwaZulu-Natal Water Services Authorities in the Blue Drop incentive-based regulatory programme in 2009. Provincial Blue Drop scores have shown a steady improvement with every assessment with provincial average scores improving from 73% in 2009, 80.49% in 2011 and 92.1% in 2012.

Community complaints regarding the quality of drinking water have been received from the Empembeni community in the Hlabisa Local Municipality (LM), and Weston in the Mpofana LM. The DWA has intervened in these areas and appropriate treatment systems were commissioned in 2012.

- (c) In Mpumalanga Province, the Mpumalanga Regional Office's Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement Sub-directorate is monitoring the final water from the Water Treatment Works up to the furthest point of use. Monitoring is conducted on a monthly basis.

When the results of samples taken do not comply with the SANS 241, a non-compliance notice is issued to the municipality indicating that the water supplied to the community does not meet the required standard. The municipality is also requested to submit an action plan with time frames indicating how they are going to ensure that they supply good quality drinking water to the community.

DWA has developed a website whereby people can log on and check the quality of water in their respective areas.

The Mpumalanga Regional Office is also monitoring the Water Services Authorities in terms of the submission of drinking water quality results in the blue drop system, which feeds the information to the mywater website.

Provincial Blue Drop scores improved from 51% in 2009 to 60.9% in 2012. It is also noted that in 2010 compliance was at 65.42%, which is considered to have been the best score in compliance, however, over the past two years additional criterion/variables were added which may be the reason why the blue drop compliance scores seems to have declined when comparing them to those of 2011 and 2012. The new criteria that was introduced in the past two years includes, but is not limited to water safety planning, Water Conservation and Water Demand Management.

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