



## water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



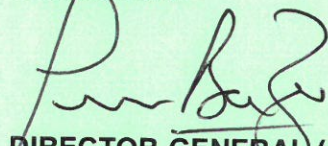
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### MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS


#### NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES: QUESTION 3 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above mentioned question asked by Mr R A Lees (DA-KZN) is attached for your consideration.

  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)**

DATE: 25/02/2014

  
DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

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

DATE: 2014/03/03



# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

## FOR WRITTEN REPLY

### QUESTION NO. 3

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 13 FEBRUARY 2014**  
**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 1)**

**3. Mr R A Lees (DA-KZN) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:**

- (1) Whether the water in all the municipal-drilled boreholes in the Indaka Municipality in the Uthukela District have been tested; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether the water from all the boreholes is good for (a) human and (b) livestock consumption; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) whether any measures are in place to prevent adverse effects on persons and livestock as a result of consuming this water; if not, why not; if so, what measures;
- (4) whether all the affected persons have been informed of the dangers of consuming the water; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (5) whether any water from these boreholes is contaminated by acid mine drainage; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, (a) what are the sources of this pollution and (b) what are the details of the measures that (i) are in place or (ii) will be put in place in order to stop this pollution?

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**REPLY:**

- (1) Yes, the boreholes when initially drilled are subjected to a full water quality and sustainability test. The uThukela District Municipality, as the Water Services Provider (WSP), carries out groundwater development as per subscribed standards of the Department for community water supply. This includes the scientific siting, drilling and testing of both sustainability and water quality according to prescribed standards. Furthermore, as part of ongoing monitoring, boreholes used for water supply are also subjected to microbiological testing twice in a year.
- (2) Yes, based on feedback received from uThukela District Municipality, the water quality in the boreholes currently utilised, meets the required microbiological standards. The uThukela District Municipality, as the WSP, primarily provides water for human consumption and as such the water quality of the resource is screened against the strictest standards for portability. Hence, where water meets the standards for human consumption, it also meets the standards for livestock consumption. All groundwater sources developed for the purpose of water services provision is subjected to an initial full water quality analysis that complies with the SANS 241, as well as the Department of Water Affairs' drinking water quality standards.

Those boreholes that fail the test are not equipped or utilised for consumption unless the failing constituent can be treated to bring it within the required standards. The unequipped boreholes are sealed or capped for safety. Further to the initial water quality test, regular microbiological screening is done.

- (3) Yes, presently the uThukela District Municipality, through its Health and Environment section is involved in continuous and ongoing community liaison. In areas where water quality is noted as microbiologically unsafe, as assessed by the ongoing microbiological quality testing, education to the communities on water safety is intensified on how to treat water prior to consumption to minimise the anticipated health risk. The treatment methods advocated are boiling, sun radiation and chlorinating where possible. These boreholes are then subjected to an increased frequency of testing until the water quality has stabilised.
- (4) Yes, the community is engaged via an ongoing water safety and health education program run by the uThukela DM's Health and Environment section.
- (5) It is currently not known whether any of the current water supply boreholes are affected by acid mine drainage (AMD) in the Indaka Local Municipal area as the current monitoring does not include those indicators specific to acid mine decant. The Department has, in the past years only focused much of its efforts in understanding and quantifying the extent of impact of AMD in the Newcastle, Dannhauser and Endumeni Local Municipalities. Hence limited knowledge is available on the status of mines that were operational in the Indaka Local Municipality.

The Department has recently launched its Provincial AMD group on 30 January 2014, which comprises a panel of experts who function as an advisory committee for hotspot areas throughout the Province where water quality has been affected by mining operations. One of the core functions of the AMD group will be to strategically direct the regulation of mining activities in the Province.

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