



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **Blue Scorpions lay charges against farmer who abstracts water illegally in Limpopo**

1 December 2014

*The Blue Scorpions, an enforcement unit of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), last week dismantled a water pump and sealed electric supply of a Limpopo farmer who illegally continues abstracting water from Phalala Dam to irrigate his crops for commercial use.*

*Officials of the enforcement unit, accompanied by the police, conducted a lightning raid on Greenway Farm in Mookgopong as part of the department's zero tolerance towards unlawful water use. The head of the Blue Scorpions, Mr Nigel Adams, informed Mr Jan Koekemoer, the farm manager, of his rights before the officials swung into action.*

*Criminal charges were also laid at Mookgopong Police Station against Koekemoer, for violating section 53 (2) of the National Water Act by pumping water from the dam to irrigate his crops. Adams warned Koekemoer against reconnecting the dismantled water pump, saying his unit would make unannounced visits to monitor if Koekemoer complied with a notice not to reconnect.*

*DWS has declared November an enforcement month to create awareness about the seriousness of abstracting water without a valid water use license. Between 17 and 21 November, the Blue Scorpions intensified their raids in industries and farms that were not complying with the water law. Adams said his unit would intensify the raids as the numbers of transgressors continue increasing.*

*"The scarcity of water in the country makes it necessary that we raid and charge those who steal water from the country's rivers and dams, just to send a message out there. If found guilty, offenders may be fined up to R500 000 or sent to jail or both," Adams said.*

*Meanwhile, the Blue Scorpions yesterday (Thursday) further pounced on two farms at Mvoti and Illovo, north and south of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal where the offenders were involved in sand-mining. Sand mining is an illegal method of separating refined sand from ordinary, a process that results in blocking rivers from flowing downstream. In terms of the National Water Act, one is not allowed to block water from taking its natural course.*

**Themba Khumalo**

**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation**

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