



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Department strives for clean water

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The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) is expending all its energies to ensure that municipalities deliver clean, safe and drinkable water to communities.

The drive by DWS was explained to municipal officials at a meeting held at the Burgers Park Hotel in Tshwane last week on Thursday, 21 January 2016.

The gathering at Burgers Park Hotel in Tshwane was dubbed: "Meeting to commission the refurbishment of 26 waste water treatment works (WWTWs)" that discharge into the Vaal River. Municipal delegates from five provinces (Mpumalanga, Free State, Gauteng, North West and Northern Cape Provinces) looked at various ways of improving the quality of water coming from the WWTW and how they can completely eradicate or stop pollution emanating from these entities.

The Department's intervention comes amid recent outcries and complaints about pollution of the Vaal River water caused by WWTWs.

According to Konanani Khorommbi from DWS, the Department's intervention into the whole matter is aimed at improving the quality of water. The process which, is directed by the office of the Director-General, Ms. Margaret-Ann Diedricks is regarded as an emergency intervention to alleviate the problems that are bedeviling the proper functioning of these plants.

To date of the 1 300 WWTWs in the country about 26 have been earmarked as needing emergency attention. According to Khorommbi who is Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Vaal Proto Catchment Management Agency (CMA), the department has set aside the amount of R300 million to refurbish priority WWTWs that discharge into the Vaal River.

It has come to the attention of the department that almost half of the 130 are not operating efficiently. It became clear from the meeting that most of the problems encountered relate to infrastructure breakdowns, lack of process controllers and proper regard of health and safety issues.

The Department foots the bill to rectify the problems and will be fully in charge of the operations but work in partnership with municipalities until they develop the necessary capacity.

With regard to the training of process controllers, Mr. Chris Du Preez, Chief Director of Risk Management noted that the Department will also be involved in job creation projects to the unemployed to help towards curbing the problem of having insufficient process controllers. This will be done through the Bamabani project that will benefit unemployed graduates.

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