

29 July 2014

National Water and Sanitation Summit 2014 – A strategy to enhance delivery

Water and sanitation services remain some of the core challenges of our time, especially in South Africa with its growing political economy.

And particularly, access to water and sanitation in South Africa is a big issue and to blame is aging infrastructure and a growing population.

The Minister of the newly-formed Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has stepped in to look deeper into the issues that contribute to these problems and to find tangible and lasting sustainable solutions that will propel service delivery to greater heights for generations to come.

The Ministry, formed less than two months ago to unify water and sanitation, is headed by Minister Nomvula Mokonyane and Deputy Minister Pamela Tshwete. “In order to ensure the delivery of water and sanitation services to all South Africans, we are charged with the responsibility of integrating our work, through infrastructure development for the eradication of backlogs and sustained delivery of quality services to the people of South Africa,” said Minister Mokonyane.

A National Water and Sanitation Summit is taking place at the Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg, east of Johannesburg for two days starting Friday, 1 August 2014. Registration is by invitation only.

The aim of the summit is to engage with the water sector stakeholders on the primary challenge facing water and sanitation in the country. Also, issues to be debated are how to develop innovative solutions that will enable DWS to take a great leap forward as we collaboratively strategise a national vision for water and sanitation points in the next five years. Topics that will come under discussions include: Meeting the service delivery challenge; The Water and sanitation Policy Environment; water Research, Development and Innovation choices and; The State of South Africa’s Water Resources.

The Minister of the DWS Mokonyane and Deputy Minister Tshwete promised the Nation that the new Ministry will primarily focus on water related matters since issues related to sanitation will be transferred to DWS by the end of September 2014.

South Africa has met the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets and what remains is the universal access to safe and sustainable water and sanitation services to all. We can only talk about growth and prosperity once we have attained these perspectives.

Ike Motsapi