



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **DWS Director General visits Waste Water Treatment Works in the Vaal**

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The Director General (DG) of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), Margaret-Ann Diedricks, yesterday visited several Waste Water Treatment Works in the Vaal to get first-hand information about the progress made in refurbishing them.

After seeing all six plants in Deneysville, Oranjeville and Frankfort, Diedricks expressed satisfaction with the work that is done to rehabilitate the plants. Subsequently, she pledged R300 million by the Department to help Metsimaholo District Municipality to rehabilitate the plants.

Her visit came after a concern about some of the mal-functioning plants discharging untreated effluent into the Vaal River System

"I'm quite satisfied with the huge progress that has been made to refurbish the plants," Diedricks said after her visit.

She said her department had reprioritised the rehabilitation of the plants as the waste water treatment works serviced the economic hub of South Africa in Gauteng.

Diedricks was briefed on the progress made on each plant by departmental and municipal officials.

At Refengkhoto Waste Water Treatment Works Diedricks was shown three ponds that were in the process of being rehabilitated. She was told that the de-sludging of the plant over four months would cost R2,4 million. A total of R10 million will be spent during the current financial year to bring the plant to acceptable standards. However, the department has set aside R145,5 million to conduct comprehensive rehabilitation.

A pipe will soon be erected to pump treat sludge from a quarry next to the Refengkhoto Waste Water Treatment Plant to the Vaal Dam. The treated water is so clean that it can be used for irrigation by local farmers.

In Frankfort Diedricks visited two old waste treatment works and a new modern one that is being constructed to cope with the growth of new settlements in Namahadi township. Mafube Local Municipality is in the process of getting rid of the bucket system in parts of the township.

Officials pointed out that the main challenge of the plant is that it is servicing 2 000 households at the nearby Refengkhoto township of Deneysville. However, efforts were being made to ensure that that plant had the capacity to cater for the entire township residents.

The plant also catered for the septic tanks of resident's small town of Deneysville. A pipe was being erected to enable the plant to pump treated effluent from a quarry into the Vaal. But Diedricks insisted that local residents should be regularly engaged to inform them about the waste water treatment works development in order to allay their fears on environmental issues.

**By Themba Khumalo and Ike Motsapi**