



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS Minister Mokonyane calls on communities to change behaviour towards water conservation

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Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms Nomvula Mokonyane, has made a clarion call to Gauteng communities to adopt a behaviour aimed at saving water as the province continues to bear the brunt of water shortages.

Addressing the media after holding a session on the implementation of water restrictions at Rand Water in Glen Vista, Mokonyane said the implementation of restrictions have so far not yielded the desired results, indicating that communities have not heeded the call to use water sparingly.

As of 06 September 2016, Mokonyane said when municipalities began to implement the 15% restrictions there was a reduction of below 5% by 26 September 2016, and this has since declined to 2,7% by 03 October 2016.

On 12 August 2016, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) gazetted the implementation of water restrictions for the Integrated Vaal River System that largely affects water users in Gauteng.

These restrictions included 15% reduction of consumption by domestic users and 20% reduction for irrigation users.

Emphasising the severity of the water shortages, Mokonyane said the Vaal River System was currently at an average dam level of 51.8%.

Currently, the Vaal Dam is sitting at 30.1% capacity and losing water at a rate of 0.8%, week by week.

Minister Mokonyane said to successfully win in getting communities to conserve water, a movement to galvanise the entire society was needed.

She said: "We need not only engineers but ordinary people to act as ambassadors to help us with water conservation. Ordinary citizens may think that they don't have anything to do with water conservation but they are critical in saving this precious resource."

"It cannot be business as usual and again we appeal to citizens that we cannot continue to lose 40% of drinkable water to non-human consumption purposes such as gardening and recreational activities," added Minister Mokonyane.

Gauteng's MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Paul Mashatile, said municipalities were the custodians of water resources and that communities needed to change their behaviour towards saving water.



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MEC Mashatile said a lot of water was used for things other than for drinking and cooking, a situation which necessitated that communities should be taught about the importance of our water resources.

“It is important to understand the changing pattern of our weather conditions. I read that the Vaal Dam is lower than it should be and this means that we should go back to having serious plans that go to the heart of managing the challenge of saving water,” MEC Mashatile said.

He urged communities to up the stakes in saving water so that South Africa could survive as a nation.

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