



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **Department of Water and Sanitation on course to limit ground and surface water pollution originating from mines**

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The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) is making inroads into curbing the effects of acid mine drainage and forging ahead with proactive measures to limit the pollution of ground and surface water resources to its bare minimum.

Speaking at the Rand Water Dialogue on Acid Mine Drainage in Glenvista, Johannesburg, yesterday, DWS' Chief Director: Mine Water Management, Mr Marius Keet, said the department, working with partners, has made strides towards limiting the impact in the Witwatersrand; that includes the Western, Central and Eastern Basins, adding that the challenge of acid mine drainage was not for government alone to tackle but for all role-players in the water sector.

He said all options were considered to ensure the best and most cost-effective approach was implemented, saying the long-term solution would be integrated with the short-term solution in an effort to ensure that desalinated acid mine drainage was directed to beneficial socio-economic uses.

Acid mine drainage flows from disused and active mines and pollutes underground and surface water reserves.

"The department is exploring promising technologies and strategies for acid mine drainage management, which is a brainchild of the Technology Development Task Team that has been established," said Keet, adding that the department was being approached by many companies who were pursuing studies with a view to curb acid mine drainage.

He said the department is also assessing other mining catchments to ensure timely interventions with specific emphasis on acid mine drainage, strategies, control, prevention and re-use of mining-impacted water. Keet emphasised the role of strategic partnerships with business as critical to optimise and ensure parallel measures for acid mine drainage and mine water management.



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Research Manager at the Water Research Commission (WRC), Dr Jo Burgess, said the dialogue was an important step in reaching a new audience to explain what they were doing to deal with the challenge of acid mine drainage.

She said this is so because this was a new forum with which they had not addressed before and needed to explain what technology testing and demonstrations they were doing together with DWS.

Dr Burgess said they have selected five treatment technologies and two alternative water management methods of mine water management for which they were now looking for co-funding. The DWS and the WRC are working together seeking innovative and sustainable solutions for the treatment of effluent from mining activities.

**Hosia Sithole**