



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Gauteng DWS's Health and Safety Office takes awareness campaign to employees

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Health and Safety Officer from Department of Water and Sanitation in Gauteng, Ms Nokuthembeka Ndita says an employer has a singularly important role to make sure employees have an in-depth knowledge of health and safety issues to promote a safe working environment.

She was speaking during health awareness campaign that is aimed at educating staff members about their health rights at their working stations to ensure they are not exposed to health hazard.

She said employees are duty-bound to cooperate with the employer to carry out lawful orders and to obey rules and procedures in reporting unsafe conditions in the workplace.

Pieces of legislations such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993 were at the core of ensuring that issues of health and safety in the workplace enjoyed the same prominence as any other law.

In addition, Ndita encouraged employees to immediately inform the employer if an accident has occurred or when a disease was diagnosed, adding that this would assist the employer to deal with those challenges swiftly.

She said employees were central to ensuring adherence to legislation and regulations, saying that their active involvement in issues of health and safety did not only fall on the employer, but that they too had a key role to play.

The Health and Safety Office took its awareness campaign to various sites of Gauteng in a bid to highlight the importance of health and safety amongst the employees. The sites that were visited as part of the Health and Safety Awareness Month included the Gauteng Regional office as well as the Potchefstroom and Boskop offices.

Human Resource Practitioner, Beaula Mekwa said the presentation was informative because it showed what to do in cases when a person was injured during working hours and the legislation that applies in situation that relate to injury at work.

"The most important aspect of the awareness was that as employees we are expected to take charge of our safety. Employees that are involved in work that necessitates the use of personal protective equipment were urged to do so without fail. This is especially the case where employees work in potentially dangerous environment," Mekwa said.

She said it was risky for employees who were supposed to wear protective clothing not to use it as this could result in the employer not footing the bill of the injured employee's medical costs.

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