



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### **Minister Launches Waste Water Treatment Works in Kroonstad**

15 June 2016

“The youth of today do not know where we come from”, said Minister of Water and Sanitation Ms Nomvula Mokonyane as she addressed a crowd of 5000 in Kroonstad on 14 June 2016. The Minister was at an event where she officially launched the Kroonstad Waste Water Treatment Works that was upgraded by the department.

The Minister told of how she as a young person was forced to fetch water from long distances and that in the olden days relieving oneself meant going to the bush and using grass or a stone as toilet paper. Pre-1994 only 46% of people had access to clean drinking water and blacks living in the townships and rural areas were not seen as a priority to receive this precious resource. The current government is seeing to it that people receive water and no less than 80% of people have access to clean drinking water to date.

In the past sanitation was used as a weapon to oppress people, but the current government has changed this around and no less than 86% of people have access to dignified sanitation. Government has worked hard to undo the inequality left by the apartheid era. “We take note that a lot of work still needs to be done, but people should also take note that a lot of work has been done,” said Minister Mokonyane.

The minister reiterated that drought is not a man-made phenomenon and that politics and water should stay as far apart as possible. Drought is an international problem and South Africa is the 30<sup>th</sup> driest country. She also said that drought stricken areas are being prioritized from the highest government levels and all three spheres of government are working tirelessly to battle this phenomenon.

The current drought provides an opportunity to clean and refurbish dams while they are empty and in turn this will mean job opportunities for the youth. A programme called War on Leaks was launched by the President whereby 15000 youth from all nine provinces will be trained as water agents, plumbers and artisans; the end game will be for municipalities to absorb them so that they fix leaking pipes in the area that they originate from. “There are many opportunities out there but it is up to you to grab them,” said Minister Moyonyane.



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Moqhaka Local Municipality is one of the municipalities plagued by the recent drought and has seen water levels reaching critical status over the past months. The department has intervened by providing 24 water tankering trucks with the capacity of 18 000 litres each to supply Kroonstad, Steynsrus and Vijoenskroon. The Department Water and Sanitation (DWS) has also intervened through short and medium term goals that include refurbishment of 5 of the existing boreholes in Kroonstad and the drilling of new ones to augment the supply of water. The water was tested and certified drinkable.

DWS has also availed three 80 000 litre tanks which are placed strategically. To make water easily accessible DWS has also provided 50 water harvesting tanks also known as jojo tanks to add to the municipality's 30 tanks.

The Waste Water Treatment Works was refurbished to the tune of R50 Million as it was unable to cope with the growing population. The collapsed sewer line in Hill Street was also upgraded as part of the project.

Minister Mokonyane said working hand in hand with municipalities and private entities the department will work tirelessly to provide water to communities during and long after the drought. The minister emphasized that communities should still use water sparingly and save each and every drop they can.

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