



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### WATER CONSERVATION AWARENESS WITH INMATES

01 April 2016

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) in Mpumalanga rounded off its Water Month Celebrations by creating awareness amongst offenders in Correctional Centres in Barberton, Umjindi Local Municipality on 30 and 31 March 2016.

As the custodian of water resources in the country, DWS is mandated to coordinate Water Month activities during the month of March. This year the Water Month was celebrated under the theme **“Water for people, Water by people”** with the main message being **“Water has no substitute”**. The message is basically a call to all South Africans to conserve water and use the available drops of water in an efficient manner as South Africa is a water scarce country ranking amongst the 30 driest countries in the world. The importance to stress the need to conserve water is made crucial by the devastating drought currently experienced in the country.

Offenders in facilities around Umjindi Local Municipality were not spared the hardships experienced by most of the community members in terms of water supply due to the devastating drought as the water supply schemes were running low and the supply dam drying up.

Offenders in Maximum and Medium B Correctional Centres were engaged on 30 March and on 31 March it was the turn of offenders in Medium A and the Town Youth Correctional Centres. The offenders were educated about the importance of water conservation and shared their water saving ideas. It was an exciting engagement as the offenders were encouraged to save the little available water and the offenders committed to practice water saving initiatives and also provided some interesting ideas about water conservation. The Offenders also alluded to the fact that the current drought affecting the country which has led to water shortages in Umjindi Local Municipality and their facility has really opened their eyes on the importance of water conservation. They also committed to reporting leaks in their environment.

One offender, who has been in the facility for 14 years, commended both the Department of Water and Sanitation and the Department of Correctional Services for the awareness



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campaign as it showed that they are not forgotten. He also stated that it was the first time in his 14 years that they had such an educational awareness session.

Another offender alluded to the fact that a lot of water is lost through leaks as he once put a bucket under a leaking pipe one morning and the bucket was already full in the evening. He encouraged his mates to report all leaks and take responsibility for water conservation in their cells.

The end of the Water Month does not mean an end to water use efficiency as water conservation must always be a priority in everything we do and everywhere we are. We must all be water ambassadors and spread the message of water conservation and the protection of our water resources, especially from pollution as we need each and every available drop of water in the country.

**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation**

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