



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Effluent Re-use in Northern Cape

05 February 2016

Last year in the National Assembly, the Minister of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Nomvula Mokonyane was asked if municipalities are reusing treated effluent or is the water just pumped back into the river system. This is a pertinent question taking cognisance of the fact that South Africa is a water scarce country.

South Africa cannot afford not to recycle treated effluent. In South Africa, like in many other countries around the world, treated effluent is used in mining, agricultural and livestock activities. Furthermore treated effluent is used in schools, golf courses, parks and gardens for watering purposes.

The Department of Water and Sanitation has an oversight role of ensuring that municipalities treat effluent to acceptable standards otherwise poorly treated effluent will pollute our water sources when pumped back into the river system. To encourage and to ensure that municipalities comply, the department has introduced the Green Drop Certification programme which incentivises and recognise municipalities for best practice of operation and maintenance of waste water treatment works.

The DWS and WSAs are increasingly investigating alternative ways of reusing our raw water resources which include treating wastewater and desalinating seawater.

In the Northern Cape, among many examples is the Sol Plaatje Municipality, which through the Homevale Waste Water Treatment Works (HWWTW) is pumping treated effluent into the Kamfers Dam which has provided a habitation for the scarce flamingo birdlife which is breeding at this manmade pan and in this way putting treated effluent to good use.

As the DWS we continue to monitor businesses that are violating the law by discharging untreated effluent into our rivers and polluting our water resources.

Through education and awareness we are educating our communities not to vandalise water infrastructure including Wastewater Treatment Works. We continue to encourage municipalities to upgrade security measures at both waste and water treatment works through proper fencing and placing security guards at access points..

What if this was the last drop? Reuse your water (grey water), stop polluting our water resources, stop vandalism, for working together we can save more water!

Together we move South Africa forward!

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