



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **Xanthia water project almost complete**

8 November 2015

*Despite the severe drought that has hit most parts of South Africa, Xanthia remains a success story of government service delivery on water and sanitation, with its water project nearing 98% completion.*

*Ensnconed in the rolling hills of Bushbuckridge in Mpumalanga, the impoverished village boasts of a successful water programme that prompted President Jacob Zuma and 13 Cabinet Ministers's Siyahlole visit. The President spent almost three hours of the visit, listening to the villagers as they poured out their hearts.*

*Minister Nomvula Mokonyane identified Xanthia as an example where the government has intervened decisively to ensure that local communities got clean drinking water.*

*Xanthia is one of 25 villages in Bushbuckridge that are benefitting from the revamped Inyaka Water Treatment Works. The first phase of water supply in Xanthia (and several other villages) is almost complete and houses are receiving clean drinking water.*

*Minister Mokonyane said more than 500 people now have work while others were trained as pipe welders and crane drivers. Another 800 job opportunities will be created through construction management. Many local contractors from Bushbuckridge are now doing business to ensure that water is connected. These companies include Malo Contractors, Lemjo Sivuthumlilo JV, Seletje Construction and Management, Shirdo Trading, and many others.*

*"70% of the appointed contractors are local contractors. Furthermore, all appointed contractors have agreed to subcontract to smaller local contractors. Procurement of material has been restricted mainly to the Mpumalanga Province. All maintenance work is done in house and is no longer outsourced," Minister Mokonyane reassured the community.*

*However, the Minister said the project of supplying water in Bushbuckridge villages was not without challenges, the main one being the illegal connections to the bulk pipeline that supplies water from the revamped Inyaka Water Treatment Plant. Ageing infrastructure was also mentioned as the problem, and was seen as an area which needed to be upgraded with immediate effect to ensure the sustainable supply of water to new villages, such as Xanthia.*

*"A preliminary assessment of the level of water use efficiency and the level of Non-Revenue Water (unaccounted for water) in the Inyaka Waste Water Treatment Works indicates that the total system losses are very high. It was estimated that the total system losses in the supply area of the Inyaka Waste Water Treatment Works is approximately 40% of the treated water production."*

*"Unauthorized connections are also receiving attention. It was found that a majority of 42% households with yard connections are connected through unauthorized connections; this*



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*further undermines the functionality of the existing infrastructure. The yard connections are now being upgraded,” Minister Mokonyane said  
President Zuma, accompanied by a delegation of 13 Ministers, visited three houses in Xanthia to see for himself progress made around water supply in the village. The delegation was met by ululating women who expressed satisfaction with government service delivery in Xanthia.*

*The President later addressed thousands of Bushbuckridge villagers and promised that the government would fight corruption and nepotism in order to ensure that every citizen benefitted from service delivery projects*

*“Bushbuckridge is a water scarce area. At least 70% of the communities here are without bulk water supply. Almost 60% are without tap water and at least 75% without yard water connection.”*

*“The majority of the communities still rely on water from the boreholes. While the situation remains difficult, there is an improvement through interventions by government.”*

*“More than twenty thousand yard connections have been made in the first two phases of reticulation in about 38 villages in this area,” the President said.*

**By Themba Khumalo**