



GAUTENG
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Gauteng holds multi-stakeholder imbizo to address potential water supply challenges

The Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG), under the leadership of Premier Panyaza Lesufi, hosted a Water Imbizo in collaboration with the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and Rand Water. This urgent intervention aims to prevent potential water shortages in the province.

Held at the Birchwood Hotel in the City of Ekurhuleni, the Gauteng Water Imbizo brought together Mayors, Members of Mayoral Committees, and Ward Councillors from various municipalities in Gauteng. The gathering provided a comprehensive situational analysis of water security in the province, with particular emphasis on the upcoming Spring and Summer seasons when water consumption is expected to increase.

The Water Imbizo forms part of the provincial government's proactive measures to avert water insecurity. Discussions covered critical issues such as municipal debt, rising water demand, illegal connections, encroachment, and the vandalism of water supply infrastructure.

Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr. David Mahlobo, opened the Indaba by stressing the importance of addressing water management challenges in the province. He emphasised the need for collaboration among all stakeholders to ensure a sustainable water supply and effective demand management.

Representing Rand Water were the Chairperson of the Board, Mr. Ramateu Monyokolo, and the Group Chief Executive (GCE), Mr. Siphosiso Mosai. Mr. Monyokolo provided an overview of Rand Water's mandate, strategic objectives, and the risks it faces.

In his presentation, Mr. Mosai outlined the significant challenges confronting Rand Water, including high municipal water consumption, illegal connections, servitude encroachment, illegal mining, and credit management. He warned, "These challenges are not insurmountable, but if left unaddressed, they will lead to a crisis."

Mr. Mosai further highlighted the growing financial strain on Rand Water due to some municipalities failing to honour their Bulk Water Purchase and Debt Settlement Agreements. Currently, the overdue debt owed by municipalities exceeds R5 billion. He urged non-paying municipalities to enter into Debt Settlement Agreements (DSA) with Rand Water to rectify the situation.

He also pointed out that Rand Water has surpassed its daily water abstraction license allocation. The DWS has approved an annual abstraction limit of 1,600 million cubic meters (4,384 megalitres per day) from the Integrated Vaal River System (IVRS).

To address these challenges, Mr. Mosai outlined several strategies to help municipalities reduce water consumption and ensure compliance with Rand Water's license provisions. These include the immediate imposition of Level 1 water restrictions, a moratorium on irrigating public facilities in Gauteng until March 2025, and the disconnection of illegal connections supplying residential areas and illegal mines.

Additionally, he urged municipalities to repair water distribution system leaks within 48 hours and to ensure timely settlement of their accounts.

Gauteng MEC for Infrastructure Development and Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr. Jacob Mamabolo, committed to hosting regular Izimbizos with Gauteng Ward Councillors to address broader issues such as energy supply, the financial stability of municipalities, and the revitalisation of ageing Central Business Districts (CBDs).

"We are all aware of the challenges faced by municipalities; these cannot be resolved with a 'business as usual' approach. We must collaborate across the various spheres of government and entities, leveraging our collective strengths to expedite service delivery and provide a better life for the people of our province," said Mamabolo.

Gauteng residents are urged to use water sparingly and efficiently to help ensure a sustainable supply and to prevent further water shortages.

Issued by the Gauteng Provincial Government and Rand Water

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