

Water and Sanitation in the News

Young engineers flock to DWS water academy

The Department of Water and Sanitation's Learning Academy has made huge strides in attracting young engineers, who want to be part of efforts to enhance the quality of water delivered to citizens. The department reported that it has been swamped by requests from ambitious, determined and young qualified engineers who want to work for the water sector. The Learning Academy is an internal structure, which was initiated in 2007 as a response to a shortage of specific skills needed to boost the production of the department.

The purpose of the academy is, among others, to investigate technical and scarce skills development needs within the department, address technical and scarce skills gaps in the overall water supply value chain and address scarce skills gaps in specific technical areas of the department. The academy also plans and builds capacity for medium and long-term needs of the department and the water and sanitation sector, as well as developing and implementing structured training for engineering and scientific graduate trainees.

Learning Academy Director Verena Meyer said one of the main areas in the department which experiences a dire shortage of skills and expertise is the engineering function. Meyer said to date, 57 young engineers have been offered an opportunity to participate in the Professional Development Programme. "Three of these [57] engineers have managed to register as professional engineers, while others are on various levels of meeting the required 11 outcomes of the Engineering Council of South Africa," Meyer said...

Source: SAnews.gov.za, 28 Jan. 2015

In 2014 the Department of Water and Sanitation said the water sector is experiencing a critical scarce skills shortage, due to an inadequate skills base and competition in the labour market. South Africa is also severely under-engineered, as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) indicates the country only has a total of 15 000 engineers and has one engineer that services approximately 2666 people whereas internationally one engineer services 40 people. Skills and capacity development are critical to

the implementation of the National Water Resource Strategy 2.

Training is, therefore, one of the most important aspects of the **Municipal Assistant™** system – designed for the operational, maintenance and management staff of water and wastewater facilities of Local Municipalities and industrial plant operators; to improve the management and maintenance of water treatment facilities and associated infrastructure in order to improve water quality through the entire chain of water and wastewater treatment.

Our primary focus is to empower municipal users to access their assets, staff details and the status of their water quality, also keeping Blue and Green Drop assessments in mind. Users are equipped with those essential knowledge and skills that will enhance the capacities of municipalities in meeting their responsibilities of supplying good quality drinking water.



We provide different levels of training which consists, among many others, of the following modules: regulatory framework (e.g. SANS241); water demand management; asset management; support tools - waste water calculator; hydraulics concepts; assets and budgets: cost and lifespan, assessments, reactive & preventative maintenance; Water infrastructure – water care works: general, layout and process; safety and risk assessments; WQ data, flow data, plant efficiency, dosing chemicals; WQ monitoring; Reporting; etc.

Training is not only provided to staff/users, but also to municipal management. The MA system is a powerful tool that gives management a daily overview of the operation of the municipality including monitoring capabilities of water treatment operations and results.

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