

## Water and Sanitation in the News

### Water Crisis for Nelson Mandela Bay

Residents of Port Elizabeth and surrounding areas could face a water crisis if their municipality does not get a R365 million bailout from National Treasury to complete a critical water pipeline. The Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality encompasses Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage and Despatch and urgently needs the money to complete the Nooitgedacht Low Level Scheme, or it will be forced to implement water restrictions in two months' time.

If implemented, the restrictions could affect more than 1 million residents who fall under the metro. But the local ratepayers' association is threatening to interdict the municipality from implementing water restrictions. This week, city manager Mpilo Mbambisa pleaded with MPs who visited the metro for oversight work to help convince Treasury to grant it the bailout. He said there was a serious shortfall of funds to complete the treatment capacity of the scheme. Litho Suka, chairperson of the select committee on economic development and small business, who was part of the delegation, confirmed that the municipality had asked for their help in securing the money. "We told them they needed to come up with a strong case as to why this R365 million was needed. "We want a comprehensive report and for them to come and present it to Parliament. We are willing to help, but things have to be done properly," said Suka. He said the water crisis needed to be addressed urgently, as residents could not be expected to live without water.

...The water crisis is reflected in the metro's midterm budget and performance report of 2014/15. The report shows that, on average, about 40% of water was lost between July and November last year due to leakages.

Source: *News24, 03 May 2015*

### Context

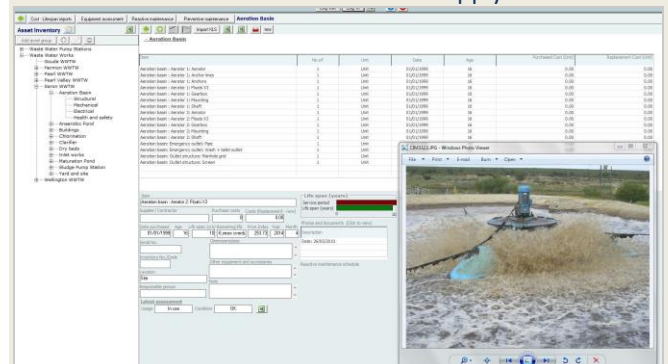
Historically, SA had invested heavily in water infrastructure, but little was done to maintain it (a similar situation we find ourselves in with the power generation industry). Consequently, much water is lost through leaking pipes, inefficient irrigation due to disrepair, and crumbling canal systems that have long since reached the end of their life span. Over and above the failing existing bulk infrastructure, excessive and irresponsible water use behaviour plays a major role in the effect it has on water

resource quality and quantity. The decline of water quality due to urban and industrial effluent discharge into river systems, poorly maintained wastewater treatment works, salinity from irrigation return flows, acid mine drainage and inadequate sanitation facilities poses yet another water challenge for our nation.

The 2014 Global Risk Report conducted by the World Economic Forum rated "water crises" as the third-most significant global risk, two places above that of the "failure of climate change mitigation adaption". This is a significant statement, especially when the vast majority of the South African population are not aware of the current state of water services in our country. By 2030, it is estimated that water usage will have grown to 2.7-billion cubic metres, leaving a 17% gap in supply and demand. Taking into account the current projected population growth and economic development rates, it is unlikely that meeting the projected demand for water resources in SA will be sustainable.

Source: *Business Day, 21 Feb. 2015*

The **Municipal Assistant™** system helps to address the serious water challenges in South Africa by facilitating proper management and operational activities related to water and waste water treatment and supply.



A core theme within the MA system approach is the implementation of maintenance scheduling (preventive and reactive) of infrastructure assets and the calculations of infrastructure components' remaining lifespan and replacement costs. A related main function of the system is the compilation of operational and maintenance budgets to ensure timeous preventative maintenance and replacement of equipment.

CONTACT US: Tel: +27 (0)21 887 7161

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