

## Water and Sanitation in the News

### **Limpopo water not suitable for human consumption: Report**

Thousands of people in Limpopo are drinking water which is not suitable for human consumption. That is according to the 2014 Blue Drop Report. Access to clean drinking water is a right enshrined in the Constitution. This is however not being realised in Limpopo. The water that is supplied to most people poses health risks for human consumption. The report reveals that some water services authorities and water services providers are supplying low quality water.

Mookgophong municipality has scored the lowest at 26% followed by Vhembe district municipality at 39%. This implies that the water they are supplying poses health risks to the people. Some residents in Mookgophong have expressed concern on the quality of drinking water, resorting to bottled water for drinking. Residents say the water sources have been contaminated by spillage from the sewerage pipes. "It's very bad we stay right next to the sewerage station where they pump the water and it's a big disaster because of the sewerage running over to the clean water where they pump the water from, eventually it's got to affect our boreholes as well."



In Elandskraal outside Marble Hall, some residents have also complained about the poor quality of water. Others are forced to share drinking water with animals from the rivers, especially in the Sekhukhune and Mopani districts.

Meanwhile, the Mookgophong municipality has dismissed the Blue Drop report as out-dated. Head of technical services in the Mookgophong municipality Clifford Makofane says: "The 2014 report it's out-dated, it's a two year old report between now and then, the municipality had an action plan the purification plant was upgraded to new technology water is being tested on a monthly basis by a competent laboratory registered with Sanas and the results show water that we supply to our communities are good for human consumption. Lastly we believe if our water

scheme was to be graded now we could be sitting above 60% not 26% in 2014."...

Source: *SABC, 10 Feb 2016*

**Despite the huge improvements in the previous years, the 2014 Blue Drop Report shows a reduction of 8% in the national average score from 87.6 % in 2012 to 79.6% in 2014. Possible factors that may have contributed to the decline in performance include limited application of water safety planning and introduction of the No Drop criteria looking at managing water losses within supply systems.**

### Provincial performance is summarized as follows:

- **Gauteng Province leads with an overall BD score of 92% with 97% of its systems in low risk category followed by Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal with scores of 89% and 86% respectively.**
- **Mpumalanga showed an 8% improvement compared to 2012 with an overall BD score of 69%.**
- **Free State and Eastern Cape scores declined from 82% in 2012 to 75% and 72% respectively in 2014.**
- **Limpopo and North West Provinces are lagging behind with their scores declining by 17% from 79% in 2012 to 62% and 63% respectively in 2014.**

Source: *DWS Blue Drop (2014) – Executive Summary*

The production of safe drinking water and the discharge of acceptable quality effluent to rivers is critically dependant on equipment that is maintained, staff that are technically skilled and management that is leading a team effort. The **Municipal Assistant™** uniquely combines into a single user friendly system with the following core functionalities: Water quality monitoring and management; Evaluating and reporting compliance with regulatory water quality standards and criteria (SANS 241, licensing conditions and Blue Drop and Green Drop specifications); Assists the user in the compilation of various reports (including a Blue Drop/Green Drop reporting facility); Asset management to ensure optimal performance of facilities to produce good quality drinking water and discharge; Operational and maintenance scheduling of equipment and staff utilisation; Assist with routine and process control inspections and incident reporting; Compilation of operational and maintenance budgets.

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