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Water and Sanitation in the News

Skills pooling urged as water-shedding is forecast to worsen

The structural nature of South Africa's water challenges requires that skills be shared to counteract the effect that a lack of skills has on water management, says South African black-owned consulting engineering firm Gibb technical executive Wiero Vogelzang. The lack of resources at smaller municipalities and rural districts to maintain infrastructure, plan and execute water management, and remunerate skilled water professionals compound the water scarcity and poor water management challenges. Vogelzang says water-shedding – cutting off water supply for periods to manage reserves – is a reality in South Africa, with some regions affected more than others. "We can expect this to increase unless the country acknowledges and manages its water resources more effectively," he notes.

Water management and water systems are complex and require a high level of skills and sustained political will from government structures to be effective, says Gibb Integrated Infrastructure senior associate Jacques Laubscher. "Many smaller municipalities do not have access to skilled water professionals or they leave for better remuneration elsewhere. However, many of the water quality and management challenges in these small municipalities is a direct result of lack of access to skills and a lack of understanding of the demands of water management," he notes.

For example, nonrevenue water losses, mainly because of leaks or water theft, constitute about 30% and, in some cases, as high as 60% of water resources lost in many parts of the country. "This means that the effective identification, management, maintenance and repair of water infrastructure can significantly reduce or eliminate water challenges in these areas. This will also help to preserve water, and municipal revenues, to aid expected growth." To this end, Laubscher suggests a centralised, possibly national, system, where water professionals from the public and private sectors can be seconded to problematic areas. Similar remuneration packages for similarly skilled and experienced professionals should be introduced to incentivise working in smaller municipalities and rural areas...

Source: Engineering News, 07 August 2015

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Preventative Maintenance Principles & Guidelines: Week 1

Reactive Maintenance VS Preventative Maintenance

Reactive Maintenance implies waiting until something breaks down and then fixing it – it is essentially the same as 'firefighting' and is not a sustainable or cost-effective way to manage a water or waste water plant (or any other infrastructure asset!)

Reactive "Maintenance" = Emergency! It is the same as for an unmaintained car that breaks down: You will get stuck in the middle of nowhere ...and have to pay the tow truck & pay for repairs (possibly a new engine!) Your day is #&\$@*!!!!

MOST IMPORTANTLY:

You do not reach your destination! Reactive: wait till it breaks down and then fix it (i.e. 'firefighting') = INEFFICIENT and COSLTLY!

Why Preventative Maintenance?

Preventative Maintenance is routinely done to ensure nothing breaks down. Prevention is always better than cure!

- Preventative maintenance is CHEAPER and is BUDGETED FOR
- If running at plant capacity or in the case of a critical component - entire plant can be at a standstill if maintenance is reactive/not planned well (similar to a car's engine breaking in the middle of the Karoo)
- Preventative is scheduled you can manage your time and let every day be a joy ride
- MOST IMPORTANTLY: You will reach your "destination"!

What is your "destination"?

Water Quality and Sustainable Service Delivery!

<u>Source</u>: Outcomes from Advanced Technical Process Controllers' Workshops 2011 & 2015

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