

Water and Sanitation in the News

Under spend by water and sanitation worrying

A Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation has expressed concern by the Department of Water and Sanitation's qualified audit opinion. In a statement released by the committee it says the area of major concern is the under-expenditure of the department's vote compared to the planned spending projections.

According to the committee the under-expenditure of 11% represents a huge number of undelivered services to the people of this country. "It is even more worrying that the department attributes this low spending on lack of proper planning." The Committee expressed its concern, in a statement, that there is a continuing lack of adequate skills to ensure that the department delivers on its mandate.

While the Committee is aware that skills shortage is a general challenge across the spheres in the country, the Committee has called for a joint effort among sister departments such as the Department of Higher Education and Training to ensure that this challenge is overcome. The Committee is however pleased that there is positive movement in relations to governance mechanisms within the department which include internal audit and functioning of the audit committee.

The Committee remains convinced that these governance mechanisms are the bedrock for future positive audit outcomes. The reduction of fruitless and wasteful expenditure by the department is another aspect that is welcomed. Although the R1 545 000 remains high, the Committee is convinced that there is adequate commitment to deal with the matter. The Committee has called on the department to ensure that this amount is reduced even further in the current financial year.

Source: *Infrastucturene.ws*, 19 October 2015

Proper planning is a critical aspect of ensuring sustainable service delivery across the entire water sector - from budget planning at national government level, to maintenance planning at component level at water and waste water treatment plants in South Africa.

In order to do sufficient planning, management teams will need to be supported by an adequate balance of sufficient human and technical resources which could supply a steady stream of accurate information, skills and tools to perform all the vital tasks that keep the country's natural and industrial water cycle - which constitute the "bloodstream" of the country's "physical body" - in a healthy and sustainably flowing state.

The **Municipal Assistant™** system enables users to approach water and sanitation planning from a higher vantage point by recognising and analysing the interdependencies of functions related to water treatment and supply.

Date	Yes/No	Projected cost	Note	Maintenance	Maintenance Schedule
3/05/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
0/05/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Monthly Maintenance
1/10/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
8/10/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Monthly Maintenance
9/10/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
9/10/2013		0.00	3 monthly maintenance	Yard and Site	Three Monthly Maintenance
5/11/2013		0.00	3 monthly maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Three Monthly Maintenance
5/11/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
6/11/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Monthly Maintenance
3/12/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Maturation Pond	Three Monthly Maintenance
1/12/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
1/12/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Monthly Maintenance
1/12/2013		0.00	3 monthly maintenance	Yard and Site	Three Monthly Maintenance
1/12/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
1/12/2013		0.00	6 monthly maintenance	Yard and Site	Six Monthly Maintenance
8/12/2013		0.00	3 monthly maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Three Monthly Maintenance
8/12/2013		0.00	6 monthly maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Six Monthly Maintenance
8/12/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Monthly Maintenance
8/12/2013		0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
5/02/2013	No	0.00	30 day maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Monthly Maintenance
5/03/2013	No	0.00	6 monthly maintenance	Maturation Pond	Six Monthly Maintenance
5/03/2013	No	0.00	3 monthly maintenance	Maturation Pond	Three Monthly Maintenance
8/03/2013	No	0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
5/03/2013	No	0.00	30 day maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Monthly Maintenance
5/04/2013	No	0.00	3 monthly maintenance	Yard and Site	Three Monthly Maintenance
5/04/2013	No	0.00	30 day maintenance	Yard and Site	Monthly Maintenance
20/4/2013	No	0.00	30 day maintenance	Pump Station (ext Building)	Monthly Maintenance

The Municipal Assistant™ was developed as an operational information system to assist with the assessment (on component level including cost and lifespan), operations, maintenance (preventive and reactive) and management of water and wastewater facilities and related infrastructure. The system helps ensure that assets and people perform at optimal levels, which reduce service disruptions due to asset failure or human error, thereby reducing future maintenance costs.

The following elements were taken into consideration when the system was developed:

- provide a structured source of information and knowledge to ensure that capacity building is an ongoing process;
- create a mechanism to enhance the optimal and sustainable use of facilities (financially and technically) and achieve the primary aim, that is the sustainable use of our water resources;
- provide a planning mechanism in order to maintain and expand facilities for the delivery of appropriate services; and
- undertake planning for water demand management and water conservation measures.

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WAMTech are specialists in implementing technology systems for improved governance, focussing on Water and Public Health Information Systems

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