

Water and Sanitation in the News

Level 2 water restrictions imposed in Johannesburg

The City of Johannesburg implemented level two water restrictions on Monday. "Rand Water notified us of a further deterioration in the bulk supply system [on Monday 9 November], recommending a higher level of water supply restrictions," Environment and Infrastructure Services mayoral committee member Matshidiso Mfikoe said in a statement.



Level two restrictions meant:

- No watering and irrigating gardens between 06:00 and 18:00.
- No filling of swimming pools.
- No using of hose pipes to wash cars, paved areas, etc.

Mfikoe said, although water was still available, the system supply pressure would be reduced. "In the event that the situation deteriorates further, a level three restriction would have to be imposed." Level three would entail supply of water at stipulated times a day, namely, only in the mornings and in the evenings at times to be announced," she said. This would mean that water would not be supplied outside the stipulated times. Residents were urged to comply with the level two restrictions.

Source: [News24, 09 November 2015](#)

Context

Droughts across South Africa are beginning to reach historic levels. Government has implemented medium- and short-term measures of interventions in KwaZulu-Natal and other provinces to minimise the impact of the drought. Minister of Water Affairs recently revealed that all the provinces were hit by drought, adding that drought disasters have been declared in KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State. The minister said her department had committed R352.6 million to the initial drought intervention projects and a further R96.62 million to interim measures and additional interventions in KwaZulu-Natal.

Mokonyane also said SA had suffered in the past few months the worst drought since 1960s. The minister said small dams in parts of the country have dried up. Water shortages have reportedly affected 2.7 million households in SA. The drought has also dealt a blow to agricultural production. Maize crop production is expected to fall from 14.25 million tons last year to an estimated 9.84 million tons this year, said John Purchase, chief executive officer at SA's Agricultural Business Chamber.

Meanwhile, an almost week-long heatwave is expected over parts of the country, with some maximum temperatures expected to hit 40 degrees Celsius. The SA Weather Service said in its daily forecast that a heatwave with "persistently high temperatures" is expected over Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the eastern part of the North West until Thursday.

Dr Francois Engelbrecht from the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research said that 2015 was going to be the warmest year ever on the global record. According to Dhesigen Naidoo, CEO of the Water Research Commission, the drought is taking place within a prolonged dry spell coinciding with El Niño, meaning that really good rains (a so-called "wet period") might be five to seven years away.

Climate-forecasting models predict that rainfall is going to become increasingly variable. So, we are not just out to survive one drought, we are out to adjust to a dryer future. Long-term measures include the construction of more storage facilities, including another large dam in Lesotho, Naidoo says. First, though, we need short-term measures to relieve the water system pressure. The biggest of these is the so-called 'War on Leaks'. Seven billion rand is lost a year through leaking pipes and taps, and collapsing infrastructure, Minister of Water Affairs, Nomvula Mokonyane, said, referring to South Africa's 37% non-billed water.

Sources: [Daily Maverick](#); [The Citizen](#); [News24, 2015](#)

WAMTechnology has been providing water asset and operations management systems and associated services for the past 9 years. We assist in responsible water management and the use of our water operations [system](#); thereby improving service delivery and water conservation.

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

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

Visit our websites:

www.wamsys.co.za

www.municipalassistant.co.za

www.ewisa.co.za