

Water and Sanitation in the News

AfriForum cheers improved water quality in blue, green drop reports

AfriForum has released its blue and green drop reports for this year, and their findings show that improvements have been made regarding the quality of South Africa's water infrastructure. The civil rights organisation tested the drinking water quality in 132 towns across the country and found that only five municipalities did not comply with quality standards. This, AfriForum's head of environmental affairs Julius Kleynhans said, was a marked improvement over last year when there were 11 non-compliant municipalities.

The five are: Molento in the Eastern Cape, Stella in the North West, Vryheid in KwaZulu-Natal, Coligny in the North West and Tarkastad in the Eastern Cape. These communities were informed by AfriForum not to drink the water and the municipalities were put on notice. Follow-up samples indicated that the water was clean.

The tests were made in towns where AfriForum had a presence, said Kleynhans. "It is incredible to see organised communities taking responsibility and standing up for their rights and monitoring the quality of the water provided by their municipalities," said Kleynhans. He said that his organisation had approached municipalities that had poor quality drinking water and through the threat of legal action had seen water quality being improved within 24 hours.

AfriForum found that Blomhof in the North West, which last year was where three babies died from drinking contaminated water, now had clean water. AfriForum's green drop report, which tested water at sewage plants, had results that were less positive. Kleynhans said they tested 58 sewage water systems, of which 26 did not comply with quality standards. He said that most municipalities denied them access to sample the waste water. "However, we have seen significant improvement in access control to these sites, and 15 sewage systems have improved dramatically, complying with quality standards on the dates tested," Kleynhans said. The province to show the best improvement over last year was Limpopo; the worst performer was the Free State.

Source: *Timeslive*, 12 May 2015

The **Municipal Assistant™** software system helps to prevent incidents of water and sanitation failures by facilitating the efficient management functions related to water treatment and supply. 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.

ASSET CAPTURING AND ASSESSMENTS

- Field visit to assess assets
- Capture of data: Risk and evaluation of assets
- Reporting: Provision of Asset audit and Asset photo report

Before the Municipal Assistant™ system is implemented, or as a standalone service, **WAMTechnology** conducts **asset and/or risk assessments** in terms of a range of identified hazards including the impact on components of the infrastructure critical for water supply and sanitation. Among others, hazards associated with relevant infrastructure age, capacity and condition; as well as operations and maintenance status; floods or droughts; theft and vandalism; and socio-economic factors are assessed in order to determine a rating on a cumulative events matrix – indicating the likelihood and severity of a community's vulnerability to experience events related to water supply and public health. In doing so, serious threats to community and ecosystems health are early identified along with priorities of preventive and reactive maintenance.

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

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