



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MASHILO CALLS FOR PRESERVATION OF WATER RESOURCES

The MEC for Human Settlements in Mpumalanga, Mr Speedy Mashilo has urged municipalities to use their water resources optimally and give sense of collaborative responsibility with communities. Mashilo was giving a keynote address at the recently held Dr JS Moroka Water Summit attended by various stakeholders ranging from government, private sector, farming, traditional to community representatives. The municipality is one of the severely draught stricken and water scarce localities in the province. Adding to the woes, the municipality has had incidents of theft and vandalism of water infrastructure in the recent past.

“The municipality has over 200 boreholes and 30 operational water tankers to the service all affected villages, the question is how do we use and allocate these resources, we must therefore use these resources optimal”, charged Mashilo. He added an earnest consideration for creation of water catchment and harvesting Mkhombo Dam must be pursued to prevent loss of water. In dealing with vandalism the MEC has labelled these heinous incidents acts of sabotage and that the matter will be elevated to the level of the Provincial Commissioner.

These challenges in water engulf the municipality at these desperate times of COVID-19 pandemic, thus undermine the efforts to combat the spread of the virus. This was well noted in the address by the Executive Mayor of Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality, Cllr. Roda Sazi Mathabe who also bemoaned vandalism and invited communities to jealousy protect their infrastructure. “Vandalism of water infrastructure is rife in this locality, we therefore call upon communities to be responsible and protect their infrastructure”, she said.

During the discussions, it transpired that community responsibility and collaboration as well communication must be strengthened to ensure preservation of water. One community representative from ward 10, Mr Peter Shile urged that constant communication and awareness should be at the centre of dealing with vandalism and water deliveries. “Communication and community awareness are of critical importance if we were to deal with these challenges, delivery of water must be reliable, timeous and well communicated”, charge Shile.

The summit recommended that all resolutions must not remain a token of lip service but be implemented. In view of illegal connections, management must devise a strategy of combating this trend as it burdens the municipality. Both the informal and formal businesses must be engaged further on water usage and preservation in their respective businesses. The summit also reflected on progress made since the last engagements of Water Indaba held in 2019.

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