

Sanitation & Hygiene Week: Western Cape
Media release by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
26 March 2007

One thousand two hundred (1 200) households in the Western Cape are stuck with no basic sanitation facilities. Government is working hard to ensure that the December 2007 Presidential target of removing this bucket system in all formal areas be met. The Premier of the Western Cape has also set the removal of the bucket system in formal areas as a Provincial priority.

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (Western Cape) – in its role as monitor and regulator, specifically setting guidelines and policy regarding water and sanitation matters, as well as providing the necessary support to all municipalities – has set aside 26 to 30 March 2007 as Sanitation Week. This week is to raise the profile of sanitation, health and hygiene matters to municipalities and their communities. The two-fold campaign will seek to address municipal concerns (stakeholders) on the one hand, and community education and awareness on the other.

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry has invested an amount of about R14-million to municipalities in the Western Cape this financial year (2006/2007). For the next financial year (April 2007 to March 2008), there is an allocation of about R30-million to ensure that buckets be eradicated by the end of this year (December 2007).

The shortage of skilled personnel such as engineers, project managers and financial experts has been identified as a major obstacle that hampers service delivery at a local level. Thus the Department and its partners, such as other government departments (Local Government and Housing), the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA), tertiary institutions, and others, are assisting Project Consolidate Municipalities by placing the necessary skills as required.

Municipalities that have benefited from this process include:

- Theewaterskloof
- Kannaland
- Central Karoo
- Laingsburg
- Prince Albert.

From 26 to 30 March 2007, the Department will exhibit regional sanitation matters from municipalities in the Western Cape, civil society groups, private companies, tertiary institutions and government agencies.

Venue: Morreesburg Agricultural Showgrounds

Date: 26 to 29 March 2007

Starting time: 10:00 – 16:00

Day 1: Stakeholders gather to launch the opening of the week, and discuss Regional sanitation initiatives thus far, to assist municipalities in fast-tracking the process of delivering sanitation to all.

Day 2 & 3: Communities are taught about health and hygiene matters

Day 4: Learners are taught about health and hygiene matters

Members of the media are invited to cover this first Sanitation Exhibition in the country, and to relay this message of hope to citizens in the Western Cape.

Statement by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry: Western Cape Region
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