

'After washing my face, I smelt like a fishmonger'

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THERE has been something fishy about the standard of the water in Pietermaritzburg.

Residents have been complaining about "greasy water that stinks like fish" that has been coming out of their taps since Sunday.

Bulk water supplier Umgeni Water confirmed yesterday it had received several complaints, which had prompted an investigation into the cause of the fishy smell.

Umgeni Water spokesman Shami Harichunder said: "Test samples were taken and results show there are no disease-causing bacteria in the water.

"The number of calls have reduced since Sunday so we can say the fishy smell no longer exists.

"At this stage we cannot confirm

the source of the problem, however, we do suspect that it could be algae."

On Sunday morning, residents in Northdale, Bombay Heights, Dunveria, Orient Heights and Raisethorpe woke up to the stench

Residents complain about 'greasy water that stinks like fish'

of fish coming from their taps.

"After washing my face, I smelt like a fishmonger.

"It was totally disgusting and I felt like vomiting every time someone opened the tap.

"I kept imagining that there were fish guts or something inside our pipes," a resident, Vivek Kara,

told The Times.

Residents complained that they were unable to bathe, wash dishes or clothes, or drink the water as the smell was too "revolting".

On Monday, several schools in the affected areas closed early because schoolchildren were unable to drink the smelly water.

One of the parents, Vincent Chetty, said his child's right to education was now being threatened by lack of basic services.

"It is quite often that the children come home early because there is no water and now it [has] become even worse because the water that is provided stinks and we have no idea what is in it."

Harichunder said Umgeni Water had not yet established whether it or the local Msunduzi municipality was to blame.

