

# New pipeline to upgrade Dolphin Coast water supplies

**By HEIDI GIBSON**

The first phase of the North Coast pipeline currently under construction has attracted a great deal of public attention, Umgeni Water corporate affairs spokesperson Shami Harichunder said recently.

Curious onlookers and motorists driving around the circle near Lifestyle and now at the Salt Rock/N2 turn off have for weeks been trying to figure out the nature of construction taking place.

“It was, in fact, a pipe jacking operation that resulted in the excavation of an area under the main street to lay the pipeline. The operation was conducted with little or no disruption to traffic,” said Harichunder.

He said contractors are on track with the first phase of the North Coast bulk water pipeline, which will be 17.6 kilometres long from the Avondale Reservoir in Ballito to the Honolulu Reservoir in Groutville.

This project is well underway and expected to be completed in November

this year.

The second phase, a seven kilometre long bulk pipeline from the Honolulu Reservoir to the Umvoti Balancing Reservoir, is in its design stage.

The entire project will comprise a new bulk water supply pipeline that will also feed into existing and proposed reservoirs along the route of the pipeline at Shakashead, Umhlali, Royal Palm Estates, Tinley Manor/Blythedale and Etete/Groutville.

In the beginning water will be conveyed northwards from the Hazelmere Dam but then the direction of the pipeline will be reversed in the future when supply to the North Coast will be supplemented with water abstracted from the Mvoti and/or Tugela Rivers.

Work began on the first phase in November last year, following the appointment of Stemele Bosch Africa for the initial feasibility studies, detailed design, tender and the subsequent construction phases.

This was after a record of decision was issued by the KwaZulu-Natal department of agriculture and environmental affairs (DAEA) in October 2007.

“The implementation of the project has been welcomed by the Ilembe District Municipality as it will assist significantly in enhancing assurance of water supply and also meet future demands, which have been precipitated by housing and industrial development and existing backlogs in many rural areas of the Ilembe District.

“It has been estimated that future potable water demand will grow by 5% annually.”

He said from a social perspective, the first phase of the R130 million project has had a significant impact through job creation and accompanying spend being ploughed back into the local economy.

The second phase will cost approximately R80 million and is also expected to generate numerous employment opportunities during its construction.

