

iLembe secures R20m to focus on water

STANGER WEEKLY REPORTER

THE iLembe District Municipality hosted a media tour of the Umvoti Water Works near Groutville on Wednesday, September 23.

The aim of the tour was to highlight the recent water crisis being experienced in KwaDukuza as well as how they plan to solve the problem.

Before proceeding to the Water Works, a briefing session highlighting the municipality's problems and proposed solutions was held at the municipal offices.

Present at the briefing and tour was iLembe District mayor, Welcome Mdabe and municipal manager, Mike Newton as well as Umgeni Water representatives and councillors.

In his presentation, Newton focused on providing clean, safe water for the people of the district at all times.

"The municipality together with Umgeni Water have secured a new generator which is able to provide the entire Umvoti Water Works with power when there is no electricity supply. This means that residents will now be able to receive water in their homes even when there is no electricity.

"This is just one of the steps we

have taken to ensure that residents receive water at all times. We are also facing many other problems and are currently working on ways to solve them."

He added that this process would start soon as they were able to secure R20 million, through grant funding after a successful meeting with other government departments, which will be used to focus on solving the issues.

In his address, Mdabe said beside the R20 million for the entire water crisis project, there would also be a project to clean up the reservoirs before the festive season.

"On a recent inspection of the water works, we discovered that a large amount of silt had built up in the reservoirs over the years.

"This has been taking up space and not allowing the reservoirs to be filled to capacity.

"The silt also diminishes the quality of the water. Although it is safe to drink, it is not as clean as it should be.

"Once it is cleaned, it will allow a sustainable amount of water to be stored. This will ensure that residents get the best water.

"It will also give us 48 hours of storage time so that in the event of

any problems residents water supply will not be cut off."

He added that the only downside to the clean up is that the water supply will need to be shut off for a five-day period.

"However, residents will be made aware of the shut offs in advance via advertisements in the local newspapers."

Also introduced was a three phase project which will focus on repairing burst or leaking water pipes, replacing old pipes and mains, water pressure reduction and management and consumer awareness and education about the scarcity of water.

The group then proceeded to the Water Works for a demonstration of how the generator would work.

The main supply of power was switched off and the generator kicked in automatically in less than 20 seconds and the water supply was not interrupted in anyway.

Other projects in the pipeline include an emergency main from Hazelmer Dam, which will top up the reservoirs in KwaDukuza in the event of a problem with the Umvoti Works as well as a system, which will use water from the Tugela River to supply the reservoirs.