

water level of the Solly Bux Dam falling significantly. The point of extraction of water from the Solly Bux Dam is a floating structure, from which the best quality water is drawn for treatment and supply to reservoirs. However, due to the drought conditions that prevailed from July - November 2010, the high quality water in the Solly Bux Dam had been used, which meant that the low quality bottom water was being used.

The South African National Standard 241 (SANS241) specifies water quality in three groups, i.e. microbiological, chemical and aesthetic. Of these, microbiological is the most important as high levels of microbiological presence could cause water-borne diseases, such as cholera. The chemical group is the next most important as this includes long-term toxins. The least important from a health perspective is the aesthetic group, which manifests itself in taste, odour and visual which are most noticeable to consumers.

Exhaustive tests were conducted by Umgeni Water in Ixopo which confirmed that the water quality issue had related to aesthetic, and not microbiological or chemical. While the water did not appear pleasant, there was no health risk associated with drinking it. Umgeni Water and its customers take pride in the quality of water they supply and try to ensure at all times that consumers are equally pleased with the water they receive. It is unfortunate that the aesthetic quality of the water supplied to consumers in the period July - December 2010 had been compromised due to the elements of nature (inadequate rainfall).

As a result of good rainfall being recorded in Ixopo during recent weeks, the level of the Solly Bux Dam has begun rising again, resulting in better quality water being extracted, treated and supplied. To prevent the water quality being problematic to consumers again, investigations are being carried out by Umgeni Water to improve the processes at the water works. Umgeni Water and the Sisonke District Municipality continue to work well together to ensure that consumers are satisfied with the water they receive.

*Response from Umgeni Water*

## **Ixopo Potable Water Quality**

There are two sources of water extraction and treatment in Ixopo i.e. the Ixopo Water Works and Solly Bux Dam, both of which are owned and operated by Umgeni Water. The reticulation of potable water (supply to end users) is the responsibility of a Water Service Authority (municipality), while Umgeni Water, as a Water Service Provider, supplies potable water in bulk to municipalities..

The period July to November 2010 had been extremely dry which resulted in the

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