

Water crisis averted as heavy rains lash Umdoni

Let it rain

IN just three days of the first week of January, 100mm of rainfall has been recorded in the Umzimai catchment area.

The catchment area serves the Umzinto Dam and EJ Smith Dam and both dams are currently more than 104 per cent full and overflowing.

This comes after Ugu District Municipality and Umgeni Water imposed water conservation measures in October, and speedily commissioned the Park Rynie/Umzinto pipeline when the two dams reached critically low levels; EJ Smith Dam at 13.1 per cent and Umzinto at 22.7 per cent. Although the dams are currently full, Umgeni Water's corporate stakeholder manager, Shami Harichunder, said the commissioned pipeline will provide a permanent augmentation option for the Umzinto system to supplement existing local resources, more specifically during the drier winter months.

*Umzinto
recorded
114mm of rain
in four days"*

"Operating rules based on hydraulic analysis and modelling will be developed and used to optimize the use of the system in conjunction with the local resources (dams), that will at the end of the day provide a more assured supply to Umzinto and its surrounding supply areas.

"There are currently no plans for dredging, although this has been considered and suggested repeatedly. Preliminary investigations have determined that it is extremely costly and not economically viable considering the low yield of the small local catchments," said Harichunder. Rainfall recorded at Umzinto Water Works during December was 156.1mm compared to January's 114mm in four days. According to records from January 1 to January 6, the rainfall data is as follows: January 3 had 1mm, January 4 had 44mm, January 5 had 56mm and January 6 had 13.

