



## Bulk water supply scheme relief for Richmond

**THAMSANQA MAGUBANE**

FIFTY thousand people will benefit from the Richmond Bulk Water Supply Scheme that was launched yesterday.

The scheme, which cost about R200 million, will supply water to communities in the Richmond Municipality and to parts of the Msunduzi and Mkhambathini municipalities.

It will alleviate the pressure of water problems in Richmond where some residents do not have access to tap water and have to rely on water drawn from nearby dams.

It was launched at a time when the province is experiencing severe drought conditions.

This year's rainfall season has been recorded as the lowest in the last 10 years and the drought is described as the worst in 30 years.

The provincial Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional affairs (Cogta) recently imposed water restrictions on municipalities supplied by dams that have low water levels.

The Richmond scheme will draw water from Midmar Dam. It will have a



Msunduzi mayor Chris Ndlela, uMgungundlovu District mayor Yusuf Bhamjee, Richmond mayor Andrew Ragavaloo and Visvin Reddy of the Umgeni Water Board at the Richmond bulk water scheme launch.

**PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

pump engine near the France township on the Richmond Road, a water reservoir near Thornville that could hold about five million litres of water and has at least 32 km of water pipes.

Richmond mayor Andrew Ragavaloo, Msunduzi mayor Chris Ndlela and uMgungundlovu District mayor Yusuf Bhamjee described the project as a suc-

cess in service delivery and called for careful use of water.

"Richmond has faced water challenges in the past because of old infrastructure ... It is our dream to provide water to all the residents of Richmond," said Ragavaloo.

He said the public, especially children, should be educated about the

need to save water.

"We [politicians] need to start going to schools and addressing students about water. They need to know that water is a scarce and precious resource," he said.

Ndlela said Msunduzi residents should not be happy that no water restrictions have been imposed on them.

Residents in the Midlands have escaped water restrictions because the dams supplying them have high water levels.

The Springgrove Dam in Mooi River is 97% full.

"We should be happy that we are not included in the restrictions but there is no guarantee that we will not face heavy restrictions from this water shortage," Ndlela said.

He urged people to report water leaks quickly so they could be repaired speedily.

Bhamjee said it was also very important that people pay their water bill.

"This allows for more investment to be made into the infrastructure," he said.

• thamsanqam@witness.co.za