



Midmar Dam begins spilling again and Current Status of Water Resources in Umgeni Water's Operational Area



Midmar Dam has begun spilling after reaching capacity - and a little more - on Wednesday, 15th April 2020. The level of the dam is at 100, 08%, representing an increase of 0, 5% from a week ago. Improved water resources in Midmar Dam has been a result of water releases from upstream Mearns Weir and good rains in the catchments of Mearns Weir and Midmar Dam.

Spills from Midmar Dam will assist in boosting the level of downstream Albert Falls Dam, which has remained consistently at below 40% for almost three years despite the end of the drought. By Wednesday, 15th March 2020, the level of Albert Falls Dam began rising steadily and is currently at 37, 25% - up 0, 5% from the previous day. If spills from Midmar Dam continue, the level of Albert Falls – the largest dam in the Mgeni System – will increase unabated.

Albert Falls and Midmar are among five dams and a weir in the Mgeni System, the largest system in KwaZulu-Natal that provides for the water needs of an estimated six million consumers in the supply areas of eThekweni, Msunduzi, uMgungundlovu and Ugu. Other dams in this system are Spring Grove, Nagle and Inanda and the weir is Mearns.

The last time Midmar Dam spilled was in April 2019.

Water resources in the Mgeni System are currently in a healthy state at a collective 69, 5%. This means the amount of water available in the entire system is at an acceptable level and there is no risk of water shortages occurring in the short-term to the medium-term. The status of water resources in the Mgeni System will assist in ensuring security of supply as Government and municipalities accelerate provision of water tanks in informal settlements to try to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Improved water resources in the entire Mgeni System has been a result of good rains that were received in the upper and lower Mgeni System from 1st April 2020 to the present. The total amount of rainfall received in the upper Mgeni System during this period amounted to approximately 300 mm, which is close to the monthly average for the autumn months. In the same period, rainfall received in the lower Mgeni System amounted to approximately 115 mm.

On Wednesday, 15th March 2020, the level of Mearns Weir was at 100%; Spring Grove Dam at 70%; Midmar Dam at 100, 08%; Albert Falls Dam at 37, 25%; Nagle Dam at 95% and Inanda Dam at 86%.

Good rains were also recorded in the South Coast towns of Amanzimtoti, Umzinto and Mtwalume and at Nungwane Dam, Umzinto Dam and EJ Smith Dam from 1st April 2020 to the present. Total rainfall recorded in this period amounted to approximately 220 mm, which is in line with the monthly average for the autumn months.

Rainfall received has assisted in stabilising the levels of Umzinto, Nungwane and EJ Smith dams, all of which continue to remain full to capacity. Mhlabatshane Dam, in inland Ugu, is at 55%. This means there is sufficient water available to meet the full demand of Ugu District Municipality well into the autumn and winter months and beyond, if no major spikes in demand occur.

In the north of Durban, 45 mm rainfall was received at Hazelmere Dam from 1st April 2020. This has stabilised Hazelmere Dam at 57%, thereby underpinning security of water supply for at least another 12 months based on current demand by eThekweni Metro and iLembe District Municipality. This level is based on the new expanded capacity of Hazelmere Dam, where the wall has been raised to increase storage. iMvutshane Dam in Maphumulo is at 87%, also reflecting water adequacy.

In Ixopo, rainfall of approximately 80 mm was received in the past two weeks, resulting in the town's Home Farm Dam reaching a healthy 70% while in the North West Region, the three dams there – Spioenkop, Woodstock and Wagendrift – are all full to capacity or close to full.

