

Shaft Pump failure at Durban Heights Water Works

Statement from the Chairperson of the Board of Umgeni Water, Ms Ziphozethu Gabsie Mathenjwa

Thursday, 18th November 2021

As stakeholders are aware by now, an emergency shaft pump failed at Umgeni Water's Durban Heights Water Works on Thursday, 11th November 2021, causing inadequate volumes of raw water reaching the plant for treatment and supply to eThekweni Water and Sanitation.

This situation still prevails, but everything possible is being done by Umgeni Water in conjunction with eThekweni Water and Sanitation to stabilise systems within eThekweni's networks and at the Durban Heights Water Works. Some success has been achieved through prevention of collapse of systems, but many challenges still remain and staff of Umgeni Water and eThekweni Water and Sanitation are working around the clock to find short-term solutions to them.

Information made available to Umgeni Water shows that at least 12 areas in the north, south and central Durban continue to be affected (the full list of these areas has been published in various media platforms of eThekweni Metro and Umgeni Water).

On behalf of the Board of Umgeni Water, I want to offer our profound apologies to consumers in the affected areas for the inconvenience that has been caused by intermittent water supply. I want to assure them, at the same time, that staff of eThekweni Water and Sanitation and Umgeni Water are working hard at developing further strategies aimed at bringing relief to affected consumers.

Among major milestones that have been achieved is the appointment of a contractor to undertake the work required to remove the shaft pump – which is approximately 200 metres below surface - disassemble, refurbish and re-install it. This is time-consuming and complex work, but everything possible will be done to complete it before the allocated time. There are other initiatives that will be implemented in the short-term to augment water supply to the Durban Heights plant. These include repairing Nagle Aqueduct 4 and bringing it back to functionality and completing outstanding work on Reservoir 4 at the Durban Heights Water Works in order to recommission it.

Umgeni Water personnel have begun a process of providing information through various platforms, including radio, newspapers and social media, on a regular basis as progress is made with the pump refurbishment project. The Board of Umgeni Water will also be communicating with stakeholders in the days ahead.

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