

Water deficit at Durban Heights Water Works comes to end Sunday, 19th December 2021

Joint Statement by Umgeni Water and eThekweni Water and Sanitation

This afternoon (Sunday, 19th December 2021) full production of potable water was restored at Durban Heights Water Works following commissioning of Aqueduct 4, which transfers water from Nagle Dam to this plant for treatment and supply to eThekweni Water and Sanitation.

Restoration of full production will enable Umgeni Water to provide additional potable water to eThekweni Water and Sanitation.

Recharging of Aqueduct 4 (slow and measured releases of water to prepare the infrastructure for normal functionality) began at 07h00 on Sunday after releases from Nagle Dam. By 14h00, the amount of water required to eradicate the day's shortfall of 50 megalitres had reached Durban Heights Water Works for treatment and transfer to Reservoir 2. Transfer of water from Nagle Dam to Durban Heights Water Works will continue.

This shortfall in raw water had led to similar shortfall in supply of potable water to eThekweni Water and Sanitation, resulting in eThekweni Water and Sanitation's inability to meet full supply to approximately 30 areas and reservoirs in south, north, central and inner west regions of Durban. The cause of reduced supply of raw water was failure of Shaft Pump 1 at Durban Heights Water Works on 11th December 2021.

Work was undertaken concurrently on two projects to restore raw water supply to the required and pre-11th November 2021 volumes. They are refurbishment of Shaft Pump 1 and repairs to Aqueduct 4, which was taken out of use after a leak was detected in the vicinity of Clermont in Durban. Shaft Pump 1 was refurbished and re-installed, with much of its work having to be done 200 metres underground. Work on Aqueduct 4 involved repair to its inner and external casing. Both projects were completed by the timeline determined by the contractors, which is 19th December 2021.

On Sunday the final stages of commissioning of this shaft pump were being undertaken. When its commissioning is successfully completed, raw water resources from Inanda Dam will be further augmented. Staff of Umgeni Water worked the entire weekend to oversee completion of the final phases of work on both projects. This included monitoring releases from Nagle Dam for Aqueduct 4.

In the next few days close observation of releases from Nagle Dam and conveyance through Aqueduct 4 will occur. A critical requirement is that the level of Reservoir 2 will have to remain consistently at 4 metres and above to ensure adequate head pressure that will make it possible to supply eThekweni Water and Sanitation's reservoirs in outlying areas. On Sunday afternoon head pressure began building as a result of excellent co-operation from eThekweni Water and Sanitation, which continues to effectively manage its distribution systems. Once it is pronounced that Reservoir 2 is able to maintain a level of 4 metres or more, adequate supply from Durban Heights Water Works would be sustainable. In the meantime, staff of Umgeni Water and eThekweni Water and Sanitation will continue to collaborate in management and distribution of water resources.

Compiled by the Stakeholder Management Unit, Umgeni Water

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