

PARTIAL POTABLE WATER PRODUCTION RE-INSTATED AT HAZELMERE WATER TREATMENT PLANT



Issued by the Corporate Stakeholder Management Unit, Office of the Chief Executive Umgeni Water
Thursday, 14 April 2022

Restoration of potable water production at the Hazelmere Water Treatment Plant in the north of Durban has begun and a stepped approach is being adopted to get to pull production by tomorrow, Friday, 15 April 2022.

At noon on Thursday, 14 April 2022, the plant was producing 25 megalitres – approximately one-third its daily output – and it is being distributed to eThekweni Metro, iLembe District Municipality and Siza Water on a rotational basis. This means that potable water available is being supplied to the three customers in intervals of five hours, in this way ensuring some water is provided to consumers served by them.

On Wednesday, 13 April 2022, production was temporarily halted due to a large increase in suspended solids/sediment from the Hazelmere Dam, from where the Hazelmere Water Treatment Plant draws its water. The plant is not designed to cope with high-suspended solids that are 20 times greater than its design capacity. Operating the plant under these conditions would have resulted in poor water quality, which would not be compliant with SANS 241:2015 and would have represented a potential risk to public health.

Therefore, Umgeni Water took a decision to stop production until the raw water quality improved. In response to the situation, staff of Umgeni Water began work immediately on desludging the pulsator clarifiers and flushing of process units.

The heavy downpours of 8 April 2022 to 11 April 2022 in the catchments of Hazelmere Dam contributed to poor water quality, as the run-off brought with it extremely high sediment load and foreign materials. Inflows into Hazelmere Dam have slowed over the past 48 hours.

The suspended solids have now decreased to manageable limits. Umgeni Water engineers have restarted the plant and will ramp up production. The programme of production will involve incremental output of five (5) megalitres every hour. If all goes according to plan, full production will be reached by tomorrow. This is dependent on turbidity decreasing significantly and on the quality of final water. Once full production is achieved and the levels of storage reservoirs improve, Umgeni Water will be able to increase supply to its customers, ultimately meeting full demands. Consumers are reminded that it takes several hours for reticulation systems to be restored to full functionality.