



MEDIA RELEASE

Embargo: Immediate
DATE: 27 February 2018

Enough water for Greater Knysna tourists

Speaking of the water security of Greater Knysna, Eleanore Bouw-Spies, Knysna Executive Mayor said that, while the Municipality has moderate water restrictions in place, residents and visitors of this pristine area will not find themselves without water.

“Knysna has not escaped the protracted drought levels, and we applaud the residents for being water wise. As a result, water storage has improved marginally and the greater Knysna is not facing an imminent Day Zero, Visitors to the area need not fear that they will not have adequate water. The municipality has embarked on short-term measures to increase water extraction, ground and rain water harvesting, repairs to desalination plants and leak reduction programme.

There is no doubt that we must continue to be water wise, given that average rainfall in Greater Knysna has dropped dramatically, from an historical average of 70mm per month to an average of 15mm in the past year. Thus we must remain mindful that water is a valuable and scarce resource across the world, and therefore it is of paramount importance that all start to embrace the value of this scarce commodity,” she said.

As a result, the municipality has to develop a plan for water resilience in the long term. Knysna Municipal Manager, Kam Chetty concurred with Bouw-Spies with regard to water availability of Greater Knysna. “Much of the short-term initiatives are beginning to yield positive results, albeit marginal at this stage. At this stage we have sufficient water to support the tourism sector and domestic consumption, and we need to manage this valuable resource wisely and aggressively. At the same time it is critical that Knysna adapts as quickly as possible to ensure water resilience going forward. Adapting rapidly to climate change will strengthen our tourism position and become our major differentiator, leaving our area attractive to visitors who are essential to our economy,” said Chetty.

The municipality has embarked on numerous projects at this stage which includes:

- Increasing our ability to extract and store water from the Knysna River through a pipeline project in the Charlesford Water Scheme;
- Leak repairs;
- Installing water meters to manage demand;
- Extraction of ground water through additional bore holes;
- New sources such as the Bongani Springs;
- Repairs to the RO and Desalination Plants; and
- Extracting water from the quarry.

- In addition the municipality is in the planning phases of developing infrastructure renewal projects and other large capital projects.

Chetty explained that the Moderate Restriction in the Greater Knysna acknowledges the stress on the water system, and limits households to 20 000 litres of water per month. Other measures include restriction on watering gardens, the washing of cars/boats, and the water us in artificial water features.”

Bouw-Spies thanked Greater Knysna residents for the manner in which they have embraced water saving measures during the current drought. “I thank each and every one who is taking this drought seriously and making water conservation part of their daily lives. This reduction by the majority of our tourism establishments has ensured that we do not have to turn any of our much-needed visitors away.

“Knysna welcomes tourists, and we are definitely open for Business and Leisure, Residents of Knysna have shown that being both water wise and growing tourism is possible,” she concluded.

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