



MEDIA RELEASE

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Greater Knysna enters Level 3 Water Restrictions

As Greater Knysna's rivers face almost no flow and the Akkerkloof dam reaches 39 per cent the Knysna Municipality has announced that Level 3 Water Restrictions with immediate effect.

"Greater Knysna has not had decent rains for months now resulting in all our rivers from which we extract our water flow being almost nonexistent, we have no option but to place our Municipal area on Level 3 water restrictions," said Knysna Acting Municipal Manager, Johnny Douglas.

Currently the Knysna, Gouna, Karatara, Homtini and Goukamma Rivers' water flow are experiencing extremely low flow.

The new Level 3 Water Restrictions include all previous restrictions and dictate that:
Municipal potable water for human consumption only
Absolutely no watering of gardens (not even with a bucket)
No washing of vehicles and/or boats
All residents and businesses to restrict their usage to 20 Kl/month
Residents utilizing more than the 20 Kl/month will be identified and notified to install water restrictive devices
Punitive tariff (75 per cent additional) will be added for usage above the 20 Kl/month

"We are currently faced with extremely high water usage within the area. This situation can be ascribed to the many premises within Greater Knysna being unmetered, the dry conditions that are causing pipe breaks within our water system as the dry soil heaves, fracturing the water pipe in the process. The daily usage of our residents and businesses could further be reduced to assist with this crisis," added Douglas.

To help mitigate the serious water shortage in Greater Knysna the Knysna Municipality is in the application process in terms of section 55 of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002) to declare Knysna Municipal area as a local disaster area.

The area has been under water restrictions since the drought in 2009, during which time the two desalination plants (Sedgefield and Knysna) were constructed to alleviate the dire situation at the time.

Knysna's abstraction rights from the Knysna River is currently 300 l/second, but due to the low level of this river only around 100l/second can be abstracted. "This morning several reports of caveating (sucking air) water pumps were received due the low levels of Greater Knysna rivers," Douglas said.

During an emergency meeting between the Knysna Municipality, Provincial Department of Local Government and Treasury as well as the Eden District Municipality to discuss the current water emergency, several measures were discussed to help mitigate the water shortage currently being experienced within Greater Knysna.

"The Provincial Department of Local Government through its Disaster Management Centre, undertook to take our current high-risk water situation to the Provincial cabinet to declare Greater Knysna as a Disaster Area. The various departments and Eden District Municipality have undertaken to offer as much support as possible to ensure that Greater Knysna does not reach Level 4 restrictions. This level will result in the closing of water valves to be opened through a roaming area 3 hour based timetable.(water shedding) In essence forcing us to implement water outages!"

In closing Douglas thanked all Greater Knysna residents and businesses for their water saving endeavors and asked that they join the Knysna Municipality in becoming the area in the Western Cape that utilizes the least water per head.

"I put the challenge to each one of our community members. Let's show the world that we can stand as one and save our precious commodity, water," concluded Douglas.

ENDS

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