



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 31 May 2016

EMBARGO: Immediate

Marginal improvement in Knysna's water consumption

KNYSNA – SINCE Knysna Municipality issued an urgent appeal to its residents in March to reduce water consumption due to dwindling reserves brought on by the national drought, the situation has seen marginal improvement.

According to reports at the beginning of March, Knysna only had enough water for around 23 days at the then consumption rate of 12,8 megalitres per day. This has since improved to just over 30 days – Knysna's main reserve, the Akkerkloof Dam, is currently at 35,7% capacity, recovering slightly from its lowest level of 33%.

Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans says: "Although we have seen a positive downward shift in water consumption in the greater Knysna area, with a small increase in our available reserves, the situation remains on a knife's edge. I therefor reiterate my appeal for residents to further curb consumption so we can replenish our reserves during the wet winter season."

The target consumption rate set by the municipality is eight megalitres per day. Week-on-week, the closest Knysna has come to this target was at the beginning of May when consumption stood at 10,66 megalitres. This is much lower than the highest consumption rate of 13,69 megalitres at the beginning of April.

Knysna's latest consumption figure for the last week of May was 11,63 megalitres which is still 45% more than the target.

The situation in Sedgefield is a lot better, with the lowest rate of 1,84 megalitres per day recorded in mid-April coming in under the target of 1,9 megalitres. Sedgefield's highest figure of 2,56 megalitres was, like Knysna, recorded at the beginning of April.

The latest figure for Sedgefield stands at 1,99 megalitres, which is only 5% above target.

During her last State of the Town address on 31 May, Mayor Wolmarans stressed the urgent need to address the water security of Knysna: "The budget for the next financial year continues to reflect the strategies and priorities of the town, chief among them the need to address our dire water security issues."

"When [our plans to improve our water system] are complete, Knysna should reach the desired six-month reserve storage required by national guidelines. It will also help to off-set the increase in demand due to the expansion of housing."

Knysna Municipality will continue with its water awareness drive as well as its clampdown on wasteful users.

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