



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

Eastern Basin Acid Mine Drainage Plant Launched

17 February 2017

The Department of Water and Sanitation together with the Trans Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA) as the implementing agent today Friday, 17 February 2017, launched the Acid Mine Drainage, Eastern Basin Treatment Plant in Springs.

The plant, which is the largest of its kind in the world, pumps approximately 110 mega litres of water per day in an effort to mitigate against the pollution of underground water sources.

Having inherited more than a century's impact of Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) due to prolific mining in the Witwatersrand gold fields, the past six years bears testimony to Government's intensive efforts in making strides to mitigate AMD and in doing so, ensuring the protection of our limited water resources.

The plant, which is the largest of its kind in the world, is part of the short-term solution of the Witwatersrand Goldfields that is aimed at preventing decant in the Western Basin and breaching of the Environmental Critical Level (ECL) in the Central and Eastern Basins.

Speaking at the launch, Minister of Water and Sanitation Ms Nomvula Mokonyane said: "Over the last six years, working through TCTA, we have successfully initiated and implemented successful short-term interventions in the three basins, which have paved the way for the long-term solutions we are now launching and implementing."

"In addition to this "TCTA will further pursue the objective of building broad-based capacity in the sector. This is in line with the theme of pursuing Radical Socio-Economic Transformation as outlined by President Zuma in the State of the Nation Address," said Minister Mokonyane.

"Construction of a new High Density Sludge plant in the Eastern Basin is complete and the commissioning of the plant has already commenced and was declared operational on 16 September 2016, said the Minister.

The short and long-term solutions to AMD are expected to cost R10-12bn which will be funded by the state working with the mining-sector and water users.

Mokonyane said "the treatment of Acid Mine water is part of government's plan to secure the water future of Gauteng for the next 30 years. These solutions include the construction and completion of the Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project." added Minister Mokonyane.

Through this intervention, government has been able to prevent an environmental catastrophe, protect underground water resources, contribute to socio-economic development and build State capacity to deal with AMD.

In her closing remarks Minister Mokonyane said: "We should appreciate the knowledge that comes with those who have been in the sector but most importantly the potential that we see, and ours is to make sure we give the people of South Africa the ability to deal with water security as well as water challenges."



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Issued by the Department of Water and Sanitation and the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority

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