



**KWAZULU-NATAL  
LEGISLATURE**  
*AN ACTIVIST PEOPLE-CENTRED LEGISLATURE*

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Mr Cyril Ramaphosa

24 January 2024

President

South Africa

Dear Mr. President

**ETHEKWINI WATER CRISIS: URGENT INTERVENTION NEEDED**

I write to you in my capacity as the leader of the DA in KwaZulu-Natal.

I do so to bring to your attention what has become a dire human rights crisis in the EThekwini municipality

Having exhausted all internal processes it has become clear that this municipality cannot self-correct anymore. As I write this letter there are areas, especially in the north, such as Parkgate, Rietriver, Ottawa Phoenix, Verulam, Tongaat, Durban North, Umhlanga, Mt Edgecombe, Cornubia, Blackburn, Broadlands, Trenance Park, Kindelwood uMzinyathi in ward 3, Engonyameni, and others across eThekwini that have not had water for weeks, months or years. I will highlight below what the DA have identified as the problem.

Call centres are completely dysfunctional, Unread metres, some for years resulting in unaffordable inflated bills, 57% water loss resulting in over 2 billion revenue loss per annum, unspent grants, reduced revenue collection, critically low spending on infrastructure maintenance and upgrade, as well as allowing huge developments without planning for the additional consumption required.

These and other factors have resulted in either daily water shedding or extended outages. The water tanker service has completely collapsed which means when there are these prolonged water outages some communities cannot access water. This results in a growing health risk, particularly in those areas that cannot afford JOJO tanks or hop in a car to buy water.



The audit committee has also flagged the lack of a concrete plan to remedy the situation as of serious concern.

There is a serious shortage of staff to attend to faults after hours and on weekends - both internal staff and contractors. Furthermore, there is a serious lack of communication from the municipality to make the public aware of what the challenges are, and what is being done to resolve this crisis.

All the above affect millions of people daily. Hospitals, Schools clinics, businesses, retail, Hospitality, Frail care centres, Religious, RDP, Informal and formal residential areas are in urgent need of your intervention.

It is for that reason, on behalf of the DA eThekweni caucus and millions of affected Stakeholders of eThekweni, I request your urgent intervention to this crisis. EThekweni municipality refuses to acknowledge the crises or communicate with the public, thereby demonstrating that the City is simply incapable of resolving this crisis. It is now necessary for you Mr President to personally intervene.

We are asking that you deploy the Hon. Minister of Water, MR Mchunu together with his D.G as well as specialist engineers and other critical skills to EThekweni in an effort to sort out this crisis.

Given the rising tension in the communities, and ongoing daily protest, there is a major concern that rolling mas action will further negatively impact on the current existing fragile EThekweni infrastructure and investor confidence.

We look forward to your very urgent response by return

Yours sincerely

**FRANCOIS RODGERS, MPL**  
**DA LEADER: KZN.**