



**EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE**  
Member of the Provincial Legislature

**Retief Odendaal, MPL**  
(Democratic Alliance Spokesperson on COGTA)



Provincial Legislature  
Private Bag x0051 or  
Independence Ave  
Bhisho, 5605

Tel: -  
Fax: -  
Cell: 082-462 0668  
e-mail: [retiefodendaal@telkom.sa.net](mailto:retiefodendaal@telkom.sa.net)

21 November 2024

**To: Boleka Kama**  
**Department of Water and Sanitation**  
**Per Email: [KamaB@dws.gov.za](mailto:KamaB@dws.gov.za)**

**And To: Portia Makhanya**  
**Department of Water and Sanitation**  
**Per Email: [MakhanyaP@dws.gov.za](mailto:MakhanyaP@dws.gov.za)**

Good Day

---

**RE: DETERMINATION OF RESTRICTIONS IN THE NEW WATER YEAR ALGOA WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM**

---

The aforementioned matter has reference.

I am well aware that the department is currently in the process of assessing the current state of the Algoa Water Supply System (AWSS) with the aim of considering new allocations and/or possible restrictions in respect of the new water year for our region.

Whilst I am cognizant of the fact that your decisions regarding allocations and/or the imposition/relaxation of restrictions are based on various factors which *inter alia* includes the current state of local dams as well as the future rainfall/drought model forecasts, I thought it well to once again sensitize you to the plight of the residents of Nelson Mandela Metro (NMB).

Nelson Mandela Bay residents have been enduring water restrictions and the imposition of punitive water tariffs for the better part of 8 years already. Unfortunately, notwithstanding your extensive relaxation of water restrictions last year on the Kouga and Loerie Dam

Scheme in the Kouga River, the Churchill and Impofu Dams in the Kromme River as well as the Groendal Dam in the Kwazungu River, the local authority has refused to relax the punitive water tariffs and restrictions imposed on residents.

Whilst the prerogative to relax water restrictions and the imposition of punitive tariffs lies solely with NMB Council, it is important that the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) takes notes of the significant risk that exists by Council not following suit in the relaxation of water restrictions after the extended drought was broken.

It is common knowledge that Nelson Mandela Bay region goes into fairly regular cyclical droughts. Key to managing these droughts is the buy-in of the public to reduce consumption behaviour. There is however an increasing public outcry over the continued imposition of punitive water tariffs whilst the current status of dams in the AWSS is looking exceptionally well, with at least 3 of the dams (Kouga, Groendal and Churchill) having overflowed at least twice in the last year.

One of the key risks in the municipality refusing to relax water restrictions/punitive water tariffs after the drought has essentially been broken, is that it erodes the trust relationship between residents and the municipality in respect of all drought related matters.

Thus, it may be difficult in getting buy-in from residents to adjust consumption habits in future should we once again find ourselves in a drought cycle within the region. We have seen that our residents have already suffered increasing "drought fatigue" over the last couple of years and in my opinion, it has just gotten worse after two consecutive good rainfall seasons.

It is against this backdrop that I call upon you to take the aforementioned into consideration and to either liaise with the municipality on your possible concerns about same or in the alternative, to make public pronouncements on what would the NMB residents could reasonably expect from its Water Services Authority in relation to restrictions. Without involving yourselves in the affairs of a local authority you can also at the very least make comments regarding the need and/or desirability of continued water restrictions and /or punitive tariffs in NMB.

I trust you find the above correspondence favourable. It is indeed regrettable that this correspondence had to be addressed to you but sadly we seem to have exhausted the available avenues in the NMB administration in relation to same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Retief Odendaal', written in a cursive style.

**Retief Odendaal, MPL**

Shadow MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs