

DPW and Rand Water recruit 32 Water Process Controllers to look into water-related challenges

By Thokozani Ngema

The National Department of Public Works (DPW) has hired 32 water process controllers to improve the operations and maintenance of water and waste-water treatment plants and other related sanitation infrastructure facilities of four major client government departments.

The workforce – nine males and 23 females – will also assist to boost the blue and green drop compliance scores.

The appointment of these Class III and IV Process Controllers will go a long way in resolving the water quality challenges that DPW currently faces.

The water care technicians are university graduates with qualifications in B Tech degrees in Water Care Technology and others have BSc degrees in Water and Sanitation. Some are candidate professional scientists.

In June they completed a three-year practical training – the National Treasury Internship Programme - from the Rand Water Academy.

They are now based in several regional offices of DPW throughout the country. They are responsible for bulk and water distribution infrastructure, water treatment, waste water collection and treatment.

They service plants that belong to the Department of Correctional Services, the South African Police Services, the South African National Defence Force and the Border Management Agency.

In the past few years, the Department of Water and Sanitation issued several notices to the DPW in terms of Section 19 (1&2) of the National Water Act, 1998 (No. 36 of 1998) due to non-compliance.

DPW has an extended responsibility to provide Waste Water Treatment and Management services on the facilities not connected to municipality infrastructure. Such facilities are mainly in prisons, border posts, police stations and military bases.

Water Specialist Mpafane Deyi, who is based in DPW's Head Office, welcomed the employment of the Water Care technicians.

“This is the first step towards building and developing internal technical capacity within the Water Management Unit. Eventually we will have our own in-house capacity just like other water service authorities like municipalities.”