

Schools' taps turned off

PUPILS HAVE BEEN ASKED TO BRING FIVE LITRES OF GREY WATER ONCE A WEEK

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SOME schools have turned off their taps and have now asked pupils to bring five litres of grey water once a week to their schools to flush the toilets.

These are some of the measures taken by various parties in the Western Cape in an effort to preserve water amid the looming crisis of Day Zero in April.

A large number of crèches, primary and senior schools in the city have requested parents to allow their children to bring five litres of grey water once a week as the toilet taps had already been turned off.

One of the parents, Chantal Abrahams, said: "I have a child at Zwaan-swyk High School in Retreat who has to take five litres of grey water once a week to school.

"A meeting at the school last week heard the principal highlight the water crisis. The taps in the toilets have been turned off and the water that the school is requesting is for toilet use."

Another mother of a child at a crèche, Lee-Ann Bothma, said: "My child's crèche is requesting five litres of water once a week.

"I don't have a problem supplying the water because I understand that there is a shortage but I am having difficulty in finding water to buy. All stores have been sold out for more than a week.

"This water situation is becoming expensive because we pay water bills and now we need to buy water for our

homes and school and I have more than one child who needs water for their school."

Western Cape Premier Helen Zille this week announced plans to support schools in the event of Day Zero.

The provincial government is finalising plans to keep schools open in areas most affected by the crippling drought.

Zille unveiled plans to principals of schools dependent on the Western Cape water supply system.

"Cape Town can still avoid Day Zero if all residents use less than 50 litres of water per person per day.

"This must be the first priority. However, the provincial government must be ready to augment water supplies to schools if consumption targets are not met and our dam levels reach 13.5% before the winter rains.

"At this point the city intends to turn off water to most areas in the metro in order to manage and preserve the remaining supply. Our job is to make sure schools remain open and operational, with an adequate alternative water supply to do so."

Officials in the Western Cape education department and the Department of Transport and Public Works have surveyed the needs of schools extensively over the past six months.

The focus of the investigation has been to ensure water security at schools and to ensure water for hygiene, fire security and drinking water.

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