

# Public works has R260m set aside, but is behind in repairing courts

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The department of public works & infrastructure has set aside more than R260m for the repairs and refurbishment of court buildings across the country.

Addressing the media in Tshwane on Tuesday, public works minister Patricia de Lille said the total budget for repairs and refurbishment of court buildings was R260m, of which R229m had been allocated for repairing and refurbishing 105

courts. "But what worries me is that the department has only spent R24m in the first quarter of this year, just around 10%, when the figure should be at more than 25%. We must work harder and faster because the lives of our citizens are at stake,"

said De Lille. She said she had received complaints across the country about the poor state of court buildings.

"In some cases lifts and air-conditioners are not working. In Pinetown [west of Durban], there are reports that rats are

eating the lunch and snakes are eating the rats. Coupled with this, there's a persistent stench of sewage," De Lille said.

She said these conditions had prompted court staff, including prosecutors and magistrates, to threaten strike action.