



Publication: LadysmithHerald - Main
Title: KZN CoGTA declares war on water leaks
Publish date: 04 Jun 2024
Page: 3

Reach: 32000
AVE: R 21063.50
Author: Staff Reporter

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KZN CoGTA declares war on water leaks

In response to the escalating water wastage due to leaking pipes, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) has launched their "War on Leaks" programme aimed at addressing the challenge, particularly in townships.

The programme, which has created 350 job opportunities for artisans through the Expanded Public Works Programme, was launched by CoGAT MEC, Bongiwe Sithole-Moloi. The department signed a memorandum of understanding with municipalities to receive support in addressing water leaks in communities, with the 350 participants placed across five municipalities and will begin working this month, for a period of 12 months.

The municipalities include eThekweni Metro, Ilembe District, uThukela District, uMzinyathi District, and Ugu District. Artisans and water agents have been allocated to these municipalities and will work closely with municipalities to fix leaking pipes.

The artisans will focus primarily on townships such as Ezakheni in Ladysmith and Sibongile in Dundee. During the launch, MEC Sithole-Moloi, along with Ilembe District Mayor, Thobani Shandu, handed over tools of the trade, including toolboxes

and personal protective equipment (PEEs) to the participants.

Addressing the community, MEC Sithole-Moloi stated that implementing the programme was one of the interventions in response to the prevalent water crisis and aims to assist municipalities in reducing water wastage, which amounts to billions of rands in the province. "We started with five municipalities that need urgent intervention to reduce water wastage. However, we will closely monitor the progress and extend the programme to other areas as our budget allows. We are also pleased to have provided employment opportunities for skilled artisans.

"We have no doubt that this programme will improve water provision and help municipalities reduce water wastage. Municipalities will assist in detecting leaking pipes and assign the artisans to fix them. We have provided the necessary tools and uniforms to ensure they are well-equipped. We hope this programme will continue and be rolled out to other municipalities until the issue of water leaks is resolved," she said.

MEC Sithole-Moloi concluded by encouraging communities to support this programme by reporting water leaks and refraining from illegal connections.