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For over two years, patients at the Louis Trichardt Clinic have had to use buckets to flush toilets because of a water shortage affecting the entire government complex, which houses several departments. Photo: Thembi Siaga.

Louis Trichardt clinic patients use buckets as water runs dry

BY THEMBI SIAGA

For more than two years, patients at the Louis Trichardt Clinic have had to make do without running water. The shortage affects the entire government building housing the clinic, including the Departments of Social

Development, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and the Louis Trichardt Magistrate's Court.

The clinic serves dozens of patients daily from the town and nearby areas, such as Tshikota.

Sixty-year-old Jonas Erasmus is one of many who rely

on the clinic. "The problem started two years ago," he said. "The clinic is clean, but there's no water. It's a big problem. We have to travel and pay R3 to use public toilets. I come here every month for my heart condition, and nothing has changed."

The Public Servants Association (PSA) has condemned the water shortage as a health hazard and a breach of occupational safety regulations. The Vhembe District Municipality (VDM) initially supplied water tankers, but the stop-gap measure has long since failed.

Without running water, staff and patients use buckets to flush toilets. An anonymous worker said many people queuing at the Department of Labour for UIF faced the same problem.

"There's no water at our offices. VDM won't send a tanker. The only water point is at the old police station, but it only serves the cells and kitchen. Even the admin offices there don't have water. Our building can't support tanks, and there's no space for them either," she said.

While most of the town's water supply

was restored some time ago, the government building remains without water. Neil Shikwambana, spokesperson for the Limpopo Department of Health, said the building was owned by the Department of Public Works, and the Departments of Health, Home Affairs, and Justice were only tenants.

"The entire building does not have water. Those who do receive water do so through special arrangements with VDM, which delivers it to them," he said.

Lawrence Muvhango, Limpopo organiser for the PSA, said the union had become

aware of the issue only after the town had already been experiencing a water crisis. "VDM promised to provide water tankers as a temporary solution," he said. "But even after water was restored to the rest of town, this building has remained without running water for years."

He added that staff and the public shared buckets to flush toilets. "At the clinic, the same bucket is shared. It's a serious health risk," he said.

Muvhango said the departments and the VDM were blaming each other, with no clear plan to resolve the issue.

"PSA has asked the De-

partment of Employment and Labour to intervene as this violates occupational health and safety laws. If nothing is done within 60 days, we'll escalate the matter to the Office of the Premier and the Minister of Water and Sanitation," he said.

Municipal spokesperson Moses Shibambu said the issue, affecting the building and parts of the CBD, would not be resolved until three new boreholes — at the caravan park, the tree park, and President Steyn Street — were operational. "According to the contractor, the boreholes might be completed by Thursday, 25 September," he said.



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Viewing & Registration date:
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Macadamia leader targets Asian and European markets as US tariffs bite

AGRICULTURAL NEWS

Green Farms Nut Company, one of South Africa's largest macadamia processors, has outlined its response to the recently imposed 30% tariff on South African macadamia kernel exports to the United States. The company is adapting swiftly, leveraging its international supply base and commercial partnerships to redirect volumes and strengthen its presence in key markets across Asia and Europe.

"While the U.S. has historically been a core market, the fundamentals of global demand haven't changed," said Alex Whyte, executive at Green Farms Nut Company in a press release.



"Macadamias remain a sought-after product, and we're already seeing solid traction in other regions where quality and consistency are valued," Whyte added.

Through its international marketing arm,

Green & Gold Macadamias, the company said it was actively growing its market share in Asia and Europe. Longstanding supply partnerships with producers in Australia, Brazil, and East Africa enable Green Farms to respond nimbly to changing market conditions without compromising product quality or customer service.

"Markets like Japan, Germany, and the Netherlands are showing strong appetite for kernel," Whyte noted. "By drawing on our glob-