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# AUTOPSIES HALTED AT CITY MORTUARY



## Sewage chaos disrupts justice at magistrate's court

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COURT cases from the Kimberley and Galeshewe magistrate's courts had to be relocated this week after raw sewage overflowed from toilets near the holding cells at the Kimberley Magistrate's Court.

The Galeshewe Magistrate's Court has been operating from the Kimberley Magistrate's Court since January 2024 after a prohibition notice was issued by the labour inspectorate.

Court proceedings started late on June 2 after accused persons awaiting trial could not be transported from correctional facilities because parts of the

Kimberley Magistrate's Court building were flooded.

Sewage was seen dripping down the walls of an adjacent office, while some toilet areas are covered with faeces.

Court officials complained that they had been unable to work due to the stench from blocked drains, which they said had persisted since the beginning of the year.

Many of the toilets intended for use by members of the public were also reportedly blocked or out of order.

A worker was seen cleaning and unblocking the basement area where the toilets are situated on Wednesday, June 3.

Contract workers further claimed that

they were required to clean sewage without adequate personal protective equipment (PPE).

The congested court rolls of the Kimberley and Galeshewe magistrate's courts were heard in the Northern Cape High Court on June 3, as accused persons had to make their first appearances within the prescribed 48-hour period.

The Galeshewe Magistrate's Court has been closed since 2023 after the Department of Employment and Labour issued a prohibition notice warning that the building was at risk due to structural instability and defects.

It was noted that peeling and spalling

concrete from walls, beams and columns could fall onto people, causing serious injuries or fatalities, while also posing a risk to vehicles parked adjacent to the building.

Cracks in several beams were found to be inadequate to carry the roof load, while cracking was observed throughout the building.

To date, no repairs or refurbishment work has been carried out at the facility.

The national Department of Public Works and Infrastructure and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development had not responded to media enquiries by the time of publication.