

**MINISTER**

**HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, WATER AND SANITATION**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: 2276**

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**Mrs M R Mohlala (EFF) to ask the Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation:**

What (a) total number of wastewater treatment plants are in a serious state of decay in the Republic, (b) measures has she put in place to refurbish and maintain the specified plants and (c) impact will there be if she fails to refurbish and maintain the plants? NW2850E

**REPLY:**

(a) The total number of Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) that are in a state of decay in the Republic are 265

(b) Maintenance and refurbishment of Waste Water Treatment Works is the primary responsibility of the Water Service Authorities (WSAs), i.e. municipalities. However, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) works together with the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) to ensure that municipalities receive the necessary support and grant funding to refurbish and maintain their assets. Water Service Authorities, through their Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) allocation for water and sanitation, have allocated funding for the refurbishment of some of WWTW.

The Department also funds certain refurbishment and upgrading projects that meet the criteria of the different funding programmes such as Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) and Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG). Some of the specified plants have been included in these programs depending on availability of funds availed to the Regions. The intended outcome is to improve the performance of the plants which will, in turn, improve the quality of effluent discharged into the water resources.

Further, the DWS conducts regular inspections and requires local authorities to develop Operation and Maintenance plans as a mandatory activity. These plans must provide system operators in the municipalities with comprehensive guidelines, procedures, and the necessary technical references to efficiently operate wastewater plants. Local authorities are required to amend the plans whenever there is a change in the treatment works design, construction, operations or maintenance which substantially changes the treatment works operations and maintenance procedures.

(c) Non-functional Waste Water Treatment Plants leads to the pollution of water resources. Pollution contributes to the deterioration of water quality which impacts on the sustainability of the ecosystems in the water resources. Poor water quality increases water treatment costs. Pollution of water resources also poses a health risk to the citizens as high microbial counts in the water may cause waterborne diseases like diarrhoea which may lead to loss of life. It can also impact on the economy of the country since it is a risk to irrigated crops and exports market, and therefore can result in the loss of investors and business opportunities.