

080618 PC Water

Water Pollution and Water Challenges

**Portfolio Committee on Water
Affairs and Forestry –
Wednesday, 18 June 2008**

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On behalf of the Water Institute of Southern Africa

What is WISA?

- WISA is the Water Institute of Southern Africa and its ultimate goal is “Building Expertise, Sharing Knowledge, Improve Quality of Life”.

The mandate of the Institute shall *inter alia* be to:

- Encourage communication and a better understanding among scientists, engineers, managers, administrators and communities engaged in the search for and implementation of solutions for water related projects.
- Liaise with governmental (Central, Provincial and Local), regional water authorities, industry, NGOs
- and any other appropriate bodies on all matters relating to the water environment.
- Arrange forums and establish a data-base to facilitate the sharing of information.

Objectives of this Presentation

- This presentation highlights
 - the way WE are managing OUR responsibilities especially from a water perspective and to propose an action plan to this committee

So -

What are the challenges?

CAPE ARGUS

WEDNESDAY August 23, 2003 LATE FINAL

Head line

“In the dark – and in the poo”

“Catastrophe looms for power, water and sewerage”

The city is heading for a New York-style catastrophe of blackouts and collapses in the sewerage system because of drastic spending cuts

What are the challenges?

- Many SA urban rivers are dead (recent news report)
- Services are collapsing slowly
- Housing is a major priority
- SETA's not functioning properly
- Political will and priorities change
- Environmental Issues are not a priority
- Lengthy EIA processes hampers service delivery

Do I do the right thing????

- **There must be personal and corporate responsibility – and co-operation**
- **It is our constitutional right to have a healthy environment**
- **BUT - With rights come responsibilities**
- **Therefore - Our attitudes must change and we must accept our responsibilities – you and me – everybody!**

Typical Local Authority

- Every LA will have some form of sewerage reticulation system,
 - some form of sewage treatment,
 - some form of waste management system,
 - and should have the by-laws and regulations to protect them.
- How can we ensure that what is in place is properly managed ?
- The Water purification works, Sewage purification works, Reticulation system and Storm-water system, Waste collection system and Waste Disposal facilities and Environmental and Health Services are possibly some of the most expensive plant and services operated by the LA

Typical Local Authority cont.

- These need to be managed as though they were important.
- It seems as if only the things that can be seen ie. above the ground – new offices, libraries, sports stadiums - are the ones that get priority
- In many cases this is the fault of local politicians who want to score “cubs and brownie points”,
- the officials who don’t stand up to the politicians, and
- the public who don’t always understand the implications of inferior services and/or who take advantage of the situation. **SHORT TERM GAIN!!!** eg. non-payment

This is where the “change of attitude” is required

- There is a need for water treatment, effluent treatment and waste management to be seen as important components of a successful and healthy community – communities already struggling with HIV Aids, Cholera, Dysentery, Tuberculosis, Worms
- We have seen that many children die from water and sanitation related diseases
- All communities must want to be successful and healthy – therefore they must know how to succeed and what causes sickness
- They must be informed about the link between poor services and community health
- **Can WE see the link between proper water supply, sanitation and the DEATHS of children**