

# The Weekly

## GOVERNMENT INVESTS MILLIONS TO RESOLVE MARQUARD WATER CRISIS

August 31, 2012

**The municipality can only provide 8 561 millilitres of water a day while the community needs 351 739 millilitres**

The MEC for cooperative governance, traditional affairs and human settlements, Olly Mlamleli, has allocated R1-million to resolve the water crisis in Marquard.

This follows a service delivery march that turned violent in the town, leading to the arrest of 21 people who were charged with public violence two months ago, in June.

Last week the residents of Marquard took to the streets once again, in demand of basic services which include access to running water.

The municipality is a water-restricted area and required more money to ensure efficient supply of water. The department of water affairs has allocated R7-million for water supply in the area but the money was not enough to address the huge water demand.

The population in the area currently stands at R125 751 and the municipality was able to provide 40 000 litres of water per day, at the cost of R300 000 a month.

"I had promised to address the community on August 16, but could not make it. Nonetheless, I did finally meet the community on the August 23.

The business associations in the area have made a commitment to help with solving the water shortage. They told me that they have skills and expertise in water systems and networks," said Mlamleli.

"We have arranged for businesses to make presentation on what they can do. This will assist in determining how much the department needs to fork out to solve the situation.

I have promised to make funds available for the community to get water and have also agreed with the municipality to increase their water supply to 66 000 litres per day," she continued.

Mlamleli has however slammed the residents for their use of violence and burning public and private property during the service delivery protests.

"What is disturbing is the burning of the four houses; the injury of a municipality employee who was driving the truck delivering the water to the community and the damaging of the very same truck."

The local municipality has built two dams, a purification plant, seven boreholes, and a pump station to alleviate the challenge of water in Ficksburg. This led to accusations of bias by the Marquard residents.

The capacity of the purification plant in Ficksburg is 16 to 32 millilitres (ml). The findings of the department of water affairs show that Setsoto loses roughly 35 808 433 litres of water through leakages. The demand exceeds the supply considerably and this itself is a challenge.

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The municipality can only provide 8 561 millilitres which is not enough for the 351 739 ml's demanded by the community. The R7-million allocated by the water affairs department was able to achieve 730 000 cubic metres water savings.

This has created 27 jobs in this municipality. It involves repairing water leaks, installation of zonal and bulk water meters, households retrofitting, repairing leaking reservoirs and replacement of aging pipelines.

The MEC will also send a delegation of departmental officials and the municipality's leadership to the department of minerals and energy to discuss the unused mine in the area.

Mlamleli said if this mine can be productive again, it will provide job opportunities to the people of Marquard.

According to Mlamleli a mining consulting company has been appointed to conduct a geological survey to determine how much mineral deposits are still available in the area. However, people are complaining that the mine, which is already in operation, is unlawful.

Mlamleli has encouraged residents of Marquard to raise their concerns with their local councillors who will then bring them to the attention of her office.



Tackling water crisis ... The MEC for cooperative governance, traditional affairs and human settlements, Oly Mlamleli.

[Source: [www.theweekly.co.za](http://www.theweekly.co.za)]