

# The Weekly

## CLOCOLAN COMMUNITY PROVIDED WITH WATER

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Delivering on promise...MEC for cooperative governance, Oly Mlamleli, made sure that she delivers water to Clocolan residents

### **MEC Oly Mlamleli fulfilled her promise to provide running water to Clocolan**

Boitumelo Masiu, from the Hlohlolwane Township in Clocolan, could not contain her excitement as her tap could now finally provide her household with water; ending the long arduous trips she used to take regularly in search of the precious liquid.

Hlohlolwane is one of three townships that have experienced the huge water crisis that had prevailed in the Setsoto Local Municipality since 2009. The municipality is made up of the old small towns of Clocolan, Marquard, Ficksburg and Senekal.

The Setsoto Local Municipality had faced numerous allegations of corruption, incompetence and maladministration that hindered it from providing basic amenities such as water and sanitation. This was before the new political leadership under mayor, Tshidiso Jakobo.

The main major problem facing the municipality was its inability to provide water to all towns under its jurisdiction, except Ficksburg, a situation that saw Clocolan and Marquard relying on water transported by trucks from Ficksburg since January 2010.

"I have had this tap in my backyard for a while but it was useless. It suddenly ran permanently dry one day, forcing me to walk long distances to fetch. I am grateful for what government has done for me. We will use the water sparingly," said Masiu.

The provision of water for Clocolan was a fulfilment of a promise made by the MEC for cooperative governance and human settlement, Oly Mlamleli, to intervene in the crisis that had triggered violent service delivery protests. The violent protests left one person injured and councillor's house burned in Marquard.

Last week, Mlamleli befittingly returned to the municipality, to formally deliver on that promise.

"You must understand that the problem of water shortage is a national one. It is not unique to Setsoto. Therefore, please do not waste this resource; instead, preserve it. Today there is water in this municipality, which means one of the people's needs has been met," said Mlamleli.

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The Marquard community will, however continue to receive water from water tanks daily between 7:00 and 19:00.

The reason the problem persists is mainly because the contractor responsible for the refurbishment of the water treatment plant is three weeks behind schedule.

“When we started the project, the idea was to finish the pipeline installation in Clocolan, simultaneously with the water treatment plant in Marquard, so that today when Sparta had finished with extracting water from the Caledon River and pumping it to an existing pipeline, people in both these areas get water,” explained Mlamleli.

The Setsoto Local Municipal manager, Tshepiso Ramakarane, echoed the MEC’s sentiments about the pertinent reasons for the Marquard water provision delay.

“This guy (the contractor) is three weeks behind schedule; he blames the delay on the recent truck drivers’ national strike, which he claims made it impossible for him to get supplies from Johannesburg.”

According to an emergency intervention, as agreed upon by the municipality and the MEC, water was to be drawn directly from the Caledon River into a balancing dam in Clocolan. This meant that the contractors, Sparta, had 10 days to commission a pipeline that would draw water from the Caledon into a balancing dam in Clocolan.

“Nelspruit is now empty; we now draw water from the balancing dam to connect with the existing pipeline. Instead of pumping water from Ficksburg, we pump it directly from Clocolan.

“This means, with effect from today the people in Clocolan will have water, because now water is taken to our treatment plant, from where it goes to our reservoirs before eventually proceeding to individual household pumps,” said Ramakarane.

Ramakarane said the work at the water treatment plant in Marquard will only continue after the arrival of material that was ordered from Johannesburg. He also hopes that the water shortage will be alleviated during the rainy season, which falls between October and November.

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