

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Metsimaholo Reaffirms Its Commitment to Protecting the Vaal River: Turning Accountability into Action

Metsimaholo Local Municipality reaffirms its unwavering dedication and commitment to protecting the waters of the Vaal River and ensuring that all wastewater infrastructure operates efficiently and responsibly. Following public concern raised by Ms. Rosemary Anderson, Chairperson of the Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa (FEDHASA), regarding the ongoing sewage pollution of the Vaal River, as well as the visit by the Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Honourable Sello Seitholo, on 31 July 2025, and the recent follow-up oversight visit by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) from both the Free State and Gauteng provincial offices, the municipality has intensified its corrective and preventative measures to stop the discharge of untreated sewage into the river.

As custodians of service delivery and community wellbeing, Metsimaholo has worked tirelessly since the Deputy Minister's initial visit to respond to the challenges affecting its wastewater management systems. The municipality is pleased to report that all problematic pump stations previously identified as sources of contamination have been repaired, restored, and are now fully functional. In addition, constant monitoring mechanisms have been instituted at all pump stations to detect and address any potential faults immediately, ensuring that no contamination of water sources occurs, wittingly or unwittingly.

During the recent oversight mission by the Department of Water and Sanitation, officials from both provinces conducted a thorough assessment of the municipality's wastewater infrastructure and commended the visible improvements and proactive interventions already underway. The follow-up visit served as an important platform to demonstrate Metsimaholo's commitment to accountability, transparency, and environmental stewardship.

Speaking after the visit, Executive Mayor, Cllr Jack Malindi, reaffirmed the municipality's resolve:

"As Metsimaholo Local Municipality, we are deeply committed to ensuring the protection and sustainability of the Vaal River. We understand the significance of this water resource to our communities, industries, and ecosystems. We want to assure residents and all stakeholders that we have taken decisive action to repair our infrastructure, enhance monitoring, and prevent any recurrence of sewage spillage into the river."

Municipal Manager, Mr. Basi Motloun, further emphasized the collaborative effort between the municipality and the Department of Water and Sanitation.

“This partnership reflects a shared commitment to environmental compliance and sustainable governance. Our teams are working around the clock to maintain the integrity of our water systems, and we remain open to continuous engagement and support from the Department and affected stakeholders,” he said.

During the oversight visit, Ms. Rosemary Anderson expressed her appreciation for the progress made and the responsiveness shown by both the Department and Metsimaholo.

“It is encouraging to see the tangible improvements and the seriousness with which the municipality has approached this matter. The collaboration between DWS and Metsimaholo represents a turning point in the collective effort to restore and protect the Vaal River,” she noted.

The follow-up oversight visit marks a significant milestone in the municipality’s journey toward restoring environmental confidence, protecting public health, and preserving one of South Africa’s most vital water sources. Metsimaholo Local Municipality remains steadfast in its commitment to sustainable service delivery, environmental protection, and intergovernmental cooperation.

As the municipality continues to make progress, the message is clear: Metsimaholo is acting, not making excuses. The restoration of the Vaal River is not only a mandate but a moral obligation to ensure that future generations inherit a clean and life-giving river system.

“Working Together for a Cleaner, Healthier Environment”

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