



STEVE TSHWETE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Your ref. MR11.02.15

Telephone (013) 2497053
Fax (013) 2432550

Our ref. MR11.02.15

P O Box 14
MIDDELBURG,
MPUMALANGA
1050

2015/02/24

Media release

Letter to the Editor: Water crisis solved

Steve Tshwete Local Municipality Acting Municipal Manager, Mandla Mnguni is pleased to report that the water crisis has finally been solved. "I wish to thank everyone for your extreme patience during this very difficult time without water in the CBD, Kanonkop and Eastdene areas."

The water problem was solved after calling in an external service provider, Water Resource Planning (WRP) on 10 February 2015, after searches, including an aerial search for possible water leaks by the Water and Sanitation Department proved fruitless.

"A WRP employee used a sensitive noise detector to determine the status of the valve in Jeppe Street that controls the water supply from the Mandela bulk line into the Groenkol area and eventually to Vliegveld reservoir. The noise detector picked up a leaking sound but it was difficult to conclude whether the valve was fully open. We excavated and exposed the valve and manually adjusted it by turning it in what we thought was the open position. The proper functioning of the gate inside the valve was also suspicious, so the valve was left in the position in which the least noise was detected, which was interpreted as being in the fully open position."

Three other valves were also checked at the corner of Verdoorn and Samora Machel Streets and the two outlet valves from the tower at Vliegveld reservoir were found to be in an open position. The level in the reservoir was monitored after the 22:00 update on the telemetry system and it was found to have increased to 65%. By 06:00 on 11 February, the level was updated through the telemetry system as reading 95%.

"Remedial steps have been taken for the replacement of the 250mm valve in Jeppe Street and the construction of a new valve chamber in order to prevent similar challenges in future," says Mnguni. He adds that the faulty valve was in operation for 15 years without a problem and was opened at least once a week when water was needed to be augmented from the Mandela bulk line. Staff were confident that the valve was fully open on the 03 February when the crisis struck.

“The municipality is thankful for all the volunteers who assisted with searching for the possible cause of the restricted water supply to the Vliegveld reservoir, which eventually led to the interruption in the water supply to the CBD.”

Enquiries: Prudence Magutle:
Tel number: 013 249 7053
E-mail: pmagutle@stlm.gov.za

Yours sincerely

ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER