

## **COUNCIL CLEANS UP ITS ACT BY ALLOCATING R13M TO SEWERAGE, WATER SERVICES**

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At least R13m has been budgeted for sewerage and water supply services at Setsoto local municipality, mayor Tsheliso Jakobo said.

In his budget speech in Ficksburg recently, Jakobo said this was a “turnaround strategy” to resolve water and electricity shortages, and address service delivery protests which have plagued the municipality.

“Water tariffs are anticipated to increase by 5% from the previous financial year. The budget is anticipated to be R22m, while the municipality has allocated R16m as bad debt,” said Jakobo.

He said his municipality was unable to provide all residents of Setsoto with subsidised water and electricity, regardless of their indigent status. He said only registered indigent residents would qualify for the 6kl of water and 50KW/per hour of electricity.

In an attempt to solve the water problem, particularly in Marquard, Jakobo said the municipality would be completing a pipeline and a reservoir that would supply water in that area.

Sewage spillages in Meqheleng Zone7 and 8 in Ficksburg would be attended to. “Some of the most horrific service delivery protests came from that area. The municipality will install a 315mm diameter outfall sewer to accommodate additional sewage pumped from the station and refurbish the existing pump station. The second phase of this Meqheleng refurbishment has commenced and entails the installation of pipes between manholes to complete the cycle,” he said.

Jakobo denied reports that the water crisis in Setsoto was a result of poor planning.

“The water crisis is not necessarily a result of poor planning, as some doomsayers would have us believe. It is largely due to circumstances beyond our control. The significant drop in rainfall has an adverse impact on our raw water sources,” he said.

“For instance, in Marquard, the raw water storage dams are empty and dry. Thus far, we continue to make significant progress in addressing the service delivery shortcomings, which led to protest actions. We all walked out of that sticky and tragic situation with valuable lessons and vowed to interact regularly to avoid committing unwarranted mistakes,” said Jakobo.

An additional amount of R3.9m will be allocated towards the Marquard water treatment works to enable fresh water supply to residents there.

“The amount has been budgeted to construct clarifiers and sand filters at the Marquard works. Another R16.9m will be allocated to the Marquard oxidation plant, which is a waste water treatment works aimed at increasing capacity.

“A further R22.5m will be allocated towards the Ficksburg bulk water supply to continue with the construction of phase three and four pipeline projects,” he said. He also said that 11 boreholes would be installed in Senekal, at a cost of R21m.

“We believe that this intervention will assist to meet the community’s demand for water,” said Jakobo.

On the first year anniversary of the killing of community leader Andries Tatane by police during a public service delivery protest, The New Age visited Meqheleng and found sewage spillages in the street, with some streets dilapidated, while others were being maintained. The Meqheleng Concerned Citizens organisation that was formed prior to the fatal service delivery protest that claimed Tatane’s life, has been putting pressure on authorities to improve the situation in the township.

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