



EMALAHLENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

WATER CONSERVATION AND WATER DEMAND MANAGEMENT MEDIA STATEMENT

South Africa is a water-stressed country with an average rainfall of 450 mm, compared to a global average of 860 mm. Emalahleni Local Municipality (ELM) is located in the Highveld region which is the grassland savannah and has an extremely varied climate and is situated on the western side of Mpumalanga province. ELM is a water-stressed mining town and has a challenge of ever-growing water demand. The Olifants River is the main source of surface water supply to the municipality, supplying more than 70% of municipal water provision capacity. The municipality has limited access to underground water resources due to contamination with acid mine drainage and disturbance of geo-hydrological flow as a result of coal mining activities. The municipality is in a region where there is no nearby water endowed catchments to augment supply and there is low rainfall precipitation when compared with the high evaporation rate. This high lying escarpment area experiences winter temperatures average in the range of 19 degrees during April to August, low or non-rainfall therefore is regarded as driest area in the region during the winter months.

During the warmer months, we talk a lot about conserving water, although we get rainfall during the wetter months which is not enough to relieve the drought conditions. We cannot take a lax attitude towards water conservation when winter rolls around. We must continue our water saving efforts throughout the year, here are the winter water saving tips:-

- Reduce watering your natural grass lawn in winter, otherwise, practice grey water re-use to keep your vegetation irrigated.
- Install a rain barrel, winter is the perfect time to install a rain barrel, collecting and using rainfall from rain barrels is an excellent way to conserve water during winter.
- Have your plumbing checked and make repairs, regularly checking your plumbing is particularly important if you live in inland areas where the temperatures drop below freezing. A plumber can look for leaks, find old pipes that are at risk of bursting and need replacing, and making recommendations to help you winterize your plumbing system.
- Keep your pool covered, you are likely not to use your pool at all as temperatures begin to drop. Evaporation is a bigger issue year-round, by

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Prepared by: Executive Director – Technical services

keeping your pool covered you can save hundreds of gallons throughout the year.