

# The Weekly

## MATJHABENG SCOOPS BLUE DROP AWARD

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Received coveted award ... Madoda Besani and Charlene Smith from the Matjhabeng municipality at the Blue Drop Awards held in Cape Town

The Matjhabeng Local Municipality has once again achieved exceptional results in the Department of Water Affairs' Blue Drop Drinking Water Quality Assessment programme. The municipality received the award for top provincial performer, with support from Sedibeng Water as its service provider.

"It needs to be mentioned that without Sedibeng Water (Water Services Provider), Matjhabeng Local Municipality (Water Services Authority) would not been able to achieve this excellent performance," said Councilor Kgotso Menyatso, the Member of the Mayoral Committee for technical services.

Impressively, Matjhabeng achieved a Blue Drop score of 94.72 percent.

Over the past three years, the Matjhabeng Local Municipality scored 47.3 percent in 2010, 79.91 percent in 2011, and 94.72 percent in 2012.

"The Matjhabeng local municipality is participating in two incentive-based regulation programmes from the Department of Water Affairs, which are the Blue Drop for Drinking Water Quality Management Regulation and the Green Drop for Wastewater Quality Management Regulation," Menyatso added.

She said the municipality has a laboratory where the quality of drinking water (Blue Drop) can be measured. Purified effluent water and sewer outflow from 12 waste water treatment plants are analysed weekly, according to the Green Drop criteria.

The municipality received Blue Drop Status awards for five supply systems – Allanridge, Welkom, Virginia, Hennenman, and Ventersburg.

Odendaalsrus narrowly missed the certificate for excellent drinking water, scoring 92.05 percent for Good Water Quality.

Matjhabeng Local Municipality/Sedibeng Water received the Blue Drop Recognition for Top Provincial Performer 2012, with a score of 94.72 percent. They also received the Blue Drop Excellence 2012 for the Most Impressive Team Performance.

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In addition, the municipality received the Women's Award 2012 for excellent contribution towards drinking water quality management. The winner's trophy was awarded to Charlene Smith of Matjhabeng.

The Tswelopele Local Municipality came in a close and impressive second, with Metsimaholo Local Municipality completing the Provincial Blue Drop podium.

Overall, out of 153 municipalities, Matjhabeng Local Municipality was rated 25th on the national log position.

The Blue Drop Awards are held annually to recognise the municipalities that provide clean drinking water to their communities.

In its 2012 Blue Drop report, the Department of Water Affairs said it is remarkable to note the impact this programme has had on the water sector over the past four years. The positive impression made on the municipal fraternity is evident of the passion and commitment rekindled within those responsible for drinking water quality management.

"These attributes were found to be the key to reshaping the sector and restore public confidence in the quality of our tap water," the statement read.

The Blue Drop incentive-based regulation programme endeavours to facilitate and drive continuous and sustainable improvement in service delivery and drinking water quality and to ensure steadfast coverage of unserved areas.

The Blue Drop process measures and compares the results of the performance of water service authorities and their providers, and subsequently rewards or penalises the municipality upon evidence of their excellence or failures according to the minimum standards and requirements that have been defined in the assessment process.

In the same report, the Department of Water Affairs applauded the performance of the Matjhabeng Local Municipality who, with the assistance of Sedibeng Water, ensured a 100 percent turnaround in the management of drinking water quality over the last three years.

"Service delivery in Matjhabeng has been associated with bad publicity over the past few years, and a dedicated effort is therefore required to educate the public and prove to residents that drinking water quality is being managed with excellence.

"The public particularly needs to be informed of the occurrence of algae and its impact on the acceptability of the drinking water supplies. The DWA encourages the Municipality and Sedibeng Water to continue its efforts. The performance of this municipality indicates that, with the required staff commitment and management support, service delivery can be of an excellent quality."

The report praised the municipality for its sterling efforts to keep its water clean.

"Matjhabeng Local Municipality, together with Sedibeng Water, are indeed worthy provincial log leaders for 2012 since they managed to score more than 80 percent overall of each of the key performance areas as per the set Blue Drop requirements. This is the only municipality that achieved this feat in the Free State."