

21 December 2025

MEDIA STATEMENT

UPDATE ON PROGRESS REGARDING PLANNED RAND WATER INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE (DECEMBER 2025 – JANUARY 2026)

21 December 2025

Government acknowledges the significant hardship experienced by households, businesses and communities across Gauteng following the recent Rand Water infrastructure maintenance, which resulted in widespread water supply disruptions. We recognise that access to water is a basic human right, and we empathise deeply with residents who have been affected, particularly vulnerable households and those in higher-lying areas.

In response to the situation, the Minister of Water and Sanitation and the Premier of Gauteng convened an urgent meeting on 19 December 2025 with all key stakeholders, including Rand Water, the Department of Water and Sanitation, the Gauteng Provincial Government, the City of Johannesburg and Johannesburg Water. The purpose of the engagement was to receive a comprehensive, first-hand update on the maintenance programme, assess its impact, and ensure decisive interventions to accelerate recovery and stabilise supply.

The first phase of the planned maintenance, undertaken from Saturday, 13 December to Sunday, 15 December 2025, was successfully completed by Rand Water. This phase included the removal of Wash Water Pump 10 for refurbishment, as well as Eskom-related maintenance activities at Stations 2 and 4 at the Zuikerbosch Water Treatment Plant. These works affected the Palmiet, Zwartkopjes and Mapleton systems, which were fully depleted during the shutdown. Following the

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completion of maintenance, the systems required careful recharging to restore supply to Rand Water reservoirs and subsequently to municipal reservoirs. We are pleased to confirm that these systems have since recovered and are now operating at full pumping capacity, with recovery continuing across both Rand Water and municipal networks.

Notwithstanding this progress, the City of Johannesburg and Johannesburg Water have advised that some areas within the Erand Reservoir supply zone continue to experience intermittent supply, low pressure or no water, particularly in higher-lying areas. Targeted operational interventions remain underway to stabilise supply and accelerate recovery. Encouragingly, the Erand Reservoir has shown notable improvement overnight and is currently supplying at a fair level, enabling more areas to gradually receive water as the system rebalances. Technical teams are actively bleeding the network to remove airlocks, which is a critical step in restoring effective flow and system stability.

Areas still experiencing challenges include Noordwyk, Halfway House, Carlswald, parts of Kyalami and surrounding high-lying areas. Government and municipal teams remain on the ground, working continuously to restore full and consistent supply as quickly as possible.

In parallel with these technical efforts, Johannesburg Water engaged ward councillors well in advance of the scheduled maintenance to ensure coordinated communication and preparedness at community level. These engagements focused on the scope of the maintenance, anticipated impacts, alternative water supply arrangements and expected recovery timelines. Councillors assisted in identifying and agreeing on tanker distribution points and schedules, with a shared understanding that alternative supply cannot fully substitute reticulated water. At the most recent engagement on 19 December 2025, councillors expressed appreciation for the manner in which the recovery process and alternative water provision have been managed, despite the challenges experienced in certain areas.

Johannesburg Water's technical and operational teams continue to work around the clock to stabilise affected reservoirs and towers. While supply has improved significantly across much of the Erand supply zone, alternative water provision remains in place where required, and the system is being closely monitored. Further updates will be provided as full stabilisation is achieved.

Rand Water has cancelled the planned maintenance work that commenced on Friday, 19 December 2025 and was originally scheduled for completion by Sunday, 21 December 2025. The cancellation was necessitated by a fault with a passing valve connecting the G34 and Q5 pipelines. As a result, water supply to the affected meters was fully restored last night to ensure continuity of service while the technical issue is addressed.

The third phase is scheduled from 04:00 on Tuesday, 6 January 2026, until 08:00 on Thursday, 8 January 2026. This phase entails the replacement of valves and a meter on the F18 pipeline, affecting the Kagiso Township meter in Mogale City Local Municipality. Additional work will include the replacement of isolation valves on the F15, F28, F39 and F45 pipelines. Affected areas will include Azaadville Tower, Leratong Hospital meters in Mogale City, Azaadville Gardens meter in Rand West, and Meadowlands North and South, Fleurhof, Roodepoort Deep, Doornkop North and Braamfischer Extension 8 in the City of Johannesburg.

The final phase of the maintenance programme is scheduled from 06:00 on 16 January 2026 until 11:30 on 17 January 2026. This phase involves the removal and refurbishment of Lethabo Pump Set 6, resulting in a temporary reduction of 200 megalitres per day from Vereeniging. Approximately 20% of meters in Emfuleni Local Municipality will be affected, with possible limited impact on Ngwathe and Metsimaholo Local Municipalities, as well as industries supplied by the Sasolburg reservoir. The Sasolburg reservoir will be filled in advance, and the impact is therefore expected to be minimal.

Rand Water has formally engaged all affected municipalities, which are responsible for implementing alternative water supply measures and for conducting detailed communication with communities at ward and sectional level. Drawing on lessons from the past week, municipalities are urged to strengthen communication, improve coordination, and intensify efforts to manage

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internal pumping, storage and losses. This includes fast-tracking reservoir refurbishment projects and scaling up leak repair programmes to reduce water losses.

Government once again extends its sincere apology to all residents and businesses for the inconvenience caused by this essential infrastructure maintenance programme. We assure the public that these interventions are necessary to safeguard the long-term reliability and resilience of the water supply system. We remain fully committed to restoring normality without undue delay and appreciate the patience, understanding and cooperation shown by communities during this period.

END

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