

R341m set aside for Vaal River rehabilitation

Government has set aside R341m for the rehabilitation of all wastewater treatment infrastructure in the Vaal Triangle.



Vaal River. Image by Ossewa, [Wikimedia Commons](#)

The project will see 250 youth and community members being trained on plumbing, carpentry, brick-laying, paving and agriculture, water and sanitation minister Gugile Nkwinti announced on Friday, 5 April.

“[The] SANDF will also train 2,000 youth and community members to guard 44 pump stations until the completion of the project, which is projected for March 2020,” the minister told the community of Sebokeng.

The project follows the signing of the implementation protocol last month by the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Department in Gauteng, Emfuleni Local Municipality, South African National Defence Force (SANDF), Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) and the East Rand Water Care Company (ERWAT).

“In terms of the implementation protocol, my department appointed ERWAT, which is an entity of the Ekurhuleni Metro, as the implementing agent. As a wastewater specialist company, ERWAT will ensure that all wastewater treatment infrastructure is resuscitated to an operational state and that pollution in the Vaal River is stopped,” Nkwinti said.

The project is part of the Vaal River Rehabilitation Project which began last year after raw sewage flowed into the river from pump stations in the Emfuleni Municipality on the northern bank of the river, posing environmental and health risks.

Nkwinti informed the community that module six of the Sebokeng Wastewater Treatment Works, a regional bulk sanitation infrastructure, is under construction and projected to be completed by the end of May 2019. A total of 120,000 households in the southern part of Gauteng will benefit from module six of the project while module seven is expected to start by July 2019.



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Vaal Catchment Management Agency

Nkwinti went on to also announce the establishment of the Vaal Catchment Management Agency in a bid to protect water resources in the area. He said the work of the agency will include river monitoring, reporting on pollution incidents and dealing with polluters while also raising awareness on protection of the water resources and environment.

“The Vaal River Catchment Management Agency will ensure that water is protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and controlled in a sustainable and equitable manner,” the minister said.

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