



# The Msunduzi Municipality

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## MSUNDUZI MUNICIPALITY REFUTES CLAIMS BY THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE ON THE EASTWOOD RESERVOIR

Msunduzi Municipality strongly rejects the assertions by the Democratic Alliance (DA) that the reservoir in Bishopstowe has leaks and requires an upgrade. The reservoir referred to in this statement is actually the **EASTWOOD RESERVOIR**, and is part of a system of bulk reservoirs emanating from the DV Harris Water Works to Belfort Reservoir through to Copesville, Eastwood and ending at Murray Road Reservoir.

As a matter of fact; the reservoir most certainly does not have the large leaks as referred to in the statement. Any leaks from within the reservoir itself would have shown up through the underdrains beneath the reservoir. The "Constant" outages as mentioned in the statement is certainly an over exaggeration of the situation. As part of a network of bulk reservoirs and trunk mains, the water level in the Eastwood reservoir is dependent upon a variety of factors such as the production of water at DV Harris, and the water demand at Claridge reservoir in the uMshwathi area of UMGungundlovu District (UMDM) also served by DV Harris. The water level in this reservoir is monitored constantly through our telemetry system and management is alerted every 6 hours to the level in all reservoirs of the City.

However as long as our command reservoir [Belfort reservoir], receives at least 33 MI/day, the level of Eastwood will remain stable and be able to supply water to all of its consumers. The recent outage was due to a financial matter with UMGungundlovu District Municipality who supplies water to this small area of Bishopstowe through UMDM's water network. This matter is now being resolved at the highest management level.

The statement is full of inaccuracies; there is no fence, since on several occasions when the reservoir was fenced, it was promptly stolen again, resulting in constant wastage of expenditure. Whilst one can admit that the grass is somewhat overgrown, water staff only require access to the telemetry hut located on the site, and the inlet and outlet chambers. The telemetry hut is regularly vandalized and equipment stolen, but it has proved impossible to safeguard this instrumentation despite many options being tried. So municipal security now maintains a 24/7 presence at this reservoir as they do at other infrastructure sites around the city.

It must be placed on record that the area is often subjected to acts of vandalism, air valves located in special chambers in close proximity (approximately 1 km away down the hill) are frequently broken into and the valves smashed to get access to water. These air valves are expensive to replace and absolutely necessary to maintain the network free of air pockets. Again no amount of different methods have been successful in curbing such wanton vandalism.

The Municipal workers **do not visit** the site to "switch the water on and off", unless there is a need such as a leaking trunk main between Eastwood and Murray Road reservoirs. And these incidents occur **very seldom indeed**. So there is **no schedule in place for such switching**. It **just does not occur to a schedule**.

The statement issued by the DA is indicative of a lack of understanding of how the water system works. Had a member of the water staff been present at this "DA's oversight visit to the reservoir", much could have been explained on site, without the need for such a spurious and disingenuous statement which was only intended to mislead the citizens of Msunduzi and sow seeds of mistrust in the Municipality and government.

**- END -**

**ISSUES BY CITY MANAGER, MR. LULAMILE MAPHOLOBA**

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