

Outage hits local water supplies

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DESPITE heavy rains, some Durban residents are experiencing water shortages after a lengthy power failure affected a primary reservoir.

The level of Reservoir 3, in Durban Heights, dropped severely after a seven-hour power outage on Saturday.

"This outage prevented the supply from Wiggins Waterworks from starting up, thus creating the additional demand on Durban Heights Reservoir 3. However, the municipality is working on the problem," said eThekweni Municipality's deputy head of water and sanitation, Ednick Msweli.

Msweli said areas that experienced water shortages were being assisted by water tankers provided by the municipality.

Meanwhile, Thys Badenhorst, director of water sector support at the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's Durban Office, said other dams were in good shape and the latest analysis showed that Durban would make it through next year's winter season without any water restrictions.

Badenhorst said the report – which he had received last month – indicated very good rainfall distribution on the Umgeni system, but meteorologists have warned of below average rainfall between January and April next year.

"When we compare the safety volume of water that we could provide and the demand for water that is out there, the total demand is a long-term problem, while the short-term problems could easily be overcome," Badenhorst said.

Shami Harichunder, spokesman for Umgeni Water, said the dams in the Mgeni System were at present at "excellent water capacity" levels.

Albert Falls Dam and Midmar Dams were nearing capacity at 97 percent and 96 percent, while Inanda, Mearns and Nangle were overflowing. He explained that as Mearns flowed into the Midmar Dam, the latter was expected to reach capacity within the next two days.

