



*This statement has been prepared and issued by Corporate Stakeholder Management Unit of Umgeni Water. It has been also circulated to members of the Board of Umgeni Water*

## Nagle Aqueduct Number 4

### Incident Report

On Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2009, a break occurred in the Nagle Aqueduct Number 4 pipeline, which carries raw water from Nagle Dam to Durban Heights. The break occurred at a joint of the pipeline, and in an area of Upper Molweni. Water began gushing into the Hlongwane property, which is close to the pipeline. The break was discovered by a local resident and reported to a Foreman, who is attached to the Operations Division. A stand-by Fitter/Artisan with the Operations Division was sent to the scene immediately.

tunnel outlet at Molweni which allowed the excess flow to run into a natural water course. This was done to minimize further damage to property.

Umgeni Water staff were at the scene after being informed of the burst pipe, and remained there the entire weekend. They worked closely with the local community and its leadership structures to provide assistance and reduce the hardship that had been experienced by some families as a result of the damage caused.

### Early indications of extent of damage

Visible signs of damage have been:



When the Fitter/Artisan arrived at the scene, the concrete pipe had already ruptured, and because of the amount of pressure in it, caused a huge volume of water to gush out. Damage was caused to the Hlongwane home. Two children, who were in the Hlongwane home, disappeared during the flood.

The Search and Rescue Unit of the South African Police Services arrived at the scene and began a search for the two children. One child was found injured on Friday night, but died the following morning in hospital. The body of the other child was found late on Saturday morning.

### Immediate interventions applied by Operations Division

The Operations Division immediately began the process of isolating the burst pipe. However, due to the fact that the water supply into the pipe is gravity fed, the reduction of flow was only experienced a few hours later. Further measures were taken to isolate the

- A section of the house occupied by the Hlongwane family was washed away
- Damage to furniture and clothing belonging to the Hlongwane family
- The roof of another house on the Hlongwane property was washed away
- The collapse of sand banks in the Hlongwane property
- Two graves on the Hlongwane property were partly washed away
- The entry of a large amount of sand into a local school yard and into some classrooms which has resulted in the school being closed
- Various degrees of damage to four other houses in close proximity to the Hlongwane property. Damage has included the destruction of furniture, carpets and clothing. The four other houses are occupied by other families.



### Social Impact

eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality has provided relief aid in the form of tents for families whose houses were damaged. Umgeni Water is working closely with the eThekwini MM and the local community in identifying other forms of assistance that may be required. For example, on Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> July 2009, Umgeni Water provided groceries and kitchen equipment to the Hlongwane family.

Umgeni Water has asked both eThekwini MM and the affected local community to inform it of other items that may be required. eThekwini MM and the local community have been both co-operative and supportive of Umgeni Water in its efforts to assist in bringing a semblance of normality to the section of Molweni that was affected by damage sustained during the pipe break.

The school still remains closed, but staff of Umgeni Water are working closely with the local community in mopping up the premises. Umgeni Water has created 17 jobs for local community members for the school clean-up operation. The role of Umgeni Water is to supervise the work being done at the school and provide excavation equipment. Once the work has been completed, the school will be re-opened.

### Way Forward

**The Deputy Chairperson of the Board of Umgeni Water, Chief Executive of Umgeni Water, the GM: Operations and the Stakeholder Manager attended a meeting on Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> July 2009, at the community hall in Molweni. The meeting was convened by the local community and chaired by representatives of the local branch of the ANC.**

A Task Team was formed at Sunday's meeting to handle and oversee all preparations for the funerals of the two children. Umgeni Water will be working closely with the community and will also participate in the Task Team.

Interventions to be made by Umgeni Water and communicated to the community:

- *The school will be restored to its original condition as speedily as possible with the employment of local labour*
- *Counselling will be provided to families and individuals who have been traumatised by the incident*
- *Umgeni Water will work closely with the community in creating awareness of the risks and dangers associated with building houses close to pipelines Technical intervention to be made by Umgeni Water*

The damaged part of the pipeline will be replaced. Work is progressing well and is expected to be completed in a few days. In the meantime, Umgeni Water is working closely with eThekwini MM in managing supply to Durban Heights WW in order to ensure that adequate supply of raw water is available. The situation has been assisted by the re-commissioning of Aqueduct Number 3.

