

Umzinto is running out of supplies of water

WITH the mid South Coast experiencing its driest year in 25 years and uMzinto Dam only 18 percent full, the Umzinto area is in grave danger of running out of potable water.

To alleviate the dire situation, Umgeni Water will fast-track the installation of a 250mm pipeline from Ellingham Reserve to the uMzinto Water Treatment works. It is hoped this emergency plan will be up and running by Christmas.

According to Ugu District Municipality spokesman Lindani Mzotho, the South Coast had received only 226mm of rain so far this year. This was about 22 percent of the 1 025mm average annual rainfall.

Average rainfall for October was 113mm. By last week, the South Coast had only received between between 30 and 40mm.

Of even greater concern was the fact that the 2010 dry weather could

be the first of a three or four year cycle of low rainfall, making the new pipeline to the uMzinto Waterworks even more vital for the area.

The new pipeline would be about 5.8km long, most of it traversing the Ellingham Estate, said Mr Mzotho.

An Environmental Management Plan had been approved by the Department of Agriculture and Environment and the Department of Water Affairs, under the emergency procedures,

he added.

“Originally Umgeni Water planned to follow the existing servitude, but this traverses areas of ecological significance.

“Umgeni Water then re-routed the pipeline to minimise the impact on wetlands and to avoid two patches of indigenous forest. The new route is mainly through sugar cane fields. The entire area through which the pipeline will travel will be rehabilitated after the pipes are laid,” he said.

In the meantime, Ugu has called on all residents to save water.

“Consumers should harvest rain water where possible and must ensure that all faulty plumbing is fixed. Every drop counts,” said Mr Mzotho.

Ugu has also asked residents report anyone involved in the ongoing vandalism of pipe bridges supplying water to Sezela, Bazley and Ifafa. The police were on the lookout for these vandals, said Mr Mzotho.

