

TSWELOPELE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

FREE BASIC WATER POLICY

PREAMBLE

This document serves as a basis to outline the Free Basic Water Policy for Tswelopele Local Municipality. It also intends to ensure that no one is completely denied access to a basic supply of water because they are unable to pay for the service. Underlying this is the recognition that the supply of water at a basic level assists in alleviating poverty, improves community health and frees women from time wasted on carrying water.

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of South Africa's commitment towards poverty alleviation and sustainable development, the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry announced the government's decision to ensure that poor households are given a basic supply of free water, in February 2001. In carrying out this commitment, 6 000 liters of clean water per month will be provided per household.

The provision of Free Basic Water has been adopted as National Policy. Given the mandate of local municipalities as Water Service Authorities [WSAs], they are responsible for implementing the Free Basic Water Policy and Programme in their areas of jurisdiction. As entrenched in the Water Service Act, Act 108 of 1997, a water service provider may not deny a person access to basic water services for non-payment, where that person proves, to the satisfaction of the relevant water services authority that he or she unable to pay for the basic services.

2. TSWELOPELE REGION

Tswelopele Local Municipality forms part of Lejweleputswa District Municipality area. Tswelopele Local Municipality area comprises of the following towns: Bultfontein / Phahameng and Hoopstad / Tikwana.

3. AIMS OF THE POLICY

The Free Basic Water Policy of Tswelopele Local Municipality is aimed at the provision of Free Basic Water to all formal households in the areas listed in paragraph 2 above.

4. THE VOLUME OF WATER

Tswelopele Local Municipality commits to providing 6 000 liters of clean water per month to all formal households, in the areas listed in paragraph 2 above. This volume is based upon 25 liters per person per day for an average of 8 persons per household per month.

However, consumption above 6 000 liters will be charged for at a rising block tariff rate, which will be informed by the costs associated with water service delivering and revised with the yearly budgetary processes.

5. BENEFICIARIES

Beneficiaries are all formal households in the areas listed in paragraph 2 above.

6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The legal framework for the provision of Free Basic Water to poor households is based upon the following legislation:

- ❑ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa - Act 108 of 1996, Section 152 - states that one of the objectives of local government is “to ensure the provision of services in a sustainable manner”. Section 27 [1][b] of the Constitution emphasizes “the right of access to sufficient water”.
- ❑ The Municipal Systems Act - Act 32 of 2000 - Section 74, states that “a municipal council must adopt and implement a tariff policy on levying of fees for municipal services provided by the municipality itself or by way of service delivery agreements, and which complies with any other applicable legislation”.
- ❑ The Water Services Act - Act 108 of 1997 - Section 4 [3][c] states, “that a water service provider may not deny a person access to basic water services for non-payment, where that person proves, to the satisfaction of the relevant water services authority, that he or she is unable to pay for basic services”.

7. PRINCIPLES ADOPTED IN THE PROVISION OF FREE BASIC WATER

7.1 Quality water at an affordable price

Tswelopele Local Municipality is committed to providing good quality water to its citizens at an affordable price.

7.2 Control water usage

Tswelopele Local Municipality recognizes the importance of installing meters in all formal households in order to restrict the supply of water. Control of water consumption will be implemented in line with Tswelopele Local Municipality Credit Control Policy.

8. FINANCING FREE BASIC WATER

Tswelopele Local Municipality will fund all its free basic water services through Equitable Share and revenue generated from rising block tariff, which will be revised with yearly budgetary processes.

9. STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING FREE BASIC WATER

Tswelopele Local Municipality recognizes its responsibility to provide free basic water to all formal households in its jurisdiction. To implement this policy, Tswelopele Local Municipality will do the following:

- [a] Ensure that all water meters are in good working condition.
- [b] Ensure that there is a efficient and effective billing system in place.
- [c] Investigate and implement rates for rising block tariff.
- [d] In cooperation with the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, hold community education blitz, in order to educate communities on free basic services generally and free basic water service delivery in particular; water conservation and the role the community could play in sustaining free basic water service delivery.
- [e] Control water consumption in line with Credit Control Policy.