



2012 National Water Conservation Awards

The Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi, announced the 2012 winners of the Water Conservation and Water Demand Management Sector Awards at Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand on 23 March 2012.

The Department of Water Affairs has a vision of a South Africa that has an embedded and actively applied culture of water conservation and water demand management in which all sectors must share water resources in an equitable and sustainable manner. Through the Water Conservation and Water Demand Management (WCWDM) Sector Awards, the department seeks to create a platform and an enabling environment for all role players and stakeholders from all sectors to start appreciating and understanding the importance of conserving water.

This is the third event of its type which recognises excellence in the field of Water Conservation and Demand Management and this year forty four (44) Nominations were received across four categories, namely:

- Agriculture
- Industry, Mining & power
- Domestic or Local Government
- Business

In the local government, 15 entries were received from which the top three received awards on the evening.

Johan Vorster and Slindokuhle Habede from Ekurhuleni were present to receive the top honour in the most competitive category of the annual WDM awards. The award was presented in recognition of its Revenue Meter enhancement project involving the investigation and consolidation of the Top 500 consumers. This project is one of the largest industrial meter auditing projects undertaken to date in Africa as it involves the main industrial areas of Ekurhuleni which in turn include some of the largest industries in South Africa. The

project has been highly successful in identifying the numerous broken or missing water meters which have since been replaced or repaired where necessary. In this manner, Ekurhuleni intends to ensure that all water supplied to its large consumers is properly measured and billed each month. The increase in revenue from this exercise is such that it has a pay-back period of between 6 months and a year making it one of the most effective water demand management interventions in their overall WDM programme.

Tshwane Metro, came 2nd out of 15 in the Local Government category after finishing first in the previous award event two years ago and was recognised for its continued WDM interventions which have helped to reduce its water losses and Non-Revenue Water to approximately 25% which is one of the lowest for any major city in South Africa. Trevor Westman from the COT, was present to receive the award on behalf of the City and it is the first time that any city has been recognised in consecutive years for its WDM efforts. Tshwane is aiming to reduce its leakage levels even further in years to come and has created an internal unit dedicated to the efficient use of water throughout the city.

The third award was presented to Andre Kowalewski from the Drakenstein Municipality in the Western Cape. This is the first time that Drakenstein has received recognition for its efforts in the WDM field and they were particularly happy having beaten many of the large municipalities and Metros such as City of Cape Town etc. Mr Kowalewski has been actively involved in reducing water wastage for many years and was one of the first Municipalities in the Western Cape to introduce pressure management on a large scale using some of the most advanced equipment available which is imported from Europe. Mr Kowalewski has driven its Non-Revenue Water down to approximately 10% which is one of the lowest levels anywhere in South Africa. The award was presented in recognition of their recent efforts to lower leakage even further in specific areas which experienced very high levels of plumbing leakage within the households. This is a problem issue in many parts of South Africa and the efforts of Mr Kowalewski demonstrate that progress can be made on a sustainable basis if properly implemented.

In summary it was a very positive outcome, particularly for Tshwane with its 2nd place overall and in addition, all three winners are being supported by the Pretoria based WRP Consulting Engineers and its local subsidiary 4Water in the case of Klein Drakenstein. This is the third time in a row that a project supported by WRP has taken the top honours in the national awards with previous recipients being Emfuleni Local Municipality, and the City of Tshwane. The awards are becoming more prestigious each year and are certainly the top accolades in the Water Conservation and Water Demand Management arena.