



**PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY JOE GQABI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY COMMUNICATIONS
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CONTAMINATED WATER IN UGIE

The Joe Gqabi District Municipality in the North Eastern Cape has shut down its water supply services at Ugie. This action follows a number of complaints by members of the community about fuel odour coming from the water.

Joe Gqabi Water Service Provider and Municipal Health Services section conducted an investigation and undertook water sampling. It was discovered that there was a layer of organic substance floating on the water surface of the reservoirs and in the Wildebeesriver.

Investigation results showed that the water was likely contaminated by oil seeping through a storm water pipe near a petrol service station. The disused motor oil is usually stored in plastic tanks but investigations show that the tanks have likely overflowed into the stormwater system. This has then contaminated the river. This water was abstracted and processed through the Ugie Blue drop accredited water treatment plant and distributed to the community.

The Joe Gqabi District Water Service Provider has blocked off the contaminated stream with bags of sand to reduce the flow of contaminated water into the river. Hazmat teams have been called to assist to identify and clean the contamination. It is likely that the cleaning of the system will take between 5 to 10 days.

Drinking water will be carted from other areas and will be supplied at strategic water points throughout Ugie. The District's Municipal Health Services will monitor clinics, hospitals and doctors for any increase in cases related to the intake of the contaminated drinking water. Joe Gqabi Management together with Dept of Water Services and other role players are conducting additional investigation into the contamination.

The Joe Gqabi District Municipality is appealing to all members of the community **not** to drink water in the taps until indicated that it is safe to do so. Notices have been distributed throughout the town.

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