

Millions spent to keep taps running

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The Northern Cape municipality of Hantam has spent more than R5m on transporting water to a town in the throes of a water crisis.



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Acting municipal manager Riaan van Wyk confirmed that the cost of getting water to Loeriesfontein had run into millions since November 2015.

The town had relied on boreholes, but they have run dry.

"Loeriesfontein is receiving water for only four hours a day. We have been trucking in 90,000-litres daily from Nieuwoudtville."

This has cost the municipality R400,000 a month.

An emergency pipeline to the town, financed by the Department of Water and Sanitation, provides Loeriesfontein with some water - but not enough.

The construction of additional boreholes in the town is expected to begin this month. The municipality is also making

attempts to keep the taps running in some of its other towns.

Calvinia has been surviving on borehole water since the Karee Dam dried up in November.

It is one of seven empty dams listed by the department in a report on dam levels last week.

"The dam is totally empty. There is no water. No gardens may be watered, no swimming pools filled or hosepipes used," Van Wyk said.

Calvinia usually receives between 100-kilolitres and 130-kilolitres of water an hour but since the dam ran dry the supply has been throttled.

The town now receives 55-kilolitres an hour from seven boreholes.

The department warns that recent rains in some provinces have not broken the national drought.

Departmental spokesman, Sputnik Ratau said the level of Gauteng's Vaal Dam had risen to about 44.5% in recent weeks but that is not enough to constitute an end to the drought.

Source: The Times

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