

Slight decrease in Vaal River system levels

A major part of the dams within the Integrated Vaal River System (IVRS) have this week seen a decrease in levels, while others have remained unchanged for the second subsequent week, with just one recording an increase.



Image source: Gallo/Getty

In a statement released on Wednesday, 19 May, the Department of Water and Sanitation said its weekly reservoir report shows that nine of the dams within the system dropped and four others remained unchanged from last week.

“Inevitably, the mixed picture in the levels of the system spilt over to the overall level of system as shown in its decline this week,” the department said.

Last week, the system was at 91.3% and this week, the system is at 91.0%.

“The level of the system this week represents a substantial improvement from 67.4% over the same week in the preceding year.

“The system is the backbone of the economy of Gauteng as the economic hub not only of South Africa, but the entire African continent. Leading industries that breathe life into the country’s economy, such as Sasol and Eskom, are supplied

with water from the system,” the department said.



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Professor Anthony Turton 26 Mar 2021



Vaal Dam shows decline this week

A significant dam within the system, the Vaal Dam, has declined this week. It lowered from 101.4% last week to slightly above the 100% at 100.7% this week. During the same time last year, the dam had slightly passed the 50% to stand at 50.5%.

Another dam to flow at a lesser level this week is the Grootdraai Dam. It fell from last week's 94.9% to 93.5% presently. The dam stood at 89.2% at this time last year.

“The Lesotho Katse and Mohale dams have equally dropped this week. The former dam has seen a decrease to 76.5% from 77.1% last week.

“The dam bounced back from a dire state of 37.7%, which it recorded twelve months ago during the same week,” the department said.

Meanwhile, the latter dam continues to lurch from a calamitous situation to an even lower level this week. It dipped further from 38.7% last week to 38.2% this week. Last year at the same time, it made for a dismal spectacle at 14.5%.

“On the contrary, the Bloemhof Dam has surged this week. It went up from 107.6% last week to 108.0% this week. During the preceding year at the same time, the dam was down at 99.2% but in a remarkably strong position,” the department said.

The Sterkfontein Dam remains at 98.7% for the second subsequent week.

In the previous year during the same week, the dam was lesser but steady at 93.5%.

Three other dams that are unchanged from last week's levels are Woodstock Dam at 100.0%, Zaaihoek Dam 80.0% as well as the Vygeboom 100.3%



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The other dams within the system stand as follows:

- Jericho - 83.5%
- Morgenstond - 85.7%
- Westoe – 84.2%
- Heyshope – 86.8%
- Nooitgedacht – 96.4%

“The department continues to plead with both businesses and households to use water with care. In this regard, it appeals that toilets should not be flushed unless it is necessary to do so. This could assist to save many litres of water, as toilets do not require flushing after every use of the facility.

“In the same vein, the department wishes to reiterate that when washing cars, water users must refrain from using hosepipes but rather use buckets. This is especially the case for businesses such as car washes,” the department said.

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