

# Despite depressed economy, SAPPMA sees increase in membership

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the Southern African Plastic Pipe Manufacturers Association (SAPPMA) recently held its 16th annual general meeting virtually. The plastic pipes standards body represents pipe manufacturers in South Africa and has grown to 51 members this past year, consisting of pipe and flange manufacturers, installers and fabricators, polymer producers, suppliers and certification bodies.



Image source: [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

Welcoming the members who were in attendance, SAPPMA CEO Jan Venter said: “We ended the 2019/2020 financial year in the midst of the strangest situation ever, with many businesses closed. We are very grateful that all our members are back in operation and that we did not lose anyone during this time. Although the depressed economy and difficult trading conditions have forced many businesses to close their doors permanently, we are fortunate to have seen an increase in membership during the last few months.”

## Pivotal role of plastic pipes

“Pipelines are at the heart of water distribution and sewage removal. Plastic pipes play a vital role in terms of the quality of the water that is delivered to our country’s citizens. The industry succeeds when we succeed, and it is therefore SAPPMA’s role to ensure consistent product quality and the long-term sustainability of our industry,” Venter said.

Because it is critically important to ensure uniformity in terms of interpretation and application of the national product standards, SAPPMA continues to work closely with SANS to evaluate, amend or approve standards. These are usually derivatives or copies of ISO documents. The association also maintains a permanent presence at TC138/SC at SANS. Regular feedback is given to SAPPMA members during technical meetings to ensure that everybody remains updated on the latest developments and product testing procedures.

“We have come a long way over the past five years. For the first time in decades, we have access to SANAS-accredited testing and certification,” Venter reported, adding that SAPPMA is also proud to have welcomed four accredited certification bodies as members.

In order to assess the ability and performance of member pipe manufacturers, SAPPMA continues to conduct regular announced and unannounced factory audits. Common findings at these audits are brought to the attention of the body's technical manager as pointers towards areas in the industry that might require attention. These issues are often used as topics of discussion at SAPPMA's regular technical workshops.



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## **Appointment of new directors**

Mark Berry (Safripol) and Renier Viljoen (Rare) stepped down as directors, and Chakrapani (CP) Bandaru of Flotek was voted back onto the SAPPMA board of directors, joining Don Coleman (Sizabantu Piping Systems), Lizl du Preez (Pipeflo), Trevor Woolward (Pipe-tech), Terence Hobson (Sun Ace SA) and Jan Venter (CEO).

"In view of the difficult economic conditions, but also thanks to our good financial results, we are pleased to announce that there will be zero increase in expenses and 5 % reduction in membership fees for the next financial year. Members can remain confident that we will continue to serve to the very best of our ability, working for the common good of the industry in general and our members in particular," Venter concluded.

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