

PLASTIC PIPES BODY URGES GOVERNMENT TO INVEST IN QUALITY WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AS FEARS OF DISEASE AND DROUGHTS CONTINUE TO INCREASE

Johannesburg, 23 March 2020. The Southern African Plastic Pipe Manufacturers Association (SAPPMA), the standards body for the plastic pipe industry, says the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus in South Africa has once again highlighted the dangers that the country's lacking water infrastructure pose for the most vulnerable in our society.

Jan Venter, CEO of SAPPMA, says frequent hand washing with soap and clean water is one of the first lines of defense against contracting the Corona virus. "However, it is a sad and worrying reality that many informal settlements and communities around our country do not have access to clean water for drinking, hand washing or cooking to protect them against the ravaging effect of this highly contagious disease," he says. "The country desperately needs a reliable network of water and sewage pipes capable of serving the whole population".

SAPPMA is a non-profit association representing the leading companies in the plastics piping sector, with the primary purpose and mission of creating absolute customer confidence in the plastics pipe industry through facilitating high standards of ethics, product quality and technical information. Each year, approximately 150 000 tons of pipe (PVC and HDPE) are produced in South Africa, used for forming integral, long term and extremely important infrastructure networks for water, gas and telecommunications supply.

"We were relieved when Water and Sanitation Minister Lindiwe Sisulu launched the National Water & Sanitation Master Plan (NW&SMP) towards the end of last year in which she committed to address the issues of insufficient water infrastructure, maintenance and investment, water and sanitation, deteriorating water quality and a lack of water engineers as a matter of urgency. However, we have not seen much progress made in this regard and believe the Corona-virus outbreak once again highlights that we cannot afford to delay the process any longer," Venter implores.

SAPPMA is urging Government to engage with them and the plastic pipe manufacturers they represent in order to develop a plan of action that will only see pipes installed that meet to international health and manufacturing standards.

"The SAPPMA brand is well known and is recognized by design engineers and customers as a safeguard against poor quality products. Pipes that bear the SAPPMA mark of quality will last up to 100 years before they need replacement, plus they are economical, sustainable and quick to install. As an industry we are offering our expertise and our assistance to help find workable solutions aimed at supplying and installing water pipes as quickly as possible in order to protect local communities against diseases, droughts and water shortages as a result of the loss of potable water. It is no longer an exaggeration, but the harsh truth, when we say that our country's future and thousands of lives depend on it," Venter concludes.

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