

MEDIA STATEMENT

09 MARCH 2010

KLERKSDORP INCINERATOR MUST DEMONSTRATE ABILITY TO COMPLY

The Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica has required Wasteman to undertake a "proof of performance" of the incinerator prior to a final decision being made on whether or not to shut down the Wasteman operated incinerator in Klerksdorp.

The suspension of the facility shutdown has been granted subject to amongst others: a four month "proof of performance" period; submission of the annual audit report; submission of a full status report of the monitoring committee and further emission testing results.

The information provided in terms of the above will enable Minister Sonjica to make a final decision with regards to the objection raised by Wasteman. The suspension of the shutdown will remain in place until such time that the Minister has made a final decision on the objection.

However, if any additional non-compliance is identified on the site which seriously impacts on the environment, she may decide to lift the suspension which would result in the shut-down of the facility.

A blitz into several of the Wasteman premises executed in late November last year had found the Klerksdorp incinerator to be in contravention of many of its permit conditions. Wasteman operates the incinerator in terms of two different permits, one dealing with the waste issues and the other regulating air emissions. The non-compliance issues that led to the compliance notice included the following: the absence of a monitoring committee; waste being stored on site for longer periods than permitted; and exceedances in relation to emission levels.

A final compliance notice was served on Wasteman in respect of the activities at the Klerksdorp incinerator on 24 December 2009 providing them with 35 working days within which to cease all operations at the site. The due date for cessation of operations was then moved to 09 March to enable the Minister to evaluate all the information before her as her office had received an application from Wasteman requesting the instructions in the notice to be suspended and objecting to the notice.

In granting a suspension of the instruction to shutdown the facility, the Minister took into account the improvements made and the work undertaken by the facility, including implementation of processes and protocols, to bring the facility into compliance. In addition to mitigating against the release of fugitive emissions from the site, the latest air emission test results confirm that the limits now fall within the permitted limit values. A continuous monitoring system is also now in place to ensure that monitoring is undertaken in line with the permit requirements.

It will be critical for Wasteman to demonstrate to the Department over the four month proof of performance period that this incinerator is able to operate within the parameters of the permit requirements as well as other environmental legal obligations. Inspectors from the Department will be closely monitoring these operations and any problems will be reported directly to the Minister's office.

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