

## RANDFONTEIN LOCAL MUNICIPALITY EXCELS IN DRINKING WATER QUALITY

The Department of Water Affairs initiated the drinking water quality (DWQ) regulation program in 2005 with the objective of ensuring the improvement of tap water quality by means of compliance monitoring. A survey conducted in the preceding year indicated that less than 50% of municipalities then monitored drinking water quality as per legislated requirements. The introduction of the regulation initiative saw the monitoring performance improving to 100% by early 2008. However this improvement did not necessarily instilled public confidence due to many negative reporting on water quality at that stage.

This phenomenon triggered the initiation of an incentive-based regulation program, termed Blue Drop Certification, which commenced on 11 September 2008. Randfontein Local Municipality was involved in this certification process through the 2008 and 2009 assessments where a wide variety of aspects relating to the Water Supply System (not only water quality) in Randfontein were evaluated.

During the first round of assessments it became clear that there was still a long way to go before all the criteria could be met in order for Randfontein to achieve Blue Drop Certification. The team now knew what the Department: Water Affairs expected to see in order to declare the water supply system as a well run, sustainable system providing the consumers in Randfontein with excellent quality water. This lead the team involved with this program, both from Randfontein Local Municipality and from Enviro Metsi (Pty) Ltd (as a service provider who assisted RLM throughout the process), to pull together like never before in an attempt to drastically improve the situation.

This effort paid off during the 2009 assessments where it became clear that the assessors were duly impressed with the newly implemented systems and programs that were put into place in order to ensure the proper management of Randfontein's water supply system – not only could the team prove that Randfontein was supplying it's consumers with water of an excellent quality, but plans were in place to ensure that this remained the case. The water quality improved from 64 % in 2009 to 87 % in 2010.

Because of this commitment to the certification process, Randfontein Local Municipality was nominated for a Blue Drop Excellence Award in Recognition for Improvement Excellence (Medium Municipalities). This was announced at the prestigious Blue Drop Awards evening held at the WISA 2010 conference in Durban during April 2010. An interview with Mr. Richard Magwanya from the Purification Works also appeared in the Blue Drop Excellence Awards Journal following this announcement.



It is truly inspiring to see that this level of commitment to the provision of potable water exists in Randfontein and that it is being recognized by the Department: Water Affairs through their Blue Drop Certification Program.