

Strandfontein temporary desalination plant being decommissioned

Commissioned in May/June 2018 as one of the City of Cape Town's emergency projects in response to the prospect of Day Zero, the Strandfontein temporary desalination plant was to function as an emergency water supply if the city needed to switch off the taps and create water collection points.



Two years on, the plant is being decommissioned a month earlier than scheduled, at the contractor's request, due to demand for modular desalination elsewhere in the world. As there is no cost incurred by the city, as well as the negligible impact it says this would have on water security, the proposal has been accepted.

"This was a first for the city, and the experience of the past two years has taught us a lot about the management of a desalination plant. They say that one should never let a good crisis go to waste, and while the going was tough during the worst drought in our recorded history, this project has shown that we can produce clean, SANS 241 approved drinking water through desalination. Successfully concluding this project brings us a step closer towards achieving resilience through alternative water sources and large scale desalination in the coming years," said Xanthea Limberg, mayoral committee member for water and waste.



Infrastructure to be removed in phases

Once the plant has been shut down, the infrastructure will be removed in phases by the contractor. Timeframes for the removal of infrastructure will be largely dependent on the weather and sea conditions. During this time, public access to sections of the area may be limited, depending on the scope of the work being effected.

The area on which the plant was built will be restored to its former condition. An environmental control officer will monitor the rehabilitation work.

The cityy has advised residents that it is likely there will be a slight change to the taste of water as supply shifts back to surface water, but that SANS241 standards remain in place and water remains safe to drink.

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