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Assessing the effectiveness of projects aimed at reducing water loss in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

Chiloane, Salome

2017

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24613

Chiloane, Salome, (2017) Assessing the effectiveness of projects aimed at reducing water loss in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24613

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ABSTRACT

This research set out to investigate the effectiveness of water loss projects in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. The study thus focused on water loss eradication programme in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. The study was motivated by the fact that Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is facing a serious challenge of managing water loss. Thus, the objective of the study was to determine the effectiveness of projects which have been rolled out to minimise water loss. Information pertaining to the progress and performance of the twenty-three projects from Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality was collected. The information which was collected was project reports, payments certificates as well as appointment letters.

Currently there is no study which has been done on the effectiveness of water loss projects in Metropolitan municipalities. However, literature on how water loss projects should be rolled out is available. Literature indicates that key areas need to be considered before embarking on a water loss reduction programme. The areas which need to be considered are system schematics, leak location and repair, pressure management, sectorising, logging and analysis of minimum night flow, bulk management meters, bulk consumer meters, domestic metering and billing, pipe replacement and repair, water balance as well as community awareness and education. Moreover, effectiveness measures of projects have been identified from literature.

The results of the study show that some projects are effective whilst others are not effective. The reason behind the non-effectiveness of the projects are as a results of contractors failing to execute the projects as per the contractual agreement. The other reasons which led to project non-effectiveness were contractors not adhering to project time which always affects the project cost. The findings of the study thus trigger the question on the criteria which are used to select contractors and consultants in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. The manner into which the water loss projects have been rolled out, are in line with what literature suggest. However, consultants and contractors are failing the Metro.

The study recommends that focus should be made in developing municipal project managers to be able to conduct proper oversight on the contractors and consultants. Over and above that, the municipality should try to pay small contractors on time to prevent project delays. Focus should also be made by the municipality to blacklist service providers who do not deliver and also to have a system in place for recovering losses from contractors and consultants who do not render good services. A review on section 33 of the Municipal Finance Management Act (no 56 of 2003) may assist in improving project performance.