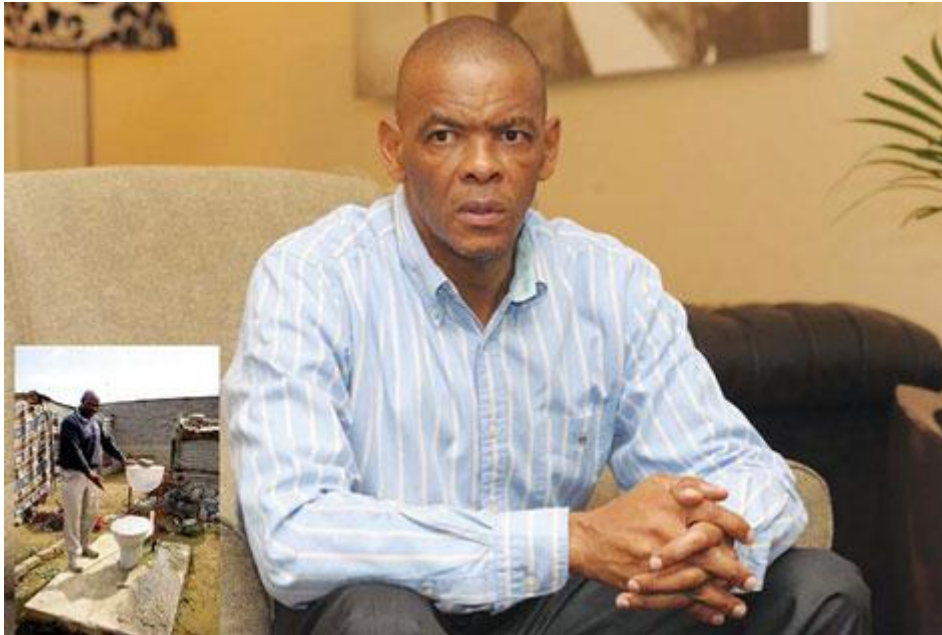


PREMIER TARGETS OPEN TOILETS

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TOILET WATCH: Free State Premier Ace Magashule has directed an investigation into reports of incomplete toilets in Viljoenskroon. Picture: TNA INSET: A resident points to an open toilet. Picture: Gallo Images

Premier Ace Magashule has directed the department of cooperative governance and traditional affairs and the Moqhaka municipality to urgently look into reports of incomplete toilets in Rammulotsi, Viljoenskroon.

This follows recent media reports which claimed that some residents in Rammulotsi have reported incomplete toilets. Magashule said the department must work closely with the Moqhaka municipality to ensure incidents of incomplete toilets are dealt with speedily.

The premier has noted the progress that has been made by the municipality in this regard. Since 2011, the municipality has enclosed more than 1800 open toilets. Initially, the Moqhaka municipality had more than 600 unenclosed toilets, but the figure increased when other residents destroyed their toilets, hoping to get new ones.

Magashule has urged residents of Rammulotsi to work together with the municipality to address this matter.

Magashule reiterated the directive that all municipalities throughout the province were required to invest more resources on basic services.

He congratulated the Moqhaka municipality for responding well to the issue of sanitation in area.

“We are proud of the fact that the municipality has dealt with this challenge quickly and effectively. This speaks volumes about the commitment of this government to serve our people.

The Free State, like many rural provinces, faces sanitation problems but the provincial government, working with municipalities, is doing its best to attend to the issue,” he said.

In the meantime, the DA has asked the SA Human Rights Commission to investigate more incidents of houses without toilets in Viljoenskroon.

In a statement issued on Sunday, Patricia Kopane, leader of the DA in the province, said the party had found that a newly developed housing project in Northleigh, Viljoenskroon, does not have any toilets in the houses. She said residents were required to use the bucket system.

The Moqhaka municipality was recently subpoenaed by the rights commission on the DA's request, after the municipality failed to honour recommendations to rebuild unenclosed toilets in Rammulotsi.

The commission accused the municipality of having failed on its undertaking to close the unenclosed structures as agreed earlier.

Kopane said the latest neglect to provide proper toilets was a sign that the ANC-governed Moqhaka municipality has repeatedly ignored the right to dignity of residents as well as the national housing code, which includes a minimum quality for basic services, including sanitation.

"The DA has now requested the commission to visit the new development in Northleigh as part of yet another possible human rights violation by Moqhaka municipality," she said.

[Source: www.thenewage.co.za]