

Collaboration crucial to effective mine water management

A unified water stewardship strategy for the mining sector is needed to address stakeholder concerns, earn social acceptance and tackle environmental challenges.



Photo: Canyon Coal

“Mines should look towards forming collaborative programmes on water conservation, water demand management and water treatment to drive water savings, usage improvements and, thereby, create a holistic integrated environmental and social development approach across the mining industry. This is crucial to bolstering mines environmental programmes and establishing good working relationships with host communities,” said Melissa Pillay, Canyon Coal licensing and compliance manager at the virtual Water Show Africa 2020.

Pillay pointed out that if neighbouring mines developed optimal water conservation and water demand management plans, they could create collective water use goals, which could in time be extended to collaboration on other environmental and social development initiatives.

“If mines work together to recycle, reuse, treat and correctly dispose of mine water, this could save on capital costs and ensure that mines worked collaboratively, instead of in silos, which can often place avoidable additional pressure on water resources,” she said.

“Communities should to be brought on board, as early as possible, to support mine water management programmes. This

could include providing them with training to become water quality and management personnel and/or running awareness campaigns to make the communities aware of the need support mines in their water treatment and management campaigns. This would benefit communities in terms of providing them with transferable skills that can be used in other sectors and potentially even lead to job opportunities in the long term.

“Mines need to be conscious of the fact that water is an important resource that must be used sensibly and responsibly at all times,” Pillay said.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>