

Urine diversion in uMhlathuze

Averting high groundwater

Phase 3 of the local rural sanitation backlog eradication project in Umhlathuze Municipality will see 8 000 toilet units installed for communities around Richards Bay. Double pits, as opposed to the conventional single-pit system, were specified for this project as this dramatically increases the lifespan of the unit. A challenge during installation will be groundwater levels which were encountered at a depth of 500 mm in Phase 2 of the project when digging the double pits. To overcome the challenge, urine diversion was implemented. The liquid is diverted away from the toilet to a soakaway. Each beneficiary receives a unit comprising nine components, including a

roof, a stainless steel door and two vent pipes to manage the odour. These lightweight components can easily be lifted and assembled by four women. Since August 2008, Rocla, which was awarded the contracts for phases 2 and 3, has trained, empowered and employed in excess of 200 local residents. 70% of these were women and they have installed 5 750 units as well as 32 toilets for the disabled in the villages of Dube South, Umkhwanza South, Port Dunford and Esikhawini. Andre Labuschagne, product development manager at Rocla, says that each toilet is also provided with GPS coordinates to allow for maintenance and control.