



the **dpw**

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**Department of Public Works**  
North West Provincial Government  
Republic of South Africa

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## **Erroneous billing almost cost us dearly but....**

**DATE:** TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 06, 2007

Vigilance by the North West Department of Public Works on its municipal services accounts has saved the department from paying an unduly debt of more than R2 million.

Ditsobotla Local Municipality early this year summoned the department, alleging that it was owed R2 155 637. 29 for services rendered namely water, electricity and sewerage by the department's Central Region office.

Suspecting that the amount could have been an result of a costly error, the region held a meeting with the municipality to alert the institution and to raise concern.

Subsequently, the municipality decided to inspect its meter readings, which were found to be faulty.

It was established that instead of counting in hundreds, the meters did so in thousands thus inflating the account to an astronomical figure.

The actual amount owed by the department was only R348 210.04 . This figure included an accumulated interest of R131 194.20 accrued before the installation of pre-paid meters in 2006.

In June this year, the municipality threatened to terminate services if the amount was not paid. Another meeting was held between the two parties and it was resolved that the accrued interest be written off. This meant that the department had to settle an outstanding amount of R233 832.22 only.

This amount comprised R211 892.70 for electricity, R18 816.87 for water and R3 122.65 for sanitation.

The department has since made means to settle the account.

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