

Growing environmental firm invests in R4,5 mln lab

KAVITH HARRILALL

A NUMBER of exciting new developments have characterised the remarkable growth phase experienced by Talbot & Talbot, a Pietermaritzburg-based environmental solutions company.

Chief among these developments is the launch of its newly completed R4,5 million inorganic laboratory, specialising in analysis of waste water and potable water.

The company experienced phenomenal growth in the past year, particularly in relation to business from municipalities. It will also focus on growing its client base, particularly in the industrial area of Richards Bay and Gauteng.

Laboratory manager Vanessa Talbot said: "We also have our first satellite [microbiology] laboratory up and running in Port Elizabeth".

"By expanding the laboratory, we are able to increase the amount of sampling and testing done due to both the increased floor space and latest scientific equipment."

The 450 m² building allows for the introduction of several new and updated items of equipment. One of these is a new laminar flow cabinet specially designed to create sterile and dust-free conditions



PHOTO: KAVITH HARRILALL

Laboratory manager Vanessa Talbot (left) and laboratory technical manager Belinda Talbot in the instrument room of the company's new inorganic laboratory, a R4,5 million investment.

in laboratories, preventing contamination of biological samples or any particle-sensitive device.

Laboratory technical manager Belinda Talbot said that this will allow for an increase in the capacity of the microbiological section, enabling it to perform specialised examinations such as for *Vibrio cholerae* and salmonella.

Other new additions are atomic

absorption spectrophotometers, a flow injection analyser, a filtration manifold, which is expected to increase sample throughput and reduce turn-around time, and an updated laboratory information management system.

The laboratory has also undergone a re-auditing.

"Whenever you move equipment, your lab goes into voluntary suspen-

sion. This is one of the obligations of an accredited lab. It has taken us two months to revalidate equipment and methods. We have had a successful re-audit and our accreditation will be reinstated shortly," said Vanessa.

The company was established 20 years ago and does business in South Africa and other parts of Africa.

kavith@witness.co.za