

Various factors behind low water pressure in Seberang Prai

By Audrey Dermawan - February 2, 2022



Water demand in the Seberang Prai Selatan (SPS) district has increased significantly due to socioeconomic growth in recent years. - NSTP file pic

NIBONG TEBAL: Hot weather with minimal rainfall, high water demand in the pre-Chinese New Year period and on-going fire-fighting activities in the Pulau Burung landfill since Jan 12 have resulted in low pressure in the Seberang Prai Selatan (SPS) district here.

Penang Water Supply Corporation chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said fire-fighting activities in the Pulau Burung landfill were compounding the current low water pressure issue at several higher ground and end-of-pipeline residential areas in the SPS district.

He said firemen drew water from nearby rivers while volunteer firefighters and the Seberang Prai City Council (MBSP) took water from PBAPP hydrants located around the landfill area.

"Inadvertently, such fire-fighting activities reduced water pressure to some areas in the SPS district.

"The key factor that is exacerbating the low water pressure issue is hot weather combined with high pre-Chinese New Year (CNY) water demands.

"Due to high temperatures, more consumers in Seberang Prai have been using water on a daily basis. In particular, the Chinese community have been preparing for the CNY festivities.

"As people celebrate CNY, this annual festive high consumption trend is likely to continue until the middle of this month," he said today.

Residents of several housing areas such as Residensi Merbok, Taman Seruling Emas, Taman Widuri, Sungai Duri and nearby areas had all complained about low water pressure.

All these areas are located on higher ground and/or at the end-of-water supply pipelines.

PBAPP, according to Jaseni, is striving to address the low water pressure issue in the SPS district.

Water demand in the district has increased significantly due to socioeconomic growth in recent years.

He added that, as mentioned last month, PBAPP was deploying resources and implementing short-term water supply engineering measures to alleviate the situation.

These measures include:

1. Improving and re-configuring the existing water supply pipeline network to ensure good and consistent water pressure.
2. Connecting 'dead pipes' at strategic locations to sustain good distribution pressure.
3. Intensifying checks for leaks, valve damage or 'air locks' in key mains and pipelines, and carrying out 'de-airing' work as required.

4. Repairing (or replacing) all leaking pipelines and valves as quickly as possible.
5. Installation of 13 static community water tanks at Taman Widuri, Taman Seruling Emas, Sungai Duri, Taman Seri Putera, Sungai Duri Indah, Sungai Baong and the Seberang Prai Prison Complex.
6. Deploying water tankers when a PBAPP pressure recorder detects a water supply disruption that lasts for more than 24 hours.

As for long-term solutions, Jaseni said the low water pressure issue in the SPS district could not be completely resolved until the implementation of a comprehensive long-term water supply engineering programme to increase treated water production and upgrade the existing water distribution network.

PBAPP, he noted, had proposed the implementation of the following five projects over the next three to five years to ensure water supply security and stability throughout Seberang Prai until 2030:

1. Phase 2, Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) sedimentation tanks upgrade project.
2. Package 12A, Sungai Dua WTP (a new water treatment module project).
3. Phase 1, Mengkuang Dam WTP project.
4. Phase 1, Sungai Muda WTP project.
5. Sungai Prai Water Supply Scheme: a pre-treatment process project.

"The combined potential yield of all these projects is an additional 569 million litres of water per day (MLD).

"Moreover, PBAPP will also need to upgrade its water supply network to supply more water to consumers at suitable pressures.

"All the proposed water supply engineering projects are subject to approval by the Penang government."