

## Water disruption in Penang due to closure of Sungai Dua WTP

By Audrey Dermawan - July 6, 2022



Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said operations at the plant had to be halted for four hours since 8am today as the raw water flowing into the Sungai Dua WTP from Sungai Muda recorded high levels of turbidity. - NSTP/ MIKAIL ONG

GEORGE TOWN: Several parts of Penang are experiencing water disruption following the closure of Sungai Dua water treatment plant (WTP).

Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said operations at the plant had to be halted for four hours since 8am today as the raw water flowing into the Sungai Dua WTP from Sungai Muda recorded high levels of turbidity.

He said the muddy and murky water flowing into the Sungai Dua WTP made it difficult for the plant to treat the water.

"As a result, the treatment plant could not operate effectively and efficiently.

"The state water authority has taken immediate measures to minimise water disruption to the affected areas by channelling water from the Mengkuang Dam to the Sungai Dua WTP to be treated before supplying to consumers," he said when asked to comment on the water disruption.

Residents in Kepala Batas and Tasek Gelugor on the mainland, including some on the island, have taken to social media to complain about the water disruption in their areas.

Elaborating, Chow said they rarely drew water from the Mengkuang Dam, the state's strategic dam, unless in an emergency.

"What we are facing now is an unexpected situation. We have no choice but to draw water from the Mengkuang Dam," he added.

The Mengkuang Dam caters to 85 per cent of the state's population, and can last for up to 108 days, if there are no other water sources.

As of noon, the turbidity level of the raw water entering the treatment plant was at an acceptable level, and the Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has restarted water production operations at the Sungai Dua WTP in stages.

PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said the temporary shutdown of the Sungai Dua WTP caused water pressure in all major pipelines in Seberang Prai and Penang island to drop.

He said this was because the Sungai Dua WTP produced more than 80 per cent of the treated water that was supplied throughout the state daily.

"PBAPP received enquiries and complaints from water consumers relating to low water pressure throughout Penang, including industrial consumers.

"PBAPP apologises for all the temporary inconvenience caused. However, all affected consumers should kindly note that the sudden spike in the turbidity of raw water from Sungai Muda is a factor which is beyond PBAPP's control.

"Nevertheless, PBAPP has reacted and responded to this crisis situation in a timely and appropriate manner," he added.

Jaseni said PBAPP would continue to monitor the turbidity of water extracted from Sungai Muda round-the-clock.

"We will continue to draw water from the Mengkuang Dam to ensure safe raw water turbidity levels for the Sungai Dua WTP.

"Our priority is to ensure safe and sustainable treated water production in Penang," he stressed.

It was reported that two water treatment plants in Kedah had been forced to halt operations last night following the floods that hit Baling, with more than 200,000 account holders affected.

The Kulim Hi-Tech and Pinang Tunggal/Sungai Petani plants had to undergo a total shutdown at 10.50pm and 11.10pm respectively because of a high Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU) reading.

NTU refers to the concentration of suspended solids in the water.

On another matter, Chow said both the Penang Island City Council and the Seberang Prai City Council had sent aid missions to Baling, Kedah, to help out in the cleaning up efforts in the aftermath of the floods.

He said the two city councils also brought with it various assets to help in the clean-up in Baling.

Earlier, Chow witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding signing which will see Penang playing host to the International Advertising Association World Congress in March 2024.