

NATION

Wednesday, 6 July 2022

Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant is back online



GEORGE TOWN: The Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant, which supplies 80% of the total volume of treated water to Penang, is back online.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) said the plant was shut for about four hours to allow for emergency response procedures as raw water from Sungai Muda turned too turbid (murky) to be treated safely.

PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said turbidity of raw water being pumped from Sungai Muda (via the Sungai Dua Canal) to the plant was recorded at three times the normal levels of nephelometric turbidity unit (NTU) on Wednesday (July 6).

"At 6am, the turbidity rating to the plant was recorded as 3,000 NTU. The normal turbidity of raw water from Sungai Muda is below 1,000 NTU.

"At 8am, all water production operations at the Sungai Dua WTP were temporarily shut down.

"This emergency measure was necessary to prevent the production of unsafe treated water that is not compliant to the Drinking Water Quality Control parameters set by the Health Ministry," he said in a statement.

Jaseni added that as a remedial measure, PBAPP immediately reduced abstraction of raw water from Sungai Muda and released raw water stored in the Mengkuang Dam to reduce the turbidity of the raw water in the Sungai Dua Canal.

He said at 12pm, when the turbidity level of the raw water entering the plant was at an acceptable level, PBAPP restarted water production operations at the Sungai Dua WTP in stages.

Jaseni explained that the temporary shutdown of the Sungai Dua WTP caused water pressures in all major pipelines in Seberang Perai and Penang Island to drop, as Sungai Dua WTP produces more than 80% of the treated water for Penang daily.

He said PBAPP received enquiries and complaints from consumers relating to low water pressure throughout Penang, including industrial consumers, and apologised for all the inconveniences caused.

The sudden spike in the turbidity of raw water from Sungai Muda was beyond its control, he said and added that PBAPP projected the supply pressures in all pipelines would be normalised by 12pm Thursday (July 7).

Earlier, Kedah's Syarikat Air Darul Aman in a statement said a water disruption would affect an estimated 171,800 households to make way for emergency works at treatment plants following the floods in Baling.

Also, there was a mad rush of consumers at hypermarkets seen stocking up bottles of water after news of the water disruption went viral.

Not just residential areas, but industrial and commercial sectors in various areas were also affected by the water disruption, with some reporting low pressure and others being cut off from supply.