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About 590,000 water consumers in Penang to face four-day water supply disruption next month



State Infrastructure Committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari said the four-day interruption is unavoidable to cater to two major valve replacement works in Sungai Dua, Butterworth.

GEORGE TOWN: Some 590,000 water consumers in the state, including non-domestic consumers in all key industrial areas, will experience a four-day water supply interruption from Jan 10 to 14, next year.

This will be one of the major planned disruption in nearly three decades.

State Infrastructure Committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari said the four-day interruption is unavoidable to cater to two major valve replacement works in Sungai Dua, Butterworth.

The two 1,200mm valves are within the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and near the WTP fence which are leaking.

Zairil said various ancillary water works projects at 22 other locations throughout the state would also be carried out simultaneously.

He said these leaking valves were affecting treated water-pumping operations at the WTP and causing significant water loss daily.

He added that the works to replace these valves required a shutdown of the Sungai Dua WTP, which would affect water supply to about 590,000 water consumers statewide.

"This is major maintenance operations which need to be carried out. Some of these parts have not been replaced for 50 years and need immediate replacement.

"They were supposed to have been replaced one to two years back but we could not find the right time to do so.

"We have no choice but to do it now and we are giving one-month notice to the people to make the necessary preparations.

"If we don't do it now, and the parts suddenly malfunctioned, then we need to carry out emergency works without prior notice, which is even worse for the people," he told a press conference at his office in Komtar here this morning, apologising to all water consumers for the inconvenience.

Zairil said those affected would be those getting water supply from Sungai Muda and thereafter the Sungai Dua WTP.

He added that the shutdown to facilitate the major repair works would take 24 hours on Jan 10.

"After that, there will be gradual resumption of water supply, which takes 48 hours until 96 hours, depending on the areas," he added.

Zairil said the state executive council had discussed the matter and had appointed state Local Government Committee chairman Jason H'ng to coordinate the despatched of water tanks to affected areas, particularly low-rise and other places in need of other such as hospitals.

He said for factories and hotels, they are required by law to store water supply for 48 hours.

"In most high-rises, there are water tanks. We urge the people to use the water available prudently.

"During this time, we also advise car wash operators and laundry shop operators to temporary stop their operations."

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer K. Pathmanathan said all this was part of PBA's contingency projects.

"We are carrying this major maintenance works to avoid multiple interruptions in future," he said.

The list of affected areas are available in PBAPP's Facebook page.