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Penang issues second water alert due to low water level of two dams



The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has issued a second water alert after two key dams on Penang island have dropped to about 50 per cent levels. - Bernama file pic

GEORGE TOWN: The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has issued a second water alert after two key dams on Penang island have dropped to about 50 per cent levels.

PBAPP chief executive officer K. Pathmanathan said as of yesterday the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam were 51.8 per cent and 51.3 per cent respectively.

He said the effective capacities of both dams were 82.5 per cent and 64 per cent at the start of this year.

He added that rainfall recorded in the dams' water catchment areas for the months of January, February and March was 251mm, while the average daily consumption of water for Penang in the corresponding two months were 875 and 944 million litres per day (MLD).

"These statistics reflect the facts that low rainfall in the dams' water catchment areas (WCAs) and high water demand are the two key factors that caused the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and the Teluk Bahang Dam to drop by 30.7 per cent and 12.7 per cent since Jan 1 this year.

"PBAPP is also seeking the cooperation of all Penang domestic water consumers (households) to use water wisely.

"PBAPP's 2022 consumption analysis data shows that domestic water consumption accounted for 61.5 per cent of Penang's average daily consumption of 868 million litres per day (MLD)," he said today.

In response to this water supply alert scenario, Pathmanathan said PBAPP was implementing several water supply engineering measures.

"PBAPP is optimising raw water abstraction from Sungai Muda and treated water production at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (Sungai Dua WTP) as well as pumping more treated water from the Sungai Dua WTP to Penang island (via three sets of twin submarine pipelines) to support water supply on the island.

"We are also minimising raw water drawdowns from the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam as far as possible, without compromising water supply services and stepping up dry weather controls to strategically 'defend' the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam for as long as possible.

"We are also re-scheduling planned pipe works to minimise water wastage as well as responding to public reports of burst or leaking pipes as soon as possible," he added.

Pathmanathan said preparing contingency plans to address water demand in higher ground and end-of-line (EoL) areas if the current dry season persists was also another measure that would be taken.

He added that the Penang people's cooperation would be much appreciated.

"Let us work together to avoid a water supply shortage in Penang until the rainy season arrives," he said.