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Penang Water Supply Corp allocates RM2.5m to install 2,000 smart meters



GEORGE TOWN, May 25 — The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has allocated RM2.5 million to install smart water meters involving 2,000 consumer accounts in Balik Pulau, near here, this year.

Its chief executive officer, K. Pathmanathan said that it involved the first phase this year and would subsequently involve 20,000 consumer accounts in other areas of the state in a move towards going digital.

“The calculation method remains the same but when there is a smart meter, consumers have the option to download their bills online, whether every month or once every two months (depending on their payment preference)... only that the installation of the smart meters requires a large amount of funds.

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“This is because one normal meter costs around RM67 compared to RM650 for a smart meter. We have identified suitable locations and the PBAPP also needs to find out the input and output obtained from the first phase,” he told reporters here today.

He said this during the 2024 World Water Day at the Bukit Dumbar Recreational Park which was launched by Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow and attended by National Water Services Commission (SPAN) chairman Charles Anthony Santiago and Penang Water Watch president Datuk Dr Chang Ngai Weng.

Meanwhile, Chow said the state government had delayed the implementation of the new water tariff, which was approved by SPAN, for almost two years to allow consumers to enjoy lower water rates.

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“Many states implemented (the new tariff) in 2023, we waited until February this year to implement it, meaning we used the old tariff for nearly over a year,” he said.

On Feb 1, Penang doubles its domestic water tariffs, with households consuming up to 20 cubic metres per month paying a higher rate of 50 sen per cubic metre from the previous 22 sen.

For consumption between 20 and 35 cubic metres per month, the charge is RM1.10 per cubic metre, up from 46 sen, while consumption exceeding 35 cubic metres incurs a rate of RM2 per cubic metre, an increase from 68 sen.

Following the implementation of the new rates, many consumers in the state were shocked by the increase in their water bills, which rose as much as 100 per cent to more than 150 per cent since February. — Bernama