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Bi-monthly billing carried out for 25 years, says Penang water corporation

PBAPP says one bill every two months is to ensure cost efficiency and adheres to federal regulations.



GEORGE TOWN: Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has rejected claims that bi-monthly water bills lead to increased expenses which consumers have to bear.

Its CEO, K Pathmanathan, said there was “no truth” to the claims as the company has been issuing bi-monthly bills for over 25 years for cost efficiency.

“PBAPP saves costs by issuing bills on a bi-monthly basis because, for the majority of Penang households, water bills are ‘relatively cheap’ when compared to TNB bills for electricity, Astro bills for satellite TV services, and mobile phone bills,” he said in a statement.

He said the bi-monthly water bills adhere strictly to federal regulations, being calculated on a “cubic metre per month” basis.

“Hence, the same water rates are charged in monthly and bi-monthly water bills in Penang,” he said.

Recently, Batu Lanchang assemblyman Ong Ah Teong said it was unfair for PBAPP to read water meters every two months, arguing that bi-monthly billing would naturally lead to higher bills.

Earlier today, Penang Gerakan complaints bureau chief Andrew Ooi made a similar comment, citing over 50 complaints received. He called for adjustments to be made to the water bill’s pricing structure to reduce monthly costs for consumers.

On Feb 1, Penang doubled its domestic water tariffs, with households consuming zero 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.