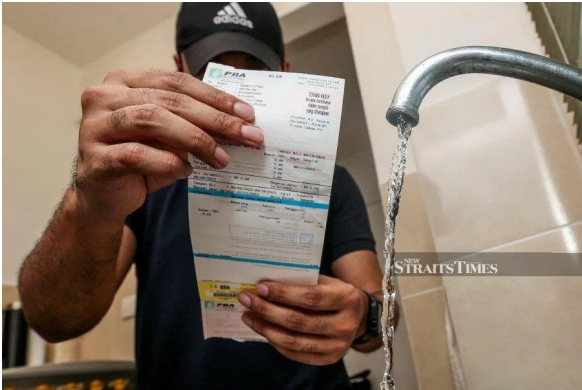


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## Penang's average domestic water rate second lowest in Malaysia



GEORGE TOWN: Despite higher charges, the average domestic water rate in Penang remains the second lowest in the country, says the head of the state's water company.

"Water rates have been revised concurrently in 10 other states and three federal territories, not just in Penang," said Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer K. Pathmanathan.

"That said, Penang's average domestic water rate for the first 35 m<sup>3</sup> per month (RM0.86 per m<sup>3</sup>) is the second lowest in Malaysia," he said today when commenting on criticisms over higher water rates in the state.

One m<sup>3</sup> is equivalent to 1,000 litres, or the volume of water that can fill 666.7 big (1.5L) drinking water bottles. "PBAPP data shows that the majority of Penang domestic consumers (77.3 per cent) are billed for 35 m<sup>3</sup> or less per month in 2023."

"In comparison, the average national domestic rate is RM1.00 per m<sup>3</sup>."

He said every other water company in Peninsular Malaysia bills a higher average domestic rate than RM0.86 per m<sup>3</sup> for the first 35m<sup>3</sup> per month, with the exception of Terengganu (RM0.69 per m<sup>3</sup>).

Pathmanathan also said water supply charges in Penang were in line with regulations set by the federal government.

Social media users in Penang have been complaining about soaring water charges, with many sharing the increases in their water bills.

Some shared that their bills have risen by over RM100, while others said their water bills which used to be around RM30 have increased to around RM100.

Pathmanathan said PBAPP is compelled to abide by federal regulations.

"PBAPP cannot bill for water supply services at rates higher (or lower) than the rates specified.

He also explained that the water rate was either the same or even lower whether it was billed monthly or bi-monthly.

"There is no truth to the allegation that Penang water consumers pay more for water supply services because PBAPP issues bi-monthly water bills.

"PBAPP has been issuing some of its water bills on a bi-monthly basis since it was corporatised on March 1, 1999, more than 25 years ago. The primary reason for this is cost efficiency.

He said those who have enquiries or issues can visit any of PBAPP's nine Customer Care Centres for assistance.