

27-7-2024

Penang utility company urges using 10pc less water till September rainy season to avoid crisis



KUALA LUMPUR, July 27 — The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) today urged residents to reduce their water consumption until the expected rainy season in September to help prevent a potential water crisis.

It warned that raw water in Sungai Muda has fallen below the two-metre “safe level” for 16 consecutive days as of July 11 due to the current dry season.

“A 10 per cent reduction in domestic water use would save approximately 50 million litres per day.

“If every resident reduces their water consumption by this amount, it will greatly assist in ensuring a stable water supply until the rains arrive,” PBAPP said in a statement.

The company also reported lower treated water production at key treatment plants due to insufficient raw water from catchment areas.

It added that the situation is compounded by the Muda Dam’s effective capacity dropping to 9.9 per cent on July 25, though the Beris Dam in Kedah is currently releasing water into Sungai Muda, helping to alleviate some pressure.

It added that the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam recorded effective capacities of just 41.1 per cent and 31.9 per cent respectively yesterday.

To mitigate these challenges, PBAPP said it is drawing from the reserves of the Expanded Mengkuang Dam to supplement water production.

However, it added that sporadic water supply issues have already affected some neighbourhoods on Penang Island.

It said Penang’s per capita domestic water consumption was 284 litres per day in 2023, notably higher than the national average of 237 litres and more than double the 141 litres consumed per capita in Singapore.

It noted that Penang’s average daily water usage increased by 10 million litres in the first half of 2024, reaching 887 million litres per day compared to 877 million litres in the same period last year.

The increase can fill roughly 6,667 large 1.5-litre water bottles every day, according to the PBAPP.

For tips on conserving water, residents are encouraged to visit PBAPP’s website.