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Penang records 0.6pct drop in water consumption last year



GEORGE TOWN: Penang recorded a marginal 0.6 per cent decline in water consumption in 2025, a positive sign for the water-stressed state despite an increase in the number of registered consumers.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said average daily water consumption fell by about five million litres per day (MLD), from 870 MLD in 2024 to 865 MLD in 2025, even as the number of consumers rose by 2.2 per cent to 721,066.

"This is a positive development for Penang.

"It shows that more Penangites and businesses are heeding the advice of the Penang government and PBAPP to use water wisely in a state with limited raw water resources," he said in a statement today

According to Pathmanathan, PBAPP maintains its treated water production at an average of 1,208 MLD in 2025, unchanged from the previous year.

The Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Seberang Prai Utara remains the backbone of Penang's water supply system, producing 1,033 MLD, or 85.5 per cent of total treated water output.

Of this volume, 638 MLD (62 per cent) is supplied to consumers in Seberang Prai, while the remaining 395 MLD (38 per cent) is pumped to Penang Island through three sets of twin submarine pipelines.

The other nine water treatment plants across the state collectively produced 175 MLD, mainly to serve areas outside the Sungai Dua WTP's coverage and to supplement the supply in borderline areas.

"These figures underscore the importance of the Sungai Dua WTP and Sungai Muda as Penang's primary raw water source," he added.

Despite experiencing a hot and dry El Niño period in 2025, Pathmanathan said Penang avoided a water crisis, a result attributed to sustained water-saving campaigns and more prudent water use by consumers.

"However, PBAPP recorded a slight increase in non-revenue water (NRW), which rose from 28.0 per cent in 2024 to 28.4 per cent in 2025, equivalent to about 1.7 MLD of water loss.

"The increase was partly due to scheduled and unscheduled water supply interruptions linked to infrastructure upgrades, repairs and ageing pipelines, some of which have been in service for more than five decades.

"A major scheduled water supply interruption in April 2025, affecting about 340,000 consumers in Seberang Prai and Penang island, also contributed to higher NRW figures, he said, adding that in Seberang Prai Selatan, NRW stood at 26.6 per cent in 2025.

Pathmanathan said Penang's NRW performance remained better than the national average of 34.3 per cent recorded in 2024, with only Johor and Selangor reporting lower NRW levels that year.

He also highlighted PBAPP's 25.4 MLD "Zero Waste Water Recycling Project" at the Sungai Dua WTP, which continuously harvests recycled water to boost treated water supply.

"No other Malaysian water supply operator was doing this in 2025," he said, noting that the additional water gain was equivalent to a 7.4 per cent reduction in NRW.

PBAPP is targeting a further reduction in NRW to 25.0 per cent this year through intensified pipe and meter replacement programmes, as well as the establishment of additional District Metered Areas.