

7.9.2020

PRESS STATEMENT

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WATER QUALITY: HIGH-RISE BUILDING MANAGERMENTS MUST MAINTAIN INTERNAL RETICULATION SYSTEMS PROPERLY

- **The quality of treated water produced by PBAPP has been tested and found to be amongst the best in Malaysia, in accordance to the Quality Assurance Programme set by the Health Ministry.**
- **However, high-rise building managements must maintain internal reticulation systems to ensure that the quality of the treated water delivered to taps within the buildings is not compromised.**

PENANG, Monday, 7.9.2020: Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) strives to supply the best quality treated water in Penang, on a 24/7 basis. However, the quality of the treated water that reaches a tap in in high-rise building may be compromised by poorly maintained, contaminated or rusty internal reticulation systems.

In 2019, a total of 3,150 samples of treated water produced by PBAPP were taken from various treatment plant outlets and water supply pipelines throughout Penang. This treated water sampling programme was a joint procedure that was carried out by the Penang State Health Department and PBAPP.

The results of laboratory tests on these 3,150 samples indicated that the quality of the treated water that is supplied by PBAPP is amongst the best in Malaysia, in accordance to the Quality Assurance Programme (QAP) set by the Health Ministry.

As such, PBAPP is concerned with a news report published by *The Star* on 4.9.2020, regarding the deplorable state of rooftop tanks in some apartment blocks in Penang.

Internal reticulation systems

PBAPP is responsible for the quality of the treated water until the point of the bulk meter position outside every high-rise building in Penang.

Pumping systems, pipelines and rooftop water tanks located within private premises, “after” the PBAPP bulk meter position, are regarded as components of internal reticulation systems. In the case of high-rise buildings, the building “management” is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of internal reticulation systems.

As such, the “management” is responsible for the conditions of rooftop tanks. This responsibility is clearly defined in the Water Services Industry Act 2006.

Item 6 under Section B of the Water Services Industry (Water Supply Services Agreement between Consumers and Water Distribution Licensee) Rules 2014, reads as follows:

MAINTENANCE OF INTERNAL PIPING SYSTEM

- 6.1 The Consumer shall be responsible for the care and maintenance of the internal piping system in the Consumer’s Premises including the service water pipe and shall bear the cost for the care and maintenance.
- 6.2 For high rise building and gated community, the Water Distribution Licensee shall be responsible for the care and maintenance up to the bulk meter and is limited to presenting the bill for the reading of the individual meter at the Consumer’s Premises.

“Management” in this case, refers to:

- Any developer prior to the formation of a joint management body or management corporation;
- A joint management body or its established or appointed managing agent;
- A management corporation or its management agent or administrator; and
- Any authorised person appointed under any written law for the management of a high-rise residential building or gated community.

Enquiries and getting the management to take action

Individual water consumers staying in units within high-rise buildings are advised to ask their building managements about the maintenance and upkeep of their building's internal reticulation system, including the rooftop water tanks.

This is especially relevant in the cases of older buildings or if a consumer notices something amiss with the quality of the treated water that reaches the taps in his or her unit.

If the rooftop tank of a high-rise building has not been inspected for a few years by a licensed plumber, consumers have the right to insist that the management takes action immediately.

The cost of inspection and cleaning a rooftop water tank may seem high but personal health risks must be considered. Moreover, the cost may be shared with other water consumers living in the building.

It may be better to pay for cleaning a rooftop water tank than to install an individual water filter because not all water filters may provide proper protection against bacterial and virus-related risks. Moreover, good individual water filters may be expensive to install and the filter elements must also be cleaned and replaced regularly.

On its part, PBAPP strives to supply the best quality treated water possible, at reasonable costs. However, Penang water consumers living in high-rise buildings must also play their roles to ensure that they receive good quality treated water by compelling their building managements to maintain and upkeep internal reticulation systems, properly and regularly.

Thank You.

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