

21.5.2023

PRESS STATEMENT

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CHIEF MINISTER OF PENANG

DEFEND PENANG DAM LEVELS: PLEASE REDUCE DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION BY 20% IMMEDIATELY

- **20% decrease in domestic consumption throughout Penang will “save 106.8 million litres of water per day (MLD)”.**
- **All Penangites should join this mission to ensure water supply sustainability until the rainy season arrives in September 2023.**

PENANG, Sunday, 21.5.2023: Penang domestic consumers should join the fight to defend their dam levels by reducing domestic water consumption by 20% every day.

According to PBAPP water consumption data for 2022, a 20% reduction in domestic consumption will result in a water saving of 106.8 million litres per day (MLD).

A water saving of 106.8 MLD will go a long way towards ensuring water supply sufficiency in Penang until expected heavy rainfall in September 2023.

The Penang State Government and Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) is making this urgent appeal to domestic water consumers because:

- The effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam was 41.5% on Friday, 19.5.2023. METMalaysia has published data online indicating that there may be a hot and dry El Niño phenomenon from now to August 2023.
- Based on PBAPP’s data for 2022, Penangites used 307 litres/capita/day (LCD) in 2022, as compared to the national average of 244 LCD in 2020 and Singapore’s statistic of 158 LCD in 2021. Since dam levels are low, there is “plenty of room” for every Penangite to cut down on water consumption now.
- In 2022, domestic consumption accounted for about 61.6% of the total consumption of water in Penang. As such, reducing domestic consumption will generate a bigger impact on water conservation than reducing consumption by all the factories, hotels, business premises, schools, government offices and other commercial enterprises in Penang.

Table: Penang Water Consumption 2022

Type of Consumption	No. of consumers	Million litres per day (MLD)	% of total water consumption in 2022
Domestic	585,740	534	61.6%
Non-Domestic	91,117	334	38.4%
Total	676,857	868	100.0%

Top 3 ways to save water at home

The 3 easiest and most effective ways for domestic consumers to save water are:

- Do not use a hose to water your plants or gardens. Use a watering can instead.
- Do not use a hose to clean your car or motorcycle. Use a bucket, cloth and sponge instead; and please clean your vehicle only when it is absolutely necessary.
- Do not leave a tap running. Turn on the tap only when you need to rinse your hands, food, dishes, cutlery, clothes and other items. Shut the tap immediately afterwards and teach your children to shut the tap properly.

For more water saving tips, please visit the PBAPP website at: www.pba.com.my

It is urgent to save water now

Some areas on Penang Island, like Air Itam, are in danger of running out of water in 2023. Please help us to make sure that our Penang dam reserves can “survive” until September 2023.

There are 2 key reasons behind our low dam levels:

- The first reason is low rainfall in the dam water catchment areas since 1.1.2023, due to climate change. We have tried cloud seeding since May 2023 but the dam levels have continued to drop.
- The second reason is high water consumption. In 2022, Penang set a new record for water consumption at 868 MLD. For the first 3 months of 2023, PBAPP recorded an even higher average consumption figure of 876 MLD.

As far as the hot and dry weather is concerned, there is not much that we can do. However, we can work together to reduce domestic water consumption in Penang.

The Penang State Government has directed PBAPP to “defend” the raw water reserves of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam at all costs in 2023.

To fulfill this mission, PBAPP has implemented contingency water supply engineering measures in Air Itam. “Tougher measures” may be necessary in the days ahead.

If dam levels hit preset low points, PBAPP will duly inform the people of Penang (through public announcements in the mass, electronic and social media) of the “tougher measures” ahead of time.

However, if Penang domestic consumers can reduce domestic water consumption by 20%, PBAPP may avoid, postpone or delay the implementation of its tough water supply engineering measures.

Penang is not the only state in Malaysia that is facing a potential water crisis in 2023. Nevertheless, we still have to make sure that the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and the Teluk Bahang Dam do not reach “zero point” before the rains arrive.

Thank You.

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