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Media Release

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Chief Minister of Penang.

JANUARY 2024 SCHEDULED WATER SUPPLY INTERRUPTION (SWSI): TANKERS READY TO GO, STATIC WATER TANKS FILLED

PENANG, Monday, 8 January 2024: All the 99 tankers that will be deployed during the January 2024 scheduled water supply interruption (SWSI) have been fully prepared and are ready to be deployed.

Moreover, all static tanks that have been deployed have been filled with water. These tanks include the 97 static tanks set up by PBAPP (including the 19 “Gajah Flexitanks” that can store up to 24,000L of water each) and all other tanks provided by State Assemblywomen, State Assemblymen (ADUNs) and Members of Parliament (MPs).

This means that PBAPP’s “exigency” water supply measures to address the needs of consumers affected by the January SWSI are ready to go. “Exigency” refers to the “difficulties of a situation, especially one that causes urgent demands”.

The deployment of all the tankers and static tanks cannot replace “normal daily water supply” to 590,000 affected consumers. We understand and apologise to the affected consumers for the inconvenience of having to line up to collect water.

However, the tankers and static tanks will provide some relief to affected consumers.

Clarifications

Of late, there have been a lot of news reported by the mass media and speculations in social media about the January 2024 SWSI. Please allow me to make a few important clarifications for the benefit of all water consumers in Penang:

Clarification 1: Allocation of PBAPP’s tankers and static water tanks is NOT prioritised according to state and/or parliamentary constituencies.

Some ADUNs and MPs have lobbied for better provisions for their constituencies. While we understand their commitment to serve their constituents as best as possible, the “allocation” of the tankers and static tanks has been planned to be as fair and equitable as possible, based on the following 3 primary factors:

- Water demand and the number of consumers in PBAPP service areas. Please remember that PBAPP is a state water supply operator that is licensed to serve the whole State of Penang.
- The overall planned movement routes of the tankers and the locations of tanker refilling stations.
- PBAPP's 4-stage water supply services recovery plan.

Clarification 2: It is NOT “4-days No Water” for the majority of water consumers.

PBAPP has publicised its 4-stage water supply recovery plan. According to the plan, water supply for 33% of the 590,000 affected consumers will be recovered in 48 hours.

At the 72-hour mark, water supply should be recovered for 84% of the affected consumers. **This means that the majority of the affected water consumers should have water supply in 3 days or earlier.**

The remaining 16% of the affected consumers should receive water supply in 96 hours. The “last consumers” to receive water will be the consumers in the end-of-line (EoL) and high ground areas.

Clarification 3: The January 2024 SWSI will NOT affect the whole state.

PBAPP has publicised the full list of the areas that will be affected by the January 2024 SWSI in mass media releases, flyers, FB posts and newspaper advertisements. The full list is available and may be viewed on the PBAPP website.

Only consumers in the listed areas will be affected. Kindly refer to official announcements instead of speculating on social media if an area is affected or not.

Clarification 4: PBAPP is NOT prioritising water supply recovery for its biggest customers ahead of domestic consumers.

There is a set sequence for the recovery of water supply services whenever the Sungai Dua WTP is “re-started” after a shutdown. This sequence is based on the configuration of Penang’s water supply infrastructure and distance from the Sungai Dua WTP.

In the first stage of the water supply recovery process, areas closest to the Sungai Dua WTP in Seberang Perai will receive water supply ahead of other areas. As such, most areas in Seberang Perai will be “recovered” by 6.00am on 12.1.2024.

In the second stage of recovery, the areas closest to the Bukit Dumbar Reservoir and Pumping Station Complex on Penang Island will start to receive water supply. Once the Bukit Dumbar facility is fully operational, George Town and most areas in the South-West District (Daerah Barat Daya or DBD) will experience “recovery” by 6.00am on 13.1.2024.

The third stage of recovery focuses on areas that are served by the Bukit Gedung and Teluk Kumbar Pumping Stations. Once both pumping stations are fully operational, almost all the southern areas of Penang island will be “recovered” and we will achieve 99.5% recovery by 6.00am on 14.1.2024.

In the fourth and final stage of recovery, PBAPP will have to tackle known issues in specific end-of-line (EoL) and high ground neighbourhoods, such as low suction pump pressure in certain buildings or elevated water tanks.

Thank You.

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