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PRESS RELEASE

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'SUPER EL NINO': PENANG WATER SUPPLY ALERT

PENANG, Wednesday, 13/1/2016: Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) has activated its water supply alert status in view of the Meteorological Department's warning of a possible hot and dry 'Super El Nino' phenomenon.

The last incidence of recorded rainfall at Penang's key dams was on 29th December 2015, when we recorded 31.0mm of rain at Air Itam Dam, 38mm at Teluk Bahang Dam and 17mm at Mengkuang Dam on 11th January 2016.

As of today, the following are the recorded effective capacities of Penang's two major dams:

- Air Itam Dam : 87.6%
- Teluk Bahang Dam : 83.2%

The Mengkuang Dam expansion project is still under progress. Meanwhile, the water level at Sungai Muda is 2.53 metres today.

For now, the effective capacities of the Air Itam and Teluk Bahang Dams are still 'healthy'. PBAPP is continuing to draw water as normal from Sungai Muda.

Nevertheless, we are monitoring the dams and Sungai Muda on a daily basis. We will brief the State Government and inform the public on Penang's water supply status regularly.

Two years ago, during the extreme dry season in January, February and March 2014, the total rainfall was only 83.0mm at the Air Itam Dam, 70.0mm at the Teluk Bahang Dam and 115.0mm at the Mengkuang Dam.

There is a possibility that we may experience a recurrence of the 2014 scenario in the first three months of this year. If necessary, PBAPP is prepared to implement the water supply and water demand management initiatives that enabled Penang to avoid water rationing in 2014 and 2015.

The prime directive from the Penang State Government is clear: PBAPP will do whatever is necessary to avoid water rationing at all costs in 2016.

USE WATER WISELY TO AVOID A SHORTAGE IN PENANG

PBAPP would also like to seek the kind cooperation of the people of Penang to use water wisely in view of the 'Super El Nino' threat.

Faced with a ‘double threat’ of very little rainfall and daily temperatures soaring to 40°C, we can expect lower water levels at Sungai Muda and higher rates of evaporation at Penang’s dams.

As such, we would like to urge all Penang water consumers to reduce their daily water consumption by adopting the following water saving practices:

1. Avoid using a hose as far as possible. Using a hose wastes water.
2. Wash your car or motorcycle less often. If you must wash your vehicle, use a bucket and a damp cloth or sponge instead of a hose.
3. Water your plants with a watering can instead of a hose.
4. Sweep your porch or driveway instead of using a hose.
5. Fix all leaking taps, pipes or toilet systems immediately.
6. Do not leave any taps running in your home or office.
7. Teach your children to shut taps properly.
8. Use your washing machine only when you have a full load.
9. When washing clothes by hand, do not leave the tap running. Turn it on only when you rinse.
10. Fill and plug your sink when washing/rinsing food, dishes and cutlery.
11. Mop the floor instead of using a hose or splashing water from a bucket.
12. Turn off the tap while you are brushing your teeth. Turn it on only when it is time to rinse your mouth.
13. Turn off the tap while soaping your hands. Turn it on only when it is time to rinse.
14. Take shorter showers.
15. Turn off the shower when you are soaping your body.
16. Install “double-flush” systems in your toilet. Usually, a “half-flush” does the job.
17. Avoid flushing rubbish down the toilet. Put rubbish in the rubbish bin.
18. Call 04 509 6 509 to report leaks at roadside mains or pipes immediately. We are ready to receive your calls 24 hours a day.

Please remember: In 2014 and 2015, other states such as Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Negeri Sembilan and Johor had to implement water rationing. Even Taiping, the wettest town in Malaysia, experienced rationing.

In this age of global climate change, we cannot take continuous good water supply for granted. Please play your role by using less water and optimising our water resources to avoid water rationing in Penang in 2016.

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