

11.3.2020

**PRESS STATEMENT**

by **DATO' IR. JASENI MAIDINSA**  
CEO, PBA Holdings Bhd and PBAPP

**2020 PENANG WATER SUPPLY ALERT 4:  
HIGH WATER DEMAND BUT PBAPP IS IMPLEMENTING  
DRY WEATHER CONTROLS**

- **PBAPP is striving to ensure water supply sufficiency, with no rationing, until the wet season arrives.**
- **Due to high water demand, consumers in specific areas have reported low water pressure or no water supply from 7.00pm – 11.00pm.**

PENANG, Wednesday, 11.3.2020: Dry weather water supply controls are being implemented in Penang to ensure that the state has sufficient water supply until the arrival of the wet season.

PBAPP data shows that the average daily water consumption for Penang in January 2020 was 887 MLD, or 5.2% higher than the average daily consumption of 843 MLD for Year 2019.

As at last Monday, 9.3.2020, the effective capacities of Penang's key dams were:

Dam	Effective Capacity (%)	Effective Capacity (million litres – ML)
a. Air Itam Dam	42.7%	922 ML
b. Teluk Bahang Dam	26.8%	4,880 ML
c. Mengkuang Dam	70.0%	56,038 ML

The primary cause of the low effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam is 61.8% less rainfall in its catchment areas (due to climate change) in the period 1.9.2019 – 9.3.2020, as compared to the average for the corresponding periods in the previous 3 years.

Similarly, the low effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam is mainly attributable to 49.8% less rainfall in the period 1.9.2019 – 9.3.2020, as compared to the average for the corresponding periods in the previous 3 years.

Meanwhile, the level of Sungai Muda at Penang's Lahar Tiang Intake was 1.77m; and PBAPP is still able to optimise the abstraction of raw water for pumping to the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP).

At the Sungai Dua WTP, water production was being maximised at an average of 968.4 MLD in the period 1.2.2020 to 9.3.2020.

Treated water from this plant is being distributed in all areas in Seberang Prai and also pumped via 2 Nos. of twin submarine pipelines to Bukit Dumbar Reservoir and Pumping Station Complex (Bukit Dumbar) on Penang Island, for subsequent distribution to the southern areas of the island.

As and when necessary, PBAPP is drawing down on the strategic drought reserves of the Mengkuang Dam to complement raw water abstraction from Sungai Muda.

However, since the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam are low, Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) is compelled to minimise raw water drawdowns from these dams.

PBAPP is also reducing drawdowns from all treated water reservoirs in the state during the hours of midnight to 6.00am daily. This is to ensure that all reservoirs have sufficient treated water to supply during daylight hours.

## INTERMITTENT LOW WATER PRESSURE OR NO WATER SUPPLY IN SPECIFIC AREAS

PBAPP has received a number of "low water pressure" or "no water supply" reports from consumers in the following areas on Penang Island in the past 2 weeks:

Areas		No. of Water Accounts Affected	Hours Affected
1	Balik Pulau (Bukit Penara)	263	7.00pm to 11.00pm
2	Flat Seri Delima (Sungai Ara)	459	
3	Taman Jesselton	4	
4	Indah Villa Emas (Bayan Lepas)	184	
Total		910	

The 3 primary causes for the phenomenon are:

- 7.00pm – 11.00pm are the peak hours for water consumption by families when most people are together at home.
- Higher than normal water demand due to hot weather.
- Higher than normal water consumption due to COVID-19 preventive actions (increased hand washing, bathing and house cleaning).

Due to higher than normal water consumption during “peak hours”, as related to hot weather and COVID-19, the water pressure at areas located on higher ground and at the water supply end-of-pipelines may drop.

Bukit Penara (Balik Pulau) and Taman Jesselton are classified as higher ground areas while the Indah Villa Emas apartments are located in an “end-of-pipeline” area. As and when water consumption is too high, these areas will experience low water pressure.

Under normal conditions, PBAPP responds to low water pressure complaints by boosting water production at the Air Itam Water Treatment Plant and Batu Ferringhi Water Treatment Plant to complement supply from Bukit Dumbar. However, under the present dry season scenario, PBAPP cannot aggressively draw down the low reserves of the Air Itam Dam and the Teluk Bahang Dam to supply more raw water to these water treatment plants.

PBAPP must prioritise its primary objective of “no water rationing at all costs” until the arrival of the wet season.

Meanwhile, the Flat Sri Delima issue in Sungai Ara is caused by a “direct to tank” supply scenario. When the water pressure is too low, water cannot

reach the tanks on the rooftops of 5-storey walk-up flats. For now, PBAPP is deploying water tanker teams to pump water up to the Flat Sri Delima water tanks as an interim measure, until internal reticulation systems may be upgraded.

## PLEASE USE WATER WISELY UNTIL THE RAINS ARRIVE

We apologise to all consumers who are presently experiencing intermittent “low water pressure” or “no water supply” issues in Penang. However, we seek their patience and understanding to note that the primary cause is high water demand during peak hours, due to abnormal circumstances.

In the meantime, PBAPP must to continue to implement its dry weather controls strictly.

We would also like to reiterate our appeal to all water consumers in Penang to use water wisely. Please help PBAPP to ensure water supply sufficiency for all water consumers in Penang.

For water saving tips, please [www.pba.com.my](http://www.pba.com.my).

Thank You.

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Issued by : Syarifah Nasywa bt Syed Feisal Barakbah  
Corporate Communications Unit  
Tel : 04-200 6607  
Email : [syarifah@pba.com.my](mailto:syarifah@pba.com.my)