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Pipelines in Terengganu to be replaced

KUALA TERENGGANU, Fri. - The Waterworks Department will replace most of the asbestos water supply pipelines in the State to reduce leakages which have contributed to RM23 million in lost revenues annually.

State Waterworks Department director Wan Ngah Wan Ali said about 60 per cent of the water supply pipelines in Terengganu used asbestos pipes of various sizes and most of the pipelines were about 15 years old.

Non-revenue water, which included leakages and pilferages besides other factors, contributed a total of 24 per cent to lost revenue.

Leakages alone accounted for 20 per cent, he said.

He was briefing Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the department's water supply and management activities in the State at the Kepong water treatment plant today.

Wan Ngah said the department would spend RM80 million to replace 220km of water pipelines during the Seventh Malaysia Plan.

Also present were Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad, Deputy Agriculture Minister Datuk Dr Tengku Mahmud Mansor, Deputy Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Idris Jusoh, State Executive Councillors and State Secretary Datuk Baharuddin Ismail.

Wan Ngah said at the moment, about 86 per cent of the population or about 787,000 people received piped water in their homes.

He said the main source of supply was from major rivers in the respective districts and underground water.

"The only area receiving underground water supply in Terengganu is at Pulau Perhentian.

"However, we have sufficient surface water from rivers in other areas and the only problem faced by the Department in supplying fresh water was during severe drought," he said.

He said during such periods, salt water would move further upstream during high tide and this affected water quality.

"Otherwise, Terengganu has no water supply problem.

"In fact, our 17 water treatment plants have the capacity to produce 330,000 cubic metres of water a day with a reserve of about 20 per cent."

Wan Ngah also said water demand in Terengganu increased by about 10 per cent per year and the current capacity could meet demands until the year 2000.

He said a new water treatment plant was being built near Tasik Kenyir which would further increase the reserve capacity to meet water demands up to the year 2010.

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