



KERATAN AKHBAR

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Saving water and money

I REFER to the StarMetro report “MB: Money saved from free water scheme used for residents welfare” (Nov 5).

Implementation of the Darul Ehsan Water Scheme to replace the free water scheme in Selangor is commendable and has been a long time coming. It will certainly bode well for the environment and water conservation. Channeling the money saved to welfare programmes will also boost the local economy and social enhancement for the people.

But there is another way to save water and money, and that is by reducing non-revenue water. Currently, the rate of non-revenue water nationwide is 35% of the amount of treated water that is put into our supply system. The government has vowed to reduce it to 31% by the end of 2020.

A damaged valve on the fire hydrant in front of my house two months ago led to a torrent of water gushing from it. I reported the leak to Air Selangor, which sent in a team within a short period of time.

They worked through the night to repair the hydrant and had to break down a retaining wall to get to the source of the problem. After stopping the leak, or so I thought,



they left. Another contractor turned up the next day to repair the wall.

I had a look at the valve and was both surprised and upset to see water still leaking from it. I spoke to the workers repairing the wall and was told that the replacement valve was an old one and didn't function properly. The workers said they were

instructed to repair the wall, cover up the valve and construct a weep hole by the side of the wall to allow the leaking water to flow into the drain.

Disgusted by this lackadaisical attitude and brazen waste of public money for shoddy work, and also for wasting water despite all the talk of reducing non-revenue water, I made another report to Air

Selangor. The assemblyman and Member of Parliament for my area were also informed. Later that night, the valve was replaced but the newly-built wall had to be dismantled and rebuilt. How could this shoddy work be allowed when the government is losing millions of ringgit in non-revenue water? More money was spent in carrying out the repair work twice. If the repair work was not done the second time, money would have been lost through the leak.

The government and relevant authorities must draw up and enforce strict operating procedures and guidelines to get repairs done properly the first time around. We don't mind paying for water, which will become more precious and scarce in the future. But we don't want to pay for this wastage of water due to gross inefficiency by the authorities concerned and their workers. The Darul Ehsan Water Scheme is certainly the right conduit to conserving water and saving money. Let's now get down to reducing non-revenue water by doing the repairs right first time.

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