

SPAN and NGO at odds over RM1.7bil NRW findings

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PETALING JAYA: The National Water Services Commission (SPAN) and an NGO continue to lock horns over the issue of reducing Non-Revenue Water (NRW).

NRW is water that has been treated and is "lost" either through leaks, thefts or metering inaccuracies before reaching the customers.

Association of Water and Energy Research Malaysia (Awer), recently revealed that the country's water industry lost RM1.7bil to NRW in 2010.

Awer president S. Piarapakaran said that as a technical regulator, SPAN must set the procedures and guidelines to ensure that water quality was not compromised.

"To realise this, SPAN must prepare the National NRW Reduction Action Plan and not let water operators tell SPAN what to do," he said in a statement yesterday.

He was referring to SPAN's statement that the loss was due to insufficient funding to replace aging pipe networks as well as poor construction and maintenance.

Piarapakaran said SPAN was formed to improve the operational efficiency of the industry and in particular the reduction of NRW through short-, medium- and long-term programmes as outlined in the SPAN Act 2006.

Meanwhile, a SPAN spokesman said the RM1.7bil figure is highly erroneous.

"It is not only misleading, it can also cause unnecessary alarm," he said.