

# Water is Life

Water is the universal solvent. Its characteristic is important for the biological living beings to sustain. 65% - 70% of a human body is water and 75% of our brain contains water, it is vital to consume them in a daily basis. The importance of water and its cleanliness has been addresses since the early civilization of men.

In Malaysia it is estimated that our annual rainfall is about 990 billion cubic metres by taking into consideration of the surface area of 330000 square kilometers and the average annual rainfall about 3000 mm. 566 billion cubic meters of the annual rainfall becomes surface runoff (water that flows on the surface of earth during rainfall), 630 billion cubic meters is evaporated and another 64 billion cubic meters infiltrate (absorbed) the ground to be groundwater. Estimated water consumption in the country is about 15 to 18 billion cubic meters of treated water. In direct comparison, we are wasting a lot of our rainwater and did not take any action to recover it.

The current agenda in the water supply industry is the quality of the water supplied. In Malaysia, the Food and Safety Division (under Ministry of Health) has adopted the **Drinking Water Quality Standards** as the guideline for water operators on the quality of water supplied to the consumers. However, the quality of water supplied is being doubted and induces the consumers to purchase filters. This gave birth to a new business sector, the filter industry. In fact, some of the deceiving marketing tools have cause thousands of Ringgits but there is no need to apply high end filter system.

The **National Water Service Commission (SPAN)** was formed in 2006 to regulate the water and sewerage industry in Malaysia. This move is important to integrate the management of the water and sewerage under one banner. Consumers should be aware that the sewerage contamination to the water source is catastrophic. Most of the consumers fail to see that the sewerage do end up in our rivers. The level of contamination of sewerage to the river is depending on the sewerage treatment system. Failure in curbing the pollution will lead to serious pollution problem to the rivers and loss of water source that can be used to process drinking water.