Our water supply is safe, says Liow

KUALA LUMPUR: The Health Ministry assured the public yesterday that the water supply is clean and safe for consumption without filtration.

Its minister, Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, said consumers should not fall into the trap of filtration companies selling high-priced products claiming to provide clean water.

"The water supply coming into our homes is clean, maintained in quality and can be consumed without any filtration," he told the News Straits Times.

Liow said the water from the Water Supply Department could be consumed without filtration but should be boiled before it was consumed.

"The public have been convinced that water supply is not safe for consumption unless it is filtered. This has shed a bad light on the department and ministries involved. They have instilled a belief into people that every household needs filters."

Liow said there were various brands of highly-priced filtration products that were used by the public without verifying the quality.

"Consumers can’t be sure that filtered water is safe to drink directly from the tap without boiling the water first."

He urged the public to be extra careful when purchasing such products, which may cause the filtered water to be unhealthy.

"Some filters can filter and extract nutrition the body needs."

The ministry, said Liow, had placed health officers at every water plant to monitor the water quality before channelled into homes.

"The water supply is always tested for consumption before it reaches the public."

Liow advised the public not to directly consume filtered water following food poisoning cases in Perak where the public consumed filtered water without boiling it first.

"If they had boiled the water before drinking it, that incident would have happened."

He added that the ministry followed World Health Organisation standards on water supply safety and quality.

In Shah Alam, Liow urged the Education Ministry to blacklist school canteen operators found to have caused students to suffer from food poisoning.

Liow said the blacklisted operators were found to have caused students to suffer from food poisoning.

Liow said the blacklisted operators would not be able to operate a canteen in any school unless they followed a one-day course that was compulsory for canteen operators.

He said any school canteen inspected and found unhygienic would be ordered to close temporarily.

"Any canteen ordered to close down is considered high risk and canteen operators concerned will be blacklisted."

"From time to time, we will update inspection procedures."

"There is no reason why the school canteen cannot be kept clean," he said after officiating the Secondary School Cleanest Canteen and Dining Hall national-level awards in Shah Alam yesterday.

Nur Annashirah Omar (right) of SM Assunta and her schoolmates taking a look at Moh Klik, an Interactive food safety web portal, at the Secondary School Cleanest Canteen and Dining Hall national-level awards in Shah Alam yesterday. Pic by Syarifq Abd Samad.