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# Dept: Give attention to drainage

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**PUTRAJAYA:** Some local authorities have been accused of not giving enough consideration to drainage when approving development projects. Selangor Drainage and Irrigation Department

(DID) director Lee Loke Chong said the consequence of this is manifested in the frequent floods in some areas.

He advised the planning department of local authorities to give equal attention and importance to drainage plans and requirements in new development projects, as they did to requirements for roads and open spaces.

The present planning process does not do enough to ensure an adequate drainage system is included in development projects, which then exposes the areas concerned to flash floods, he said when met at the Shah Alam disaster relief and management seminar organised by the Shah Alam City Council recently.

“Developers involved will complete the project and leave, but when the area is hit by a flash flood, it is the council and the government that have to spend money on (remedial) measures and compensation,” Lee said.

“So in the long term, making sure the drainage system is effective and there is enough drainage reserve to cater to future expansion will prove to be a cheaper solution, than spending millions on

(remedial) measures,” he said.

“Local authorities must seriously consider compelling developers to adhere to drainage requirements, which are contained in the Environmentally Friendly Drainage Manual which the Cabinet approved in 2001, but unfortunately these guidelines are not often adopted,” he said.

“In view of the rapid pace of development, especially in states like Selangor, we propose that requirements contained in the manual are made compulsory under the Street Drainage and Building Act 1974, because if this is done then half the battle is won and less money will be spent for (remedial) and compensation purposes,” he added.

The DID has embarked on a road trip to introduce these guidelines to local authorities, Lee said.

Most local authorities in Selangor are receptive to this idea, such as the Subang Jaya Municipal Council and the Petaling Jaya City Council, while some housing developments like Sierramas, Setia Alam and Bukit Jelutong have adopted the recommended drainage features.

Lee acknowledged that in older areas that are already affected by floods, only remedial measures can be adopted.

For new projects, he said, there should be better coordination among various stakeholders such as the local authorities, state governments, and the Environment and Natural Resources and the Housing and Local Government Ministries.