

WASA to crack down on illegal connections

By LEISELLE MARAJ

VIGILANCE is what the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) is asking of its workers and acting Chief Executive Officer, Ganga Singh, is leading by example.

Singh recently stopped an attempt by someone to make an illegal water connection.

"We sought to bring a level of vigilance among WASA workers and by my own actions. I stopped two Fridays ago around 6:30pm because I saw someone making an illegal connection," Singh explained. He added that he stood for an hour until the WASA police arrived to make an arrest.

The company is hoping to reduce the number of illegal connections and thefts of equipment and materials.

In April three million gallons of water was wasted while supply to 200,000 consumers was disrupted when an air valve was stolen from WASA's 54-inch Caroni South transmission main system.

In another incident, Antonio Singh was charged with the theft of two 20 inch diameter ductile iron pipes belonging to WASA.

"There is a big scrap metal market and that market is seeking to attract pipe fittings and so on. So we have started to go to scrap dealers and inform them. We have even charged one scrap metal dealer, and he is before the courts," Singh said at the finals of the company's quiz competition on the water sector for secondary school students.

To curb the number of illegal connections, he said, WASA is doing surveys area by area in an effort to pursue illegal connections.

Singh said however there is need for changes in legislation to make penalties more severe for illegal connections, and material theft.

Bishop's High School, Tobago out-performed their rivals, Miracle Ministries Pentecostal High School to cop first place in the WASA's first National Secondary Schools "In the Know with H2O" quiz competition.

The finale of the competition involving 116 schools over the past few weeks took place on Wednesday afternoon at WASA's Public Education Centre, St Joseph.