

'Robocops' Check Water Wastage in Bengaluru

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BENGALURU: The Unaccounted For Water (UFW) levels in the city have started dwindling in Bengaluru South, West and Central, where the task has been entrusted to private players. Sophisticated tools and technologies, imported from abroad, are being deployed to make this happen.

Water wastage occurs due to old, corroded pipes, illegal connections and leakages.

Leading the pack of hi-tech equipment are two sophisticated cameras. "A remote-controlled crawler camera with a 360-degree view on four wheels, is inserted into a massive pipeline (100 mm, 200 mm diameter pipelines) and its operations are controlled from outside," said representatives of Larsen & Toubro involved in the operations. This is imported from UK and looks very similar to a remote-controlled car.

The camera's recordings can be read on a screen connected to it. This helps identify the path taken by the pipeline. The other camera can be inserted into a pipe using a steel wire. Vidya Nagar, Bangalore University Road and Banashankari are where it has been used so far.

Usage of acoustic equipment like ground microphones and leak noise detectors, particularly at night, have also helped.

Suez and SPML are carrying out the leak reduction works in the congested areas of Bengaluru Central including Majestic and Chikpet, said O Vishveswaraiah, GM, Projects,



SPML Infra Limited. "They have the worst UFW levels in the city that range between 60 and 70 per cent," he said.

"For the first time in the country, we are using helium gas technology to detect leakages in the pipes," he informed. "This has helped us reduce the leaks from 65 per cent to 50 per cent in Banappa Park and reduce the levels at Sadashiva Nagar to 40 per cent. We are trying it out at Sudama Nagar (in Shanti Nagar) next. The old pipelines in these areas are also being replaced all over and we hope to reduce the UFW to 30 per cent."

An implementing agency of SPML in Dharwad, Technomechanical Services Private Limited, has succeeded in reducing the UFW levels there from 46 to 33 per cent just by using a technology that integrates the billing, supply and revenue schemes, said Manish Jain, Head - Utilities of the company.

The replacement of old galvanised iron (GI) pipes in house connections by new Medium Ductile Polythene Pipelines (MDPE), which have a longer life, has also played a crucial role in bringing down the UFW levels across the city, said a top BWSSB official.

UFW project funded by JAICA

Bengaluru South Contractor: L & T

Cost: Rs 153.12 crore

Time period: (July 2012 to July 2016)

Bengaluru West Contractor: L & T

Cost: Rs 316.79 crore

Time period: (Oct 2013 to Oct 2016)

Bengaluru Central Contractor: Suez & SPML

Cost: Rs 184.33 crore

Time period: (Nov 2013 to Nov 2016)