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## Thousands rush to regularize illegal water connections

RAJKOT: Thousands of citizens swarmed the three zonal offices of the Rajkot Municipal Corporation on Monday to apply for regularizing their illegal water connections.

RMC had set September 15 as the deadline for regularizing such connections. From today, the civic body will impose a fine of Rs 3,000 to all those households and other establishments where illegal connections are detected. Acting tough, the RMC has also decided to lodge a police complaint against those who are found drawing water illegally even after being penalized.

On Tuesday alone nearly 2,000 applications, for regularization of water connections, were received at the three offices. V C Rajyaguru, city engineer of the water works department, told TOI, "We are going to keep all three zonal offices open till midnight and accept the applications. RMC charges Rs 2,000 for new water connections.

RMC has launched a massive drive against illegal water connections in the city since July 15 and has so far disconnected over 1,800 illegal connections, most of them residential. "There are around 12,000 illegal water connections and 2.57 lakh regular water connections in the city," said an official.

RMC is aiming to reduce the non-revenue water supply and increase regular water connections. "Earlier, we had regularized around 4,000 illegal connections," he said.

Sources said that most of the illegal water connections were found in newly developing residential areas in the east and west zones.