



The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan

Water Conservation Actions and Descriptions

Water Conservation Action No. 1 *Establish conservation pricing by all District utilities*

All District utilities are required by EPD Planning Standards to implement water conservation pricing by January 1, 2004. In order to meet this requirement, all utilities must, at a minimum, institute a uniform pricing structure. To meet year 2030 conservation goals, all District utilities should implement at least a 3-tiered rate structure by 2006.

The goal of conservation pricing is to reduce excessive discretionary water use, especially outdoor irrigation, by making water use increasingly more expensive. Some key elements of conservation pricing are low fixed monthly charges and high commodity use charges, as well as informative monthly billing, to ensure that customers are aware of their water use in time to make changes to their behavior.

Water Conservation Action No. 2 *Replace older, inefficient plumbing fixtures*

To speed the conversion of older, inefficient plumbing fixtures towards current lower flow models, local water providers are required to implement a program targeting the replacement of older plumbing fixtures. Low flow fixtures are defined according to current code standards. In order to provide flexibility, the water providers can choose a program that fits their community. The program requirements are as follows:

1. Local water providers should identify single and multifamily residences and commercial buildings that contain older pre-1993 plumbing fixtures. This assessment should take into account the natural replacement rate from remodeling of older homes.
2. Local water providers should develop a strategy to distribute, install, or provide incentive to replace higher flow fixtures on accounts owning pre-1993 built structures. The program must specifically address toilet replacement rather than provide toilet retrofit devices. Examples of such programs include:
 - a. Direct install program – Customer exchanges older toilet for a low-flow toilet with discounted or free installation through the local water provider.
 - b. Rebate incentive program – Customer receives a credit to water bill, cash, or voucher offsetting the cost for a new low-flow toilet.

- c. Other – Any program that provides at least the same rate of replacement as the above examples. Water provider must document exchange rate.
3. An assessment of service area pre-1993 plumbing fixtures and selection of a program should be completed by 2008. Depending on the selected program, the utility should establish a schedule for implementation and set benchmarks accordingly. For all programs, implementation should begin no later than 2010. Information on this measure should be integrated with other plan public awareness and education implementation.

Water Conservation Action No. 3 *Require pre-rinse spray valve retrofit education program*

To speed the installation of low-flow pre-rinse spray valves in food preparation establishments, an intensive education program is needed to promote the replacement of these devices. The program needs to target food service establishments, including grocery stores, restaurants, cafeterias, and institutional housing facilities. Municipal operations should retrofit these valves as an example to the private sector. District staff should provide educational brochures to be distributed throughout the area by the local governments. In conjunction with grease trap inspections, inspectors should also provide this information and encourage retrofit. Another option of implementation is to establish a rebate or direct install incentive program.

Water Conservation Action No. 4 *Enact legislation to require rain sensor shut-off switches on new irrigation systems*

To reduce wasted irrigation water, establish regulations requiring rain sensor irrigation shut-off switches on all new irrigation systems – both residential and non-residential. A new state law has been passed to implement this requirement across the District. In 2004, the Georgia General Assembly passed HB 1277, which requires rain sensor shut-off switches on new landscape irrigation systems. Beginning on January 1, 2005, all new, in-ground landscape irrigation systems in the District must have rain sensor shut-off switches installed.

Water Conservation Action No. 5 *Require sub-unit meters in new multi-family buildings*

Local ordinances or policy should be adopted to require that all new multi-family buildings (i.e. apartments, town homes, condominiums) be built with either individual water utility owned meters on each unit or sub-unit meters owned and managed by the property owner with a utility owned master meter. Water service would be based on volume of use. Local ordinances for this purpose are authorized by the Official Code of Georgia, § 12-5-180.1. The billing for water use can be accomplished by the water provider or by a private, third party, such as the development owner. Language has been provided by the District representing variations for the water utilities preference.

Water Conservation Action No. 6 *Assess and reduce water system leakage*

Water providers must identify methods to reduce leakage in their systems, and to reduce unbilled water. Each water provider should perform a distribution system water audit based on the International Water Association (IWA) methodology, in order to maintain uniform assessments of leakage and set targets at the economic level of leakage. Further information on the IWA Methodology can be found at the AWWA website, <http://www.awwa.org/waterwiser/waterloss/>.

Water Conservation Action No. 7 *Conduct residential water audits*

Water providers will begin or expand a program to provide water audits (indoor and outdoor use) to residential customers, following the adoption of conservation pricing and subsequent rate increases. The largest 25 percent of water users should be targeted to evaluate water saving measures, and audits should be made available to customers who complain about high water bills.

Water Conservation Action No. 8 *Distribute low-flow retrofit kits to residential users*

Water providers will begin or expand a program to distribute low-flow retrofit kits to customers. These kits could include low-flow showerheads, faucet aerators, and other applicable retrofit items. The kits would be distributed to the portion of the service areas that have pre-1992 homes.

Water Conservation Action No. 9 *Conduct commercial water audits*

Water providers will begin or expand a program to provide water audits (indoor and outdoor use) to commercial customers. This audit will include a feasibility report that outlines changes to process and operations to reduce water usage. The Pollution Prevention Assistance Division (P2AD) of the DNR can be used to train and/or certify auditors in performing the water audits. Pre-qualified contractors could be identified that the water providers could use to perform the audits, which could reduce the providers' long-term costs.

Water Conservation Action No. 10 *Implement education and public awareness plan*

Public education is critical to achieving public cooperation and support of water conservation goals. The District and each water provider must increase their public information programs.