

Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources Water Conservation Program

Quarterly Status Report

January 2012



DWR Water Conservation Program
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall Status

The purpose of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (Metro Water District or the District) is to establish policy, create plans, and promote intergovernmental coordination of water issues in the district from a regional perspective. As members of the Metro Water District, Gwinnett County is required to comply with the *2009 Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan* and the ten additional water conservation measures added to the Plan in December 2010 as issued by the District. Gwinnett has fulfilled the requirements of the plan by implementing a long-term water conservation program. The following details Gwinnett's compliance to key plan measures by providing a status report to gauge program progress for 2012.

Conservation Measure	Status
Conservation Pricing	DWR uses a three-tiered conservation pricing structure. Conservation pricing is in effect year round. Residential tiered water rates were increased to \$4.53, \$6.60 and \$9.06 for 2012 in accordance with the rate resolution passed in 2009.
Toilet Rebate Program	2,567 toilets were rebated in 2011. In January 2012, Gwinnett County DWR rebated our 10,000th toilet . An estimated \$940,000 has been spent on the program to date. A multifamily toilet rebate program was launched in January 2012. The program includes comprehensive on-site water audits and requires building owners to recycle the old toilets to qualify for the rebate. One 450 toilet apartment complex has already completed their pre-inspection. Efforts are underway to promote the program to the pre-1993 apartment complexes that have the highest per unit consumption.
Public Events	Fix A Leak Week event was held in 1 st quarter 2011 in partnership with EPA to encourage customers to fix leaks and conserve water. Annual Drinking Water Week festivities were held at Shoal Creek plant for the public in 2 nd quarter 2011. DWR staff also participated in the Earth Day festival held in April at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center to promote water conservation with information and giveaways. DWR staff will participate in similar events throughout 2012.
Low-flow Retrofit Kits	Over 750 kits were distributed in 2011. Since the program began in 2007, over 2,800 kits have been given away.
Residential Water Audits	MWD Do it Yourself Residential Water Audits are distributed in the DWR lobby, at workshops and events, and via direct mail. They are also available to download online at: http://www.gwinnettcountry.com/static/departments/DWR/pdf/householdwateraudit.pdf
Commercial Water Audits	DWR staff attended a cooling tower workshop and Green Plumbers training in 2011 to learn how to better advise commercial customers on water efficiency. One on-site commercial audit was conducted and two more businesses were advised and received materials via email. DWR staff also met with facilities managers at Gwinnett County Public Schools to explore water conservation training options for GCPS staff. Commercial water audit information is available for CII customers on the county website at: http://www.gwinnettcountry.com/portal/gwinnett/Departments/PublicUtilities/WaterConservation/CommercialIndustrial

Student Education	In 2011, a water conservation school outreach program was developed to target first and fourth grade students in Gwinnett County Public Schools. The program is aligned with AKS curriculum standards. Sessions were piloted at Jenkins Elementary and McKendree Elementary in May 2011. In June and July, sessions were also conducted for several summer camps at Gwinnett County Parks. For the 2011/2012 school year, programs were promoted via flyers distributed to teachers at a GCPs science curriculum planning meeting in August. Teachers were also contacted about the program via direct email. A total of 2,650 students received hands-on water conservation education between May and December 2011. Ten schools have already booked programs for spring 2012.
Homeowner Education	Three HOA presentations have been conducted to date, with one currently scheduled. Five civic/community group presentations have been conducted to date and two are scheduled. In 2011, more than 550 conservation packets were mailed by request to residential customers responding to a bill message. Kits include brochures, a Do-it-Yourself household water audit, toilet dye tablets and a flow meter bag. Kits were also mailed to the top 100 highest residential water users. The brochure display in the DWR lobby is restocked regularly and an educational video was installed above the queue. The water conservation website is continuously updated.
Publications	In 2011, articles on water conservation topics appeared in the April, May and July issues of the Gwinnett County Connection newsletter and in the Water Words water quality report published in April. Articles are scheduled for February, April, May and July 2012. Development of new themed and branded educational materials is underway and will include brochures, website content, children's activities and promotional items. Completion is expected in 2012.
Sub-meter Policy	Gwinnett complies with state code requirements by enforcing a sub-meter policy. Installation of a sub-unit meter for each dwelling unit is required at the time of construction for all new multi-family buildings where master meters are utilized.
Water Loss Reduction	114,758 two-inch and smaller meters have been replaced since the project started in 2004. From 2008 to 2011, 139 large meters have been replaced. All meters three inches and larger are tested per AWWA standards. The County also utilizes the AWWA water audit methodologies and water loss tracking software to assess and reduce water system leakage. The current ILI is 1.16.
Point of Use Metering	Through a cooperative agreement with the City of Loganville, Gwinnett County will begin a point of use metering pilot program that will deploy and study this technology at 420 residences.
Private Fire-line Metering	Gwinnett County's Backflow Prevention Ordinance requires all private fire-lines to be equipped with a detector meter. These meters are capable of detecting and metering the occurrence of low-volume water flow through the fire-line.
Reclaimed Water	180 million gallons of reclaimed water was distributed to customers in 2011. Additionally, over nine billions gallons of highly quality effluent was returned to Lake Lanier. Information about the Reuse Water Program is available on the county website at: http://www.gwinnettcountry.com/portal/gwinnett/Departments/PublicUtilities/WaterConservation/ReuseinGwinnett
New Policies and Ordinances	New water conservation ordinances were passed in December 2010. Ordinance WTR-2010 of Gwinnett County Municipal Code prohibits observable water wasting and updates the drought and non-drought outdoor water use schedules. It also establishes rules for conservation billing and outlines procedures for fines, penalties and termination of service related to water conservation violations.
Maintain a Water Conservation Program	A full-time Water Conservation Coordinator was hired in December 2010. Funding for new and expanded water conservation programs has been included in the 2012 budget.

CONTROLS

Issues

- Outreach and awareness for commercial customers needs to increase. A successful program will require a great deal of staff expertise, time and funding to encourage and incentivize businesses to invest in equipment upgrades and modify their practices. Holding two Commercial Water Audit workshops in 2012 was identified as a good first step.
- DWR promotes and encourages residential water audits. The resource needs for performing on-site residential audits are considerable; therefore, “Do-it-Yourself” residential water audit information is posted on the website for public access. DWR is also coordinating a Residential Water Audit Workshop.

Change Status

- A full-time Water Conservation Coordinator was hired in December 2010. This action has provided additional staff resources to increase Gwinnett County’s Water Conservation Program.

Risk Status

- Risk: Because Georgia metro counties are no longer under Level 4 Drought or total water ban, this poses a threat to conservation behavior.
- Mitigation: A continuous effort is being placed on increasing public events, website information, education and Toilet Rebate Program awareness.