

**WATER PLANNING STANDARDS**  
prepared for the

**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District**

by the  
**Environmental Protection Division**  
of the  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**

**December 18, 2001**

# **Water Planning Standards**

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The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Act (SB 130) provides that three plans (watershed management, wastewater, and water supply/water conservation) be prepared. The statute includes specific requirements for each plan. The statute also provides for EPD to develop standards for each plan, receiving input from basin advisory councils.

This document reiterates the statutory requirements for each plan and includes the standards adopted by EPD.

## **Watershed Management Plan**

Specified SB 130 elements (These are not established by EPD but are contained in State Law, O.C.G.A. 12-5-582.)

- 1) Appropriate standards and methodologies for monitoring water quality and maintaining and organizing an inventory of collected water quality data;
- 2) Descriptions of current pollutant loads by source categories, subsource categories, and specific sources where identifiable;
- 3) Forecasts of potential future pollutant load increases by virtue of new development, growth, or other changes in watershed activities;
- 4) Identification of streams or bodies of water within the applicable watershed having or requiring total maximum daily loads; provisions for incorporating into the watershed-specific plan any implementation plan for total maximum daily loads as established by EPD; and provisions to ensure that the watershed-specific plan conforms to requirements for implementation plans for streams requiring total maximum daily loads, such that said watershed-specific plan could be readily utilized by EPD to meet applicable federal requirements for implementation plans for total maximum daily loads;
- 5) Establishment of priorities for protecting watershed resources and for obtaining pollutant load reductions or preventing future pollutant load increases, or both, and an explanation of the rationale for such priorities;
- 6) Identification of specific effective control programs and strategies including specific regulatory or voluntary actions to attain and maintain applicable water quality standards, including any pollutant load reductions mandated by implementation plans for total maximum daily loads; identification of specific public or private organizational responsibility for carrying out such control programs or voluntary actions, including without limitation instances where

control programs require coordination among multiple jurisdictions, such that there are reasonable assurances that applicable water quality standards will be attained or maintained, or both;

- 7) The model ordinances for effective stormwater management and any recommended additions or modifications to such model ordinances, if appropriate, to provide additional measures to improve storm-water run-off quality, including without limitation, requirements to retrofit or modify existing developments in order to improve storm-water run-off quality;
- 8) Recommended changes to state or local laws, regulations, or ordinances necessary to implement the plans;
- 9) A timetable for implementation of necessary elements of the plans for each jurisdiction including description of annual, measurable milestones for determining whether identified measures are being implemented;
- 10) Estimates of costs and identification of potential sources of funding necessary for implementation of the plans;
- 11) Education and public awareness measures regarding watershed protection; and;
- 12) Establishment of short-term and long-term goals to be accomplished by the plan and measures for the assessment of progress in accomplishing such goals and plan.

### **Standards – Watershed Management Plan**

1. The plan shall include items 1-12 of O.C.G.A. 12-5-582 (above).
2. The plan shall, at a minimum, be consistent with all applicable federal and state laws and rules.
3. The plan shall be implementable. Specific activities should be cost effective as they relate to identifiable measurable goals. These activities should be practical in design knowing that they must be calibrated for the application and the desired results. These activities should be site specific and effective in the watershed in which they occur. Testing of selected BMP projects should be included in the implementation schedule.
4. The plan shall be consistent with or more protective than the Part V criteria rules developed pursuant to the Comprehensive Planning Act (DNR Rule 391-3-16).

5. The plan shall include an evaluation of all provisions contained in the “Land Development Provisions to protect Georgia Water Quality,” October 1997 and shall incorporate those provisions selected by the Planning District Board.
6. The plan shall be consistent with the water supply/water conservation plan and with the wastewater plan.
7. The plan shall have a planning horizon of at least twenty years.
8. The plan shall address the local governments’ need for a watershed strategy and will project the overall health of the watershed post development. It will link ordinances, zoning, impervious surface limits, green space, and demonstrate how these actions will protect the overall health of the watershed.

### **Wastewater Plan**

Specified SB 130 elements: (These are not established by EPD but are contained in State law, O.C.G.A. 12-5-583.)

- 1) Identification of anticipated waste-water treatment capacity requirements over the life of the plan;
- 2) Recommended future upgrades and expansions of existing waste-water treatment facilities;
- 3) Measures to maximize efficiency through multijurisdictional approaches to avoid duplication of efforts and unnecessary costs;
- 4) A timetable for phasing out existing plants if appropriate; upgrading or expanding existing plants; and construction of new plants;
- 5) An inspection and maintenance program for sewer collection systems with timetables for any necessary upgrades or replacement of substandard segments of such systems;
- 6) An inspection and maintenance program for septic tanks in critical areas and recommendations for effective management of decentralized wastewater system;
- 7) Identification of appropriate opportunities for gray-water reuse or the implementation of other technologies to increase waste-water treatment capacity or efficiency;
- 8) Education and public awareness measures regarding waste-water management; and

- 9) Establishment of short-term and long-term goals to be accomplished by the plan and measures for the assessment of progress in accomplishing such goals and plan.

### **Standards – Wastewater Plan**

1. The plan shall include items 1-9 in O.C.G.A. 12-5-583 (above).
2. The plan shall, at a minimum, be consistent with all applicable federal and state laws and rules.
3. The plan shall identify various wastewater treatment alternatives, including direct and indirect effluent reuse and opportunities for pollution prevention. The capital and operations cost for the entire District for each alternative shall be identified along with the environmental benefits/impacts of each alternative.
4. The plan shall include a general cost schedule for the selected wastewater treatment alternative including identification of funding sources and mechanisms.
5. The plan shall include a provision that at least ten percent of treated wastewater within the District shall be directly reused (for potable or non potable purposes) by the year 2025.
6. The plan shall be consistent with the watershed management plan and the water supply/water conservation plan.
7. The planning horizon shall be at least twenty years.
8. The plan shall develop and analyze options to minimize future interbasin transfers.

### **Water Supply/Water Conservation Plan**

Specified SB 130 elements (These are not established by EPD but are contained in State Law O.C.G.A. 12-5-584.)

- 1) A description of current water supply resources within the district and potential limitations on such supply resources;
- 2) Projected water supply requirements over a 20 year period for the district, including projections given differing population, consumption, and conservation scenarios;
- 3) Identification of opportunities to expand water supply resources which are found within the district (as it was defined at the time of the effective date of this Act);

- 4) An accounting of existing transfers of surface waters in excess of 100,000 gallons per day on an annualized basis across natural basins within the district;
- 5) A water conservation program including voluntary measures, best management practices, and measures enforceable through local ordinances;
- 6) Education and public awareness measures regarding water conservation; and
- 7) Establishment of short-term and long-term goals to be accomplished by the plan and measures for the assessment of progress in accomplishing such goals and plan.

### **Standards – Water Supply/Water Conservation Plan**

1. The plan shall include items 1-7 of O.C.G.A. 12-5-584 (above).
2. The plan shall, at a minimum, be consistent with all applicable federal and state laws and rules.
3. The plan shall be consistent with agreements in the ACF/ACT compacts.
4. The plan shall propose allocations of the waters of the Chattahoochee River, Lake Lanier, Allatoona (and other lakes if appropriate) to water systems consistent with guidance to be provided by EPD.
5. The plan shall not prevent the appropriate and reasonable downstream water needs from being met, even during droughts. These needs include instream flow protection and water withdrawals both inside and downstream from the planning district.
6. The plan shall optimize interjurisdictional water connections for efficiency and reliability.
7. The plan shall include a stakeholder process to (1) identify effective conservation measures including water conservation pricing and low-flow toilet retrofit programs; (2) develop reasonable schedules for the implementation of each measure; (3) define a mechanism for determining resultant reductions in water use. All of these steps shall be included in the water conservation plan. The initiative formalized in the Memorandum of Understanding that created the California Urban Water Conservation Council is a good example of a stakeholder process.
8. The plan shall provide that all local governments have water conservation pricing by January 1, 2004. The plan shall identify the details and extent of such pricing.
9. The plan shall be consistent with the wastewater plan and the watershed management plan.

10. The plan shall identify various water supply alternatives. The plan shall determine the cost for the entire District of each alternative and the environmental/water supply benefits of each alternative.
11. The plan shall develop and analyze options to minimize future interbasin transfers.
12. The plan shall identify the projected water consumption from each basin and analyze the impacts of this consumption.

These standards were issued by the Environmental Protection Division on December 18, 2001.

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