

Summary of January 2008 Water Use

Background

On October 23, 2007, Governor Perdue directed the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) to modify surface and ground water withdrawal/production permits to achieve a 10 percent reduction in usage for permit holders in the 61 North Georgia Counties covered under the Level 4 drought designation. Beginning November 1, 2007, permit holders were required to reduce water production and non-municipal/non-agricultural water withdrawal by 10 percent compared to usage of the last winter season (beginning of December 2006 through end of March 2007).

Affected Georgians

These requirements are currently in effect on 759 permit holders. 80 of these permit holders produce more than 1 million gallons per day each for a total of 97% of the water produced in the Level 4 Counties. The remaining permit holders produce less than 1 million gallons per day each for a total of 3% of the water produced.

For our review of January data we made one major change for the group of systems producing more than 1 million gallons per day. To be consistent with how we are reporting water produced by systems that wholesale to other water systems, Cobb-Marietta Water Authority's water usage was adjusted by subtracting the water they wholesale to other water systems. Besides its wholesale customers, Cobb-Marietta only sells water to two retail customers: Southern Polytechnic Institute and Lockheed. Because of this change, Cobb-Marietta's winter baseline dropped to .96 million gallons per day so they do not appear on the list of systems greater than 1 million gallons per day.

As we did in December, our review of January data has focused on those systems greater than 1 million gallons per day in accordance with our Enforcement Strategy. The January review includes 80 permit holders that produce more than 1 million gallons per day.

Critical Infrastructure Considerations

Opportunities to reduce water consumption by power producing utilities are related to the demand for electricity. Consequently, water conservation by electric producing utility plants is constrained by the need to support energy demands. These can be reduced to the extent that Georgians work to reduce energy. Additionally, the power grid is designed to have certain plants operating almost continuously to provide the base load for electrical needs.

Electric generation from facilities in the 61 counties increased in January 2008 and the associated water use has also increased. The 7 power generating facilities are considered separately from the data described below.

Reduction Goal Exceeded

The goal for these 80 permit holders producing more than one million gallons per day (public water systems and industries, not including power generation) was to reduce by 69 million gallons per day for a 10% reduction. The actual reduction achieved was 73 million gallons per day for a 10.6% reduction.

Data Received

For large systems (those greater than 1 million gallons per day), all systems reported January usage and all systems responded to the Request for Additional Information.

Based on the Additional Information submitted by permit holders, EPD has adjusted the previous winter baseline to reflect buying and selling water between systems and adjusted industrial baseline based on production/shutdown information.

Compliance Status Summary

While more than half of the 80 permit holders producing more than 1 million gallons per day succeeded in meeting or exceeding the 10% reduction, some systems faced greater challenges:

Successes

41 met in January

- 2 met in December and use decreased in January
- 5 met in December with no increase in January
- 6 did not meet in December but met in January
- 28 met in December but use increased January

Challenges

39 did not meet in January

- 6 did not meet in December but use decreased
- 15 met in December but did not meet in January
- 2 did not meet in December but did not increase or decrease use in January
- 9 did not meet in December and their use increased in January
- 7 used more than last year

Enforcement Strategy

EPD will be sending letters to all permittees requesting additional information regarding their water usage. Permittees whose January usage exceeded the average of their December 2006 through March 2007 usage will receive a notice of violation.