

**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
**Environmental Protection Division Watershed Protection Branch**

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Judson H. Turner, Director  
Phone : (404) 656-2750 Fax : (404) 651-9590

Re:     **PROCEDURE FOR PERMITTING A PROPOSED PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM**

The **Georgia Rules for Safe Drinking Water** (Rules of the Department of Natural Resources, Chapter 391-3-5, *et seq.*) defines a public water system as “a system that provides piped water to the public for human consumption, if such system has at least fifteen (15) service connections or regularly serves an average of twenty-five (25) individuals at least sixty (60) days out of the year. Such terms include: 1) any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under the control of the operator of such system and used primarily in connection with such system; and 2) any collection or pre-treatment storage facilities not under such control which are used primarily in connection with such system. Under the **Georgia Safe Drinking Water Act of 1977** (O.C.G.A. 12-5-170), any water system that meets the above definition of a public water system is required to have a **Permit to Operate a Public Water System**. Please note that a water system can have less than fifteen (15) service connections and still be considered a public water system. The minimum residential population served by a water system can be determined by multiplying the total number of active service connections by Georgia’s average population per household (as published in the most recent Federal Census Bureau statistics). Based on Georgia’s average of 2.6 persons per household, a system with ten (10) service connections would be considered a public water system. Also, a water system would be considered to be a public water system if an actual count (that is, a census) established an average population greater than twenty-five (25) individuals.

*Any person who desires to develop or expand a public water system must first obtain approval from the Environmental Protection Division (Division or EPD).*

To initiate the permitting process, the Division requires that you review and return the following items (a list of where to submit the application forms is given below):

- **Application for a Permit to Operate a Public Water System**
- **Drinking Water Project Submittal**
- **Drinking Water Laboratory and Related Services Contract Application**

As part of the acknowledgement of your permit application, you will then receive a three-phase permitting checklist document: **Phase I – Inquiry and Discovery**, a **Phase II – Technical Review**, and **Phase III – Permitting and Contract Services**. After an initial review of the application materials, if the information requested in the **Phase I (Inquiry and Discovery)** form is not received within ninety (90) days, then no further consideration will be given to the request for the permit application.

If the items requested on the **Phase I** checklist are complete and adequate, a seven digit (7-digit) **Water System Identification number (WSID)** will be issued to your proposed water system application. This WSID number must be included on all correspondence to the Division for the water system.

One of the items requested on the **Phase II (Technical Review)** form is a detailed plan of the public water system. Construction plans and specifications of the proposed system, prepared in accordance with the requirements outlined in Section 391-3-5-.05 of the Rules, must be submitted for review and approval **prior** to any construction. This submittal must be detailed enough to cover the materials and construction methods for all wells, storage tanks, water

treatment equipment, water lines and associated appurtenances. Please note that a Drinking Water Project Submittal form must be included with each project submittal.

The final step in the process will be the issuance of a **Permit to Operate a Public Water System**. A permit will not be issued until all of the previous steps have been completed.

Once a permit has been issued, compliance monitoring for microbiological and chemical sampling shall commence. It is the responsibility of the permittee to ensure that sampling schedules set by the Division are followed with conducting the appropriate sampling within the required timeframes.

It is important for permitted water systems to know and follow their drinking water sampling schedules. These sample schedules (along with inventory, sample results, violations, and other information) can be found online on the Georgia EPD "Drinking Water Watch". The internet address for the Drinking Water Watch is: <http://gadinkingwater.net> .

The Division offers permittees the option of contracting with the Division's Drinking Water Laboratory for testing and related contract services. If microbiological analyses are to be conducted by the EPD Laboratory, a microbiological sampling kit should be ordered from the Environmental Protection Division's laboratory for a cost of \$35.00 (thirty-five dollars). If chemical sample analyses are to be conducted by the EPD Laboratory, then chemical sampling kits will begin shipments, based on the sampling schedule. A microbiological and chemical laboratory service contract application is available. Once contracted for EPD Laboratory Services, the contract carries an annual fee, based upon the type of water system, population, and number of sampling points. You do have the option of seeking the services of a private, Division-certified laboratory for microbiological and chemical monitoring. It is the permittee's responsibility to ensure that the samples are collected, analyzed and reported to the Division within the required timeframes.

Should you have any further general questions about the above permitting procedure, please call the Drinking Water Permitting and Engineering office at (404) 656-2750. For specific questions about your permit application, please contact the Drinking Water Permitting and Engineering office for surface water systems or for groundwater systems, the EPD District office shown below.

EPD Coastal District, 400 Commerce Center Drive, Brunswick, GA 31523-8251

Phone: (912) 264-7284 Fax: (912) 262-3160

For Counties: Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Candler, Charlton, Chatham, Clinch, Coffee, Effingham, Evans, Glynn, Jeff Davis, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, Pierce, Tattnall, Toombs, Ware, Wayne

EPD West Central District, 2640 Shurling Drive, Macon, GA 31211-2629

Phone: (478) 751-6612 Fax: (478) 751-6660

For Counties: Bibb, Bleckley, Chattahoochee, Crawford, Dooly, Harris, Houston, Jones, Lamar, Macon, Marion, Meriwether, Monroe, Muscogee, Peach, Pike, Pulaski, Schley, Talbot, Taylor, Troup, Twiggs, Upson

EPD Southwest District, 2024 Newton Road, Albany, GA 31701-3576

Phone: (229) 430-4144 Fax: (229) 430-4259

For Counties: Baker, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Calhoun, Clay, Colquitt, Cook, Crisp, Decatur, Dodge, Dougherty, Early, Echols, Grady, Irwin, Lanier, Lee, Lowndes, Miller, Mitchell, Quitman,

Randolph, Seminole, Stewart, Sumter, Telfair, Terrell, Thomas, Tift, Turner, Webster, Wilcox, Worth

EPD Northeast District, 745 Gaines School Road, Athens, GA 30605-3129  
Phone: (706) 369-6376 Fax: (706) 369-6398

For Counties: Baldwin, Banks, Barrow, Butts, Clarke, Elbert, Franklin, Greene, Hall, Hancock, Hart, Jackson, Jasper, Lincoln, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Putnam, Stephens, Taliaferro, Walton, Wilkes

EPD East Central District, 3525 Walton Way Extension, Augusta, GA 30909  
Phone: (706) 667-4343 Fax: (706) 667-4376

For Counties: Burke, Columbia, Emanuel, Glascock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Johnson, Laurens, McDuffie, Montgomery, Richmond, Screven, Treutlen, Warren, Washington, Wheeler, Wilkinson

EPD Mountain District, P O Box 3250 16 Center Road, Cartersville, GA 30120-3250  
Phone: (770) 387-4900 Fax: (770) 387-4906

For Counties: Bartow, Carroll (industrial only), Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Cobb, Dade, Dawson, Fannin, Floyd, Forsyth, Gilmer, Gordon, Habersham, Haralson, Lumpkin, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Rabun, Towns, Union, Walker, White, Whitfield

EPD Mountain District, 4244 International Pkwy Suite 114, Atlanta, GA 30354-3906  
Phone: (404) 362-2671 Fax: (404) 362-2712

For Counties: Carroll, Clayton, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Heard, Henry, Rockdale, Spalding

### Georgia Environmental Protection Division District Offices

