



# Water Conservation and Water Use Efficiency

January 2012

Water conservation and water use efficiency play an important role in protecting Wisconsin's groundwater and surface water. While Wisconsin is rich in water resources, they are not evenly distributed across the state. Even in locations where water is plentiful, the high cost of pumping and treating water is a good reason to use water more efficiently. The Great Lakes Compact and the companion Wisconsin implementing legislation direct the DNR to develop a statewide **voluntary** water conservation and water use efficiency program with some **mandatory** elements in the Great Lakes Basin. A new rule (NR852) came into effect in January 2011 to implement this program. The new laws and rule are part of the foundation for achieving Wisconsin's goal to:

*“Sustainably manage the quantity and quality of water in the state to ensure that water is available to be used to protect and improve our health, economy and environment now and into the future.”*

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## Mandatory Water Conservation and Water Use Efficiency Program

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### To whom does the mandatory program apply?

Some elements of the water conservation and water use efficiency program are mandatory for the following:

- **New and increased** large withdrawals in the Great Lakes Basin.
- **New and increased** diversions of Great Lakes water.
- Persons applying for an approval for a **water loss** that averages more than 2 million gallons per day.

### What should I know about the mandatory program?

- Water conservation is not required for existing facilities at their current level of water withdrawal.
- Withdrawals and diversions are categorized into one of three tiers. The conservation requirements increase with each tier.
- Conservation and efficiency measures that involve retrofitting are optional.

### What is a new or increased withdrawal in the Great Lakes Basin?

A new withdrawal is a proposal for a withdrawal from a new well or surface water source after December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008. An increased withdrawal is a proposal for a withdrawal above the established baseline.

### What is a baseline?

A baseline is the amount of water that is grandfathered to a water withdrawer. Withdrawers with the capacity to withdraw more than 100,000 gallons of water per day that existed prior to December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in the Great Lakes Basin all received a baseline.

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## Mandatory Requirements for Water Conservation for Each Tier

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**Tier 1** – New and increased water withdrawers in the Great Lakes Basin applying for coverage under a General Water Use Permit.

**Tier 2** – New and increased water withdrawers in the Great Lakes Basin applying for an Individual Water Use Permit.

**Tier 3** – New or increased diversions of Great Lakes water and new or increased water withdrawals statewide that result in a water loss of more than 2 million gallons per day averaged over 30 days.

Water Conservation Requirements	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Develop a water conservation plan.	X	X	X
Implement 4 prescribed basic Conservation and Efficiency Measures (CEMs).	X	X	X
Implement 4 prescribed intermediate CEMs <b>OR</b> choose your own CEMs to reduce water use or increase efficiency by 10%.		X	X
Identify and implement all available CEMs that are cost effective or environmentally sound and economically feasible.			X

**What are the Tier 1 Conservation and Efficiency Measures?**

- Conduct a water audit.
- Develop a leak detection and repair program.
- Educate your staff or customers about your water conservation activities.
- Measure all sources of water.

A more detailed description of these measures is available at the Water Use Program webpage.

**What are the Tier 2 Conservation and Efficiency Measures? Where do I find them?**

In addition to Tier 1 measures, these measures vary by water use type, but they include measures related to developing demand management programs, evaluating water reuse projects, evaluating and reducing water use for cleaning, evaluating and reducing water use for cooling needs, and implementing sub-metering for industrial processes to improve efficiency. A full list is part of the water conservation and efficiency rule and is available at the water use webpage.

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**Voluntary Water Conservation and Water Use Efficiency Program**

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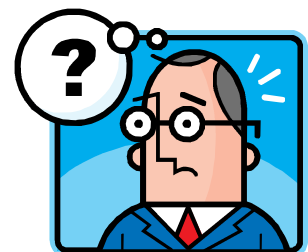
The DNR, the Public Service Commission, and the Department of Safety and Professional Services are collaborating to promote a statewide voluntary water conservation and water use efficiency program. This program will promote water conservation and efficiency measures for many types of water use, and build upon and support the successful efforts of water utilities, industries and agricultural operations. Water users are encouraged to examine the water conservation and efficiency measures identified in the mandatory program and implement those measures that are practical for their facility or operation.

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**Where can I get more information?**

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Questions can be directed to the Water Use Program at (608) 266-2299 or [DNRWaterUseRegistration@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRWaterUseRegistration@wisconsin.gov)



*Department of Natural Resources – Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater*  
 101 S Webster Street  
 Madison, WI 53703