

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
Activities & Progress Report

2011



2011 Board Members

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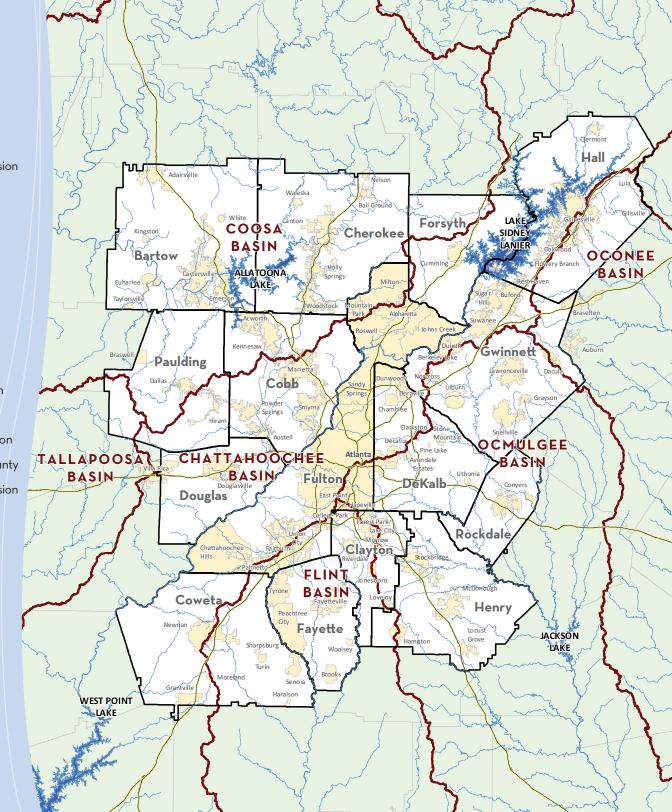
Chuck Huling, Mableton

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Chairman's Message

December 2011

From its inception in 2001, the Metro Water District has served as the forum for local governments, water and wastewater utilities and stakeholders to come together to develop and implement plans that move the region toward best-in-class water resources management. It is remarkable how much has been accomplished over the decade.

The District is the only major metro area in the country with more than 100 jurisdictions that are implementing such a comprehensive water conservation program that is both required and enforced. Through implementation of the Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan, the District has reduced its total water use, even though the population of the District has increased by one million.

The Watershed Management Plan is the best and most comprehensive stormwater management plan in the nation. The model ordinances that local governments have adopted are reducing water pollution and protecting the recreational values of rivers and streams in the metro area. And, thanks to new floodplain mapping, homeowners and businesses will know if their properties are at risk and be able to plan accordingly.

Wastewater treatment is also vital. The number of sewer spills has steadily decreased over the last decade as a result of improved operations and maintenance of wastewater treatment facilities. Metro Atlanta has some of the most advanced wastewater treatment facilities in the world. Wastewater from these and other plants is treated to very high standards, and returning highly treated wastewater to source water is part of the District's comprehensive approach to water resources management.

This year brought great news for the Metro Water District in the tri-state water litigation. The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta ruled that water supply has always been an authorized purpose of Lake Lanier. The District's leadership in water conservation and management has strengthened Georgia's position in the ongoing conflict.

In just 10 years, the District has created the best and most comprehensive suite of water resources management plans in the nation and has established our position as a leading steward of regional water resources throughout the state and the country. As chair of the Metro Water District, I am exceedingly proud of the District's achievements and applaud the extraordinary leadership and collaboration among the District governing board, local and state partners and regional stakeholders that have made those accomplishments possible.

Sincerely,







About the Metro Water District

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District was created by the Georgia General Assembly 10 years ago to establish policy, create plans and promote intergovernmental coordination of water issues in the District from a regional perspective. Under the direction of the governing board, technical coordinating committee and basin advisory councils, the Metro Water District remains committed to its central mission – the development of comprehensive regional water resources plans that protect water quality and water supplies in and downstream of the region, protect recreational values and minimize potential adverse impacts of development on rivers, streams and lakes.

The District is responsible for creating and maintaining three water resources plans: the Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan, the Wastewater Management Plan and the Watershed Management Plan. Local government officials and stakeholders provide important feedback in the process of updating the plans. The District updates the plans every five years and has procedures in place to amend the plans between updates as necessary. These procedures give the District and local governments the flexibility to adapt to changes as needed.

The District's governing board establishes policy and oversees the activities of the organization. The board consists of elected officials from each of the 15 counties and the City of Atlanta and 10 citizen members.



Left to right: Birdel Jackson, Secretary/Treasurer; Katie Kirkpatrick, Vice Chair; Boyd Austin, Chair



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Board meeting

Measuring Progress

To measure what has been accomplished as a result of the plans, the Metro Water District surveys local jurisdictions and utilities annually and publishes an Implementation Review report that documents the number of local governments and utilities that have implemented each plan measure. Periodically, the District publishes a Metrics Report that analyzes water supply and wastewater trends, specifically focusing on water withdrawals, wastewater returns and stream water quality characteristics within the 15-county metro area. Both the Metrics Report and the Implementation Review are available on the Metro Water District's website, www.northgeorgiawater.org.

To enforce compliance with the Metro Water District plans, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) conducts audits of local government and utility activities. Communities must comply with the plan provisions in order to modify or obtain new water withdrawal permits, wasteload allocations, Georgia Environmental Finance Authority loan funding or to renew MS4 stormwater permits. Since 2001, EPD has conducted more than 97 audits. Seventeen other audits were in process by year end. EPD audits each local government or jurisdiction every four to five years, working closely with the Metro Water District to provide technical assistance to help local governments meet current plan requirements.





Technical Coordinating Committee

The Technical Coordinating Committee, composed of watershed, wastewater and water supply experts from the jurisdictions and utilities within the Metro Water District, provides technical guidance to the District staff and the governing board as plans and policies are developed. The Technical Coordinating Committee also provides a forum for water and wastewater utility staff to share best practices and coordinate regional strategies.

Divided into subcommittees that focus on water supply and conservation, wastewater, stormwater and education, the technical committee members contribute hundreds of hours each year. In 2011 alone, more than 300 individuals participated in subcommittee and working group meetings.

This past year, the committees helped guide the development of the water resources metrics report, and a working group prepared a guidance document to help local governments evaluate stormwater technologies to ensure that they select the best products for their area. A second work group developed and published the Water System Audit Data Collection and Input Guidance to help water systems assess and reduce water loss. This publication served as the foundation for the state's Georgia Water Audit and Loss Control Manual.

The technical committee has been invaluable in assessing proposed rules issued by regulatory agencies. As people on the ground in local water systems, they have the practical and technical know-how to advise on how to make new regulations work.



Technical Coordinating Committee members discuss elements of Metro Water District Plans.



Chattahoochee Basin Advisory Council meeting

Basin Advisory Councils

Basin Advisory Councils are the District's main forum for public involvement and input. As such, they have served a vital role in the creation of the District's plans. The councils have contributed to the success of District-wide campaigns including the Clean Water Campaign and "I'm In," and to the creation of various educational materials, including the recent fats, oils and grease brochures and door hangers. Through facility tours, site visits and panel discussions, advisory council members have gained a better understanding of the local water resources issues of the region.

In 2011, a membership drive strengthened the advisory councils, involving more members from a wider variety of backgrounds. A total of 200 individuals represent local governments, the water resource industry, environmental organizations, civic groups, businesses, the development community, recreation interests and the academic community.

Basin Advisory Council Chairs

Chattahoochee - Charles McKinney Coosa/Etowah - Doris Cook Flint - Richard Greuel Lake Lanier – Val Perry Ocmulgee – Mike Walker Oconee – Jill Stachura





Water Supply & Water Conservation

The Metro Water District's Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan includes a balance between securing additional supplies for the region's long-term needs and water conservation. Water conservation is a critical element in planning for metro Atlanta's water future, but conservation alone will not provide all the water that our growing region will need in the future. The expansion of existing sources and the construction of new reservoirs is also necessary.

Water Supply Sources/Facilities

The District's strategy is to maximize the use of existing water sources in the metro area. The plan provides for the continued and expanded use of the metro area's primary sources - Lake Lanier and Allatoona Lake. The plan also includes the continued use of the 22 small existing reservoirs in the District, the construction of three new reservoirs that are in the planning process and the investigation of three additional reservoirs needed in the future.

In addition, the Metro Water District encourages water systems to maximize water reuse opportunities. A number of facilities practice non-potable reuse in the form of golf course irrigation, industrial process water and other urban irrigation. Indirect potable reuse is also practiced in Fulton, Gwinnett, Cobb and Clayton counties.



Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority/City of Canton Hickory Log Creek Reservoir

Required Water Conservation Measures

- » Conservation pricing
- » Replace older, inefficient plumbing fixtures
- » Pre-rinse spray valve retrofit education program
- » Rain sensor shut-off switches on new irrigation systems
- » Sub-unit meters in new multi-family buildings
- » Assess and reduce water system leakage
- » Residential water audits
- » Low-flow retrofit kits for residential users
- » Commercial water audits
- » Education and public awareness
- » Install high efficiency toilets and high efficiency urinals in government buildings
- » New car washes to recycle water
- » Expedite existing programs to identify and reduce both real and apparent water losses*
- » Multi-family high efficiency toilet rebate program*
- » Install meters with point of use leak detection*
- » Require private fire lines to be metered*
- » Maintain a water conservation program*
- » Water waste policy to reduce outdoor water waste
- » High efficiency plumbing fixtures consistent with state legislation

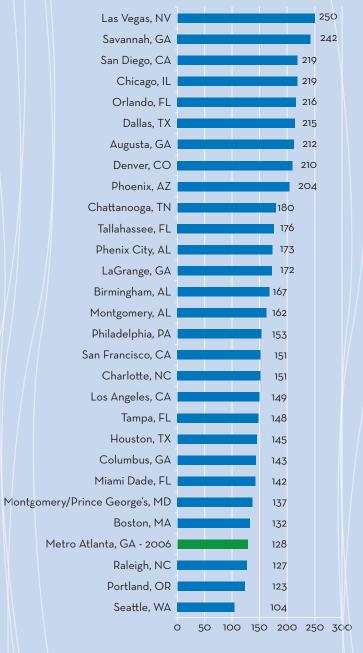
*Required for Chattahoochee River and Lake Lanier only

Water Conservation

The 15 counties, 91 cities and 56 water systems in the Metro Water District have worked hard over the past decade to make metropolitan Atlanta one of the most water efficient regions in the nation. Nowhere else in the country have so many local governments and water systems come together to develop and implement a comprehensive water conservation plan that is required and enforced by the state.

The District has reduced its per capita water use by 14 percent since 2001, even though its population has increased by one million. Further, a survey of some 30 metro areas reveals that metro Atlanta's per capita water use is lower than all but three of the regions surveyed.

Per Capita Comparisons



The majority of the data represents the 2005-2007 period

Water Providers with Toilet Rebate Programs

City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management*

City of Austell

City of Ball Ground

Bartow County Water Department*

Town of Braselton

City of Buford

City of Cartersville Water Department

Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority*

Clayton County Water Authority*

Cobb County Water System

City of College Park Water and Sewer*

Coweta County Water and Sewerage Authority*

City of Cumming Department of Utilities*

City of Dallas*

DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority

City of East Point*

City of Emerson

City of Fairburn*

Fayette County Water System*

City of Fayetteville Water Department*

Forsyth County Department of Water and Sewer*

Fulton County Department of Public Works*

City of Gainesville Public Utilities

Gwinnett County Water Resources*

City of Hapeville Water and Sewer*

Henry County Water and Sewerage Authority*

City of Lawrenceville Water Department

Marietta Power and Water

City of McDonough*

City of Norcross

Paulding County Water System

City of Powder Springs*

City of Roswell*

City of Smyrna Utility Services

City of Suwanee Water Department*

City of Villa Rica

City of Woodstock Water and Sewer*

Conservation Accomplishments

- » Ten years ago, conservation pricing the more you use, the more you pay was rare. Today 99 percent of the population is served by water systems that have tiered water conservation rates.
- » A total of 38 jurisdictions offer toilet rebates to replace old, inefficient toilets. These programs cover 96 percent of the area's population. Since the program began in 2008, 71,600 old toilets have been replaced.
- » Most water systems have active leak detection and repair programs. More than 15,000 leaks were reported and repaired last year.
- » Since 53 percent of metro area water use is residential, the District and its local partners have targeted homes with the "Do-It-Yourself Household Water Assessment" which helps residents analyze how much water they use, how to detect leaks and how to change water use habits. As of 2011, 85 percent of water suppliers provide residential water audits or the "Do-It-Yourself Household Water Assessment" brochure to their customers. In addition, more than 165,000 low-flow retrofit kits have been distributed by water systems to residential customers in the past decade.
- » The Metro Water District has provided technical assistance to commercial water users in how to conduct water audits for both general commercial properties and hotels. In 2011, the District partnered with BOMA (Building Owners and Managers Association) Atlanta to provide a cooling tower water efficiency training workshop for local building engineers, facility and property managers, and water providers.
- » Georgia Power partnered with the Metro Water District to bring the GreenPlumbers Training to Atlanta. Certified GreenPlumbers are able to help customers make more informed decisions to improve water and energy efficiency in their homes and businesses.
- » These conservation measures are making a difference. The Metro Water District Metrics Report shows that per capita water use is down 14 percent since 2001, while the population of the 15-county metro area increased by one million people.



Cooling tower water efficiency training workshop

^{*}Participates in the Metro Water District Regional Toilet Rebate Program



Lake Lanier

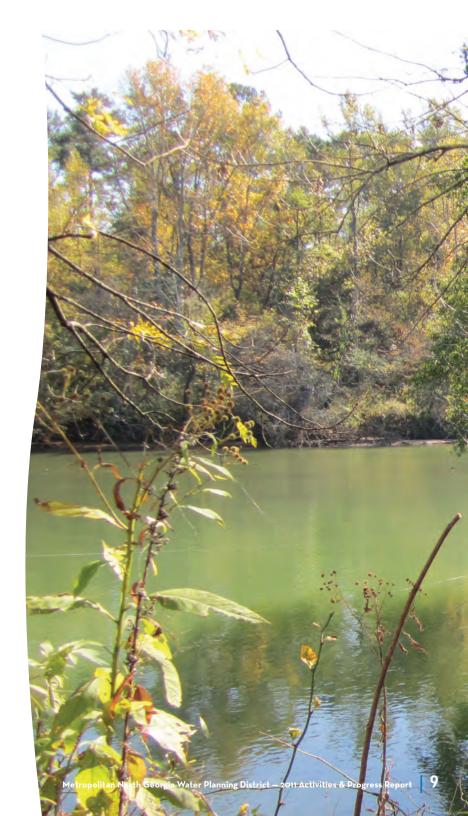
Good News About Tri-State Litigation

The United States Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit reversed a District Court decision and found that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has the authority to operate Buford Dam for water supply for metro Atlanta.

The 11th Circuit's decision clearly states that water supply is an original authorized purpose of Lake Lanier — equal to hydropower, navigation and flood control. It directs the Corps to use its legal authority and expertise to assess how best to operate the federal dams on the Chattahoochee to meet Congressional objectives, while balancing the needs of all users in the basin.

The second phase of the litigation, which focuses on endangered species and related concerns in the Apalachicola River, is continuing.

The lawsuit involving the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa Basin, which is being heard in the District Court in Alabama, has been stayed for several years. Action is not expected in this case until after the first of the year.





Wastewater Management

The Wastewater Management Plan prescribes strategies and recommendations to effectively manage wastewater flows in the Metro Water District. These strategies have been implemented to address the 92 publicly owned wastewater treatment plants, 16,000 miles of sanitary sewer line, more than 450,000 manholes and more than 500,000 septic systems.

Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The primary source of additional wastewater treatment capacity will come from the expansion of existing facilities while the decommissioning of older, less efficient facilities will help maintain water quality. The plan calls for the construction of 21 new wastewater treatment facilities, the expansion of 50 existing facilities and the decommissioning of 23 smaller facilities.

Management Measures

The plan includes requirements for intensive inspection and maintenance of sanitary sewer systems, improvements in asset management, streamlining of tasks through the development of standardized procedures and more comprehensive management of onsite wastewater management systems. These wastewater management measures are necessary to ensure that the sanitary sewer system operates properly and that public health is protected.



City of Gainesville's Flat Creek Water Reclamation Facility



District materials educate about fats, oils and grease.

Wastewater Management Accomplishments

The District and its member communities have made significant progress towards the implementation of these prescribed measures, and have demonstrated a decade of commitment to ensuring adequate wastewater treatment capacity while maintaining water quality.

- » Over 90 percent of the wastewater utilities in the Metro Water District have developed a sanitary sewer system inspection and maintenance program for determining the condition of the system and identifying any needed maintenance and rehabilitation needs.
- » 89 percent of wastewater utilities have developed a grease management program for reducing the amount of grease entering the sanitary sewer system.
- » 93 percent of wastewater utilities maintain Standard Operating Procedures for responding to sanitary sewer overflows.
- » 66 percent of wastewater utilities have developed a capacity certification program to ensure that adequate space exists within the pipes of the sanitary sewer system and within the treatment facilities for receiving additional wastewater flows from new development or redevelopment projects.
- » In order to reduce grease discharges to the sanitary sewer system originating from multi-family residential areas, Metro Water District partnered with the Atlanta Apartment Association to develop and distribute Fats, Oils and Grease (F.O.G.) educational door hangers to their 315,000 member units in the 15-county area. The first 100,000 door hangers are currently in the process of being delivered.
- » The Metro Water District was given planning guidance from GA EPD to return 58 percent of the water withdrawn in the Chattahoochee Basin. As of 2009, the Metro Water District was surpassing that goal and returning 68 percent of withdrawals to the basin.





Watershed & Stormwater Management

The Metro Water District's stormwater and watershed management efforts are among the most comprehensive and holistic in the nation, and the District's unique, locally-led process provides for ongoing regional coordination of stormwater and watershed management issues.

The District and its member communities have made significant progress towards implementing measures that help protect and restore local watershed conditions and regional water resources, including the development and adoption of model ordinances and a comprehensive plan for watershed protection.

Model Ordinances

The Metro Water District has created a suite of model ordinances intended to address a variety of issues related to the region's water resources. Stormwater management ordinances reduce water pollution and damage to stream banks by requiring all new development to control stormwater runoff. Floodplain ordinances are helping to map future flood-prone areas, which will give homeowners and businesses information they can use to guard against the risks of flooding. Vegetative buffers called for by model stream buffer ordinances protect water quality and stream bank integrity. Pollution is also reduced as a result of illicit discharge ordinances that make it illegal to discharge contaminants to storm drains and provide for appropriate enforcement and remedial actions. As of 2011, 95 of the District's 106 jurisdictions – representing well over 99 percent of the area – have adopted all of the model ordinances.



City of Atlanta Historic 4th Ward Park Multi-Purpose Regional Stormwater Facility

Watershed Management Measures

The Watershed Management Plan prescribes strategies, recommendations and requirements for effective stormwater and watershed management. It builds upon local efforts to meet the overall goal of healthy watersheds and the protection and improvement of water quality. Some key results of the plan include:

- » Local governments are undertaking watershed improvement projects, including physical retrofits and rehabilitation initiatives designed to address water quality impairment, streambank erosion, flooding, aging infrastructure or aquatic habitat degradation.
- » More than 80 cities and counties have programs in place to inventory, inspect and maintain stormwater infrastructure to ensure that drainage systems and stormwater facilities function as they should to protect the public and the environment.
- » Local jurisdictions are promoting and requiring low impact development, greenspace protection and green infrastructure that provide for more natural approaches to stormwater management, and reduce the need for expensive ongoing maintenance of hard infrastructure. Ninety-two local governments already have such efforts in place.
- » More stream miles are being monitored for water quality under the plan provisions that require local governments to assess ambient conditions and biological integrity.
- » Over a third of the communities in the Metro Water District including some of the region's largest such as Clayton, DeKalb, Douglas, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale counties - fund their programs using a stormwater utility (up from none when the District was created), a user-fee approach similar to water and wastewater utilities.

Other Activities

The District also has provided training and technical assistance to local governments on a variety of topics related to stormwater and watershed management. It has prepared a comprehensive set of standards and protocols for surface water quality monitoring to enable local entities to streamline their water quality sampling programs and reduce redundancy. Finally, the Technical Coordinating Committee serves as an ongoing regional forum for discussion and addressing policy and technical issues and applying adaptive management to the District's efforts.



Take nser Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District — 2011 Activities & Progress Report

Education & Public Awareness

Education and public awareness is a significant element of each of the Metro Water District's plans. The highlight for 2011 of the Metro Water District's education and awareness work was the launch of www.mydropcounts.org, the first phase of the "I'm In" water conservation campaign. This highly interactive website explains how we use water in the region and offers tips for conservation. The site calls upon visitors to take the water conservation pledge and share what they are doing to conserve water. The site focuses on individuals and families, businesses, schools and governments. Visitors can use the water calculator to estimate how much water they use in their homes and link to myriad resources about water conservation. More than 100 students participated in the kickoff of the campaign at E. Rivers Elementary School.

The Clean Water Campaign (www.cleanwatercampaign.com) gives residents, businesses and educators many resources explaining how to improve water quality by reducing nonpoint source pollution. Each year, the District hosts the Clean Water Campaign/"I'm In" essay contest for all middle school students throughout the District. This contest encourages students to write about ways they can encourage others to protect water quality and conserve water. This year's region-wide winner was Brooke Underwood, a sixth-grader at Mt. Paran Christian School in Cobb County.



2011 Clean Water Campaign/"I'm In" Essay region-wide winner Brooke Underwood pictured here with her parents and Cobb County Commissioner Helen Goreham



"I'm In" Kickoff at E. Rivers Elementary School

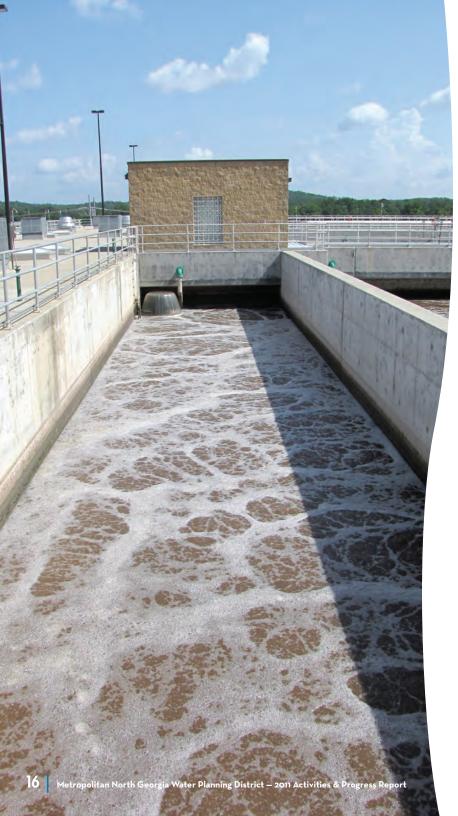
In addition to "I'm In" and the Clean Water Campaign, the Metro Water District produces brochures, videos, posters and how-to booklets to capitalize on economies of scale and ensure consistent messaging throughout the region.

Events held by local governments in the District

- » World Water Day
- » Earth Day Events
- » Rivers Alive Clean Up
- » Storm Drain Marking Events
- » Adopt-A-Stream Workshops
- » Facility and Plant Tours
- » Project Wet Activities
- » Clean Water Week Poster Contest in Marietta
- » Wetlands and Watershed Festival in Clayton County
- » Water Professionals Presented at Career Day Events
- » Cubihatcha Kids Outdoor Education Day in Henry County
- » Household Hazardous Waste Amnesty Day in Clayton and Cobb counties

- » Rain Barrel Workshops
- » EPA Fix a Leak Week
- » WaterSmart Workshops in Atlanta
- » National Drinking Water Week
- » U-Fix It Workshops in Fulton County
- » Water Conservation Workshops





Local Highlights

During the past decade, the District's member local governments and water authorities have successfully completed many projects which contribute to water resources management in the District.

» Bartow County - The City of Cartersville installed an innovative wastewater treatment system that increased treatment capacity, improved treatment performance and reduced operating costs.



- » Cherokee County Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority's Fitzgerald Creek WPCP was upgraded in 2008. (pictured left)
- » Clayton County Clayton County Water Authority's Huie Constructed Treatment Wetlands returns almost as much water to the basin as customers use on a daily basis.





- » Cobb County Chastain Meadows Regional Stormwater Management Facility reduces peak stream flows and flooding downstream on Noonday Creek.
- » Coweta County B.T. Brown Water Treatment Plant has a capacity of 8 mgd. (pictured right)
- » **DeKalb County** The Scott Candler Water Treatment Plant was rebuilt and uses a multi-step automated process to filter 150 mgd.









- » Douglas County The Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority raised the Dog River Dam to expand the reservoir capacity to 23 mgd. (pictured left)
- » Fayette County The City of Fayetteville completed expansion of their Whitewater Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant to 5 mgd. (pictured above)
- » Forsyth County Fowler Park, near Fowler Water Reclamation Facility, is irrigated completely with reuse water.



- » Fulton County Johns Creek Water Reclamation Facility is one of the largest of its type in the U.S., providing reuse water that is suitable for irrigation. It also utilizes state-of-the-art odor and noise control technology. (pictured right)
- » Fulton County The City of Atlanta's CSO Remediation Plan consisted of sewer separation in several CSO areas and the construction of deep-rock tunnel storage and two new treatment facilities to capture, store and treat combined storm water and sewage flow.



» Gwinnett County - F. Wayne Hill Wastewater Treatment Plant is one of the largest and most advanced such facilities in the world. Gwinnett County returns highly treated wastewater to Lake Lanier and provides reuse water for commercial uses and irrigation purposes.







- » Hall County The City of Gainesville's Flat Creek Stormwater Regional Detention and Stream Restoration Project incorporated stream restoration, a stream diversion structure into a regional detention pond, underground stormwater storage and a greenway. (pictured left)
- » Henry County The Henry County Water And Sewerage Authority Tussahaw Reservoir has a raw water storage capacity of approximately 9.78 billion gallons.



- » Paulding County Reuse Booster Pump Station and Reuse Transmission Main projects provide reclaimed water to approximately 60 home owners. (below left)
- » Rockdale County Rockdale Water Resources' water meter replacement program utilizes automated reading technology for more accurate accounting of water usage. (below right)





2011 Financials

The Metro Water District operates on a calendar year budget. Most revenues come from local government dues (\$782,795) and the State of Georgia (\$250,000). Dues were \$0.20 per capita for 2011 (based on the 2000 Census). Below is a review of the revenues and expenses for 2011. This accounting is subject to adjustment after year-end close and independent audit. In June 2011, the board adopted a policy to establish and strive to maintain a minimum fund balance of \$300,000 for operating contingencies.

Beginning Fund Balance								. \$354,251
Revenues								
Direct State Funding								. \$250,000
Local Dues (\$0.20 per capita)								. \$782,795
Interest Income								. \$2,000
District Special Projects Reven	ue							. \$90,000
District Special Projects Carry								. \$16,978
Obligated "I'm In" Carryover								. \$285,000
Misc. Fees								. \$68,000
Total Revenues								. \$1,494,773
Expenses by Type								
								. \$3,200
Salaries								
Fringe Benefits								
_								. \$70,000
Overhead								. \$269,926
Miscellaneous Operating .								. \$75,000
Public Awareness/Education								
"I'm In" Water Conservation Ca								. \$38,000
Total Expenses	-	_						. \$1,123,031
		•	-				-	71,1=0,1=0
Special Projects Fund Balance								. \$ 6,925
Designated "I'm In" Carryover								
General Fund Balance .								. \$472,068

Financials for 2012

The governing board has adopted a budget of \$1,253,273 for 2012, with the majority of revenues coming from local government dues (\$773,239) and the State of Georgia (\$250,000). Dues will be \$0.16 per capita for 2012 (based on the 2010 Census).







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