



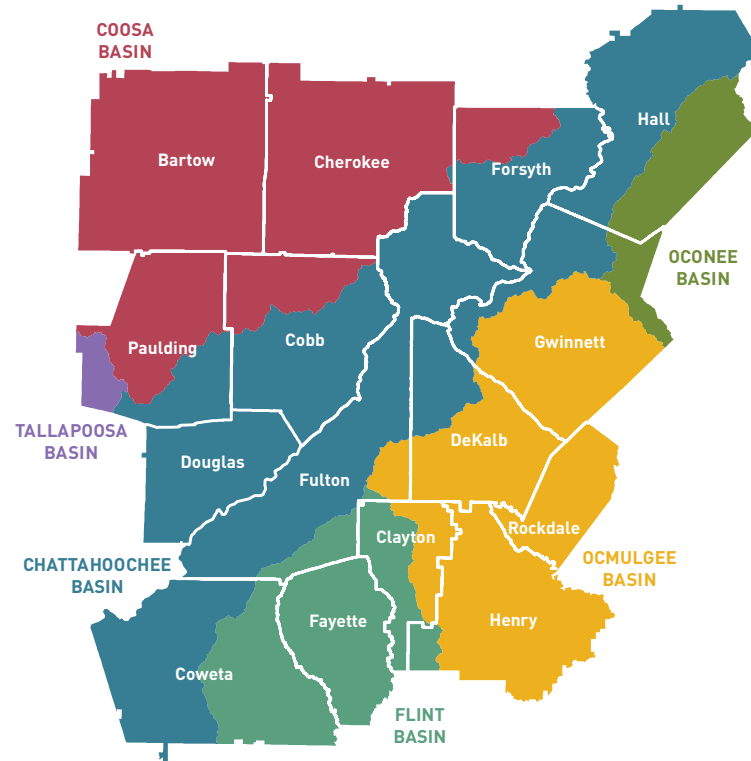
2017 Activities & Progress Report

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District



About the District

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (the Metro Water District, or simply, the District) was created by the Georgia General Assembly in 2001 as a regional water resources planning agency. The Metro Water District is staffed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and develops comprehensive action items and strategies for the management of water supply and water conservation, wastewater, and stormwater for the 15 county, 95 city metro Atlanta area. The first suite of plans was adopted in 2003 and updated in 2009. The District completed the second update in June of 2017. For the first time, the three separate plans were combined into a single, integrated Water Resource Management Plan.



A Message from Our Chair

I am honored to have been elected in June of this year to chair the Governing Board of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. I have been involved with this organization and with the Atlanta Regional Commission since 2001, and I remain dedicated to the mission of the District: to provide the highest quality planning services and resources for the metropolitan Atlanta region, and to encourage good water resource stewardship among its citizens.

This year proved historic for the Metro Water District. In June, the Governing Board approved the **Water Resource Management Plan**, ending a successful planning process that began in 2014.

The plan, the first of its kind for the region and state, is a highly coordinated and technically sound document with a number of innovative and integrated action items that continue to push our region forward in water conservation and nonpoint source pollution reduction. It solidifies our reputation as a national leader in water resource management.

Indeed, the Metro Water District has a strong track record of success. Our water conservation and leak detection efforts have helped reduce total water demand in the District by more than 10 percent since 2001, even as population increased by more than one million. Meanwhile, we are experiencing fewer sewer spills as our maintenance and grease management programs near full implementation. And our stormwater model ordinances are contributing significantly to improved stormwater pollution prevention practices and sediment reduction.

The new Water Resource Management Plan builds on these successes, enabling us to better respond to new challenges. The plan features an expansion of our Toilet Rebate Program, along with more than 50 additional water management action items that are required and enforced through Georgia Environmental Protection Division's permitting process. *See page 7 of this report to learn more about this innovative and groundbreaking plan.*

We are proud to have been recognized in Georgia and nationally for our success in water resource management and education outreach. In October 2017, the Metro Water District received the U.S. EPA's prestigious **2017 WaterSense Promotional Partner of the Year Award** for outstanding contributions as a promotional partner of the WaterSense brand and mission. The

District also received the Metro Atlanta Chamber's **E3 Award in the category of Liquid Assets** for our innovative strategies in water conservation and our role in reducing water use in the 15-county metro area.

But even as we celebrate the many successes and accomplishments of this year, we must keep an eye on Georgia's water future. At different times over the past 30 years, Georgia has been involved in legal battles over water resources in both the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) and Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa (ACT) basins. For the latest on litigation, visit atlantaregional.org/waterlitigation.

Also in 2017, we faced the challenge of addressing exceptionally dry conditions that began in 2016 and stretched into the first part of this year. The state EPD issued a **Level 2 Drought Response** to all counties in the Metro Water District, limiting outdoor watering to two days a week as well as requiring other conservation measures. The Metro Water District took steps to educate the public about the drought response and to encourage conservation. The drought also underscored the importance of the action items aimed at water conservation and efficiency that are part of our new Water Resource Management Plan.

As I reflect on the successes of the past year, I am encouraged by the progress we have achieved and the opportunities we have for a bright water future. I'm confident that 2018 will be another great year for the District as we continue to work with our regional partners and stakeholders to innovate and promote best practices in regional water resource management.

Hon. Charlotte Nash
Metro Water District Chair



2017 Governing Board Members

— Elected Officials —

The Hon. Charlotte Nash (District Chair)
Chairman, Gwinnett County Commission

The Hon. Kasim Reed
Mayor, City of Atlanta

The Hon. Larry Owens
Mayor, City of Senoia, Coweta County

The Hon. Bob Ellis
Interim Chairman, Fulton County Commission

The Hon. Matt Santini
Mayor, City of Cartersville, Bartow County

The Hon. Mike Thurmond
CEO, DeKalb County

The Hon. Richard Higgins
Chairman, Hall County Commission

The Hon. L.B. "Buzz" Ahrens, Jr.
Chairman, Cherokee County Commission

The Hon. Dr. Romona Jackson Jones
Chairman, Douglas County Commission

The Hon. June Wood
Chairman, Henry County Commission

The Hon. Jeff Turner
Chairman, Clayton County Commission

The Hon. Edward Johnson
Mayor, City of Fayetteville, Fayette County

The Hon. Boyd Austin, Jr.
Mayor, City of Dallas, Paulding County

The Hon. Mike Boyce
Chairman, Cobb County Commission

The Hon. H. Ford Gravitt
Mayor, City of Cumming, Forsyth County

The Hon. Oz Nesbitt, Sr.
Chairman, Rockdale County Commission

— Citizen Members —

Katie Kirkpatrick (*Vice Chair*), Atlanta
Birdel Jackson (*Secretary/Treasurer*), Atlanta

Pam Burnett, Marietta
Bradley Currey, Jr., Atlanta

Glenn Page, Marietta
Gerald Pouncey, Jr., Atlanta

Mark Berry, Atlanta

Kit Dunlap, Gainesville

Tim Thoms, Fayetteville

Tim Lee, Cornelia

Education and Public Participation

Innovative and Impactful Community Engagement

Educating the public about sustainable water use is a critical component of Metro Water District planning. For 16 years, the District has provided high-quality educational resources to our partners, local governments, and water providers.

In 2017, the District continued to build its resources catalogue with new and updated brochures, flyers, informational packets, giveaway materials, and a new puppet show, “The Water Cycle,” featuring W. Otter and friends. The puppet show was created in partnership with the Center for Puppetry Arts and teaches elementary students in the region about the importance of water conservation and stormwater pollution prevention.

Additionally, the Level 2 Drought Response that persisted from 2016 through the summer months of 2017 presented the District with messaging challenges and opportunities for new programs. District staff manned tables at six community events during the hottest summer months to provide metro area residents with information and answer questions about the Level 2 Drought Responses and associated watering restrictions.

The District also launched the Society of Intentionally Dry Lawns (SIDL), a community engagement program aimed at significantly reducing outdoor water use, or eliminating it

altogether. SIDL lives on after the drought and is growing. Members pledge to sharply reduce their outdoor watering and receive a yard sign to let the neighborhood know how committed they are to conserving water.

The My Drop Counts Water Conservation Campaign and Clean Water Campaign for stormwater pollution prevention continue to be successful, with solid local participation and recognition at the national level. Three signature contests, the Middle School Essay Contest, the High School Video Contest and the Water Reflections Calendar Photo Contest, continue to generate high levels of participation. The fifth annual Water Drop Dash 5K Race and Water Festival, held in March, and second annual Storm the Watershed 15k/5k Trail Race, held in October, together had over 500 participants. These community events are a fun way to successfully message to local residents.

In October, the Metro Water District was honored to accept the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s 2017 WaterSense Promotional Partner of the Year Award for innovative conservation programming and close collaboration across their extensive network of partners.

Over **3,000 citizens** participated in District contests and signature events

3,000

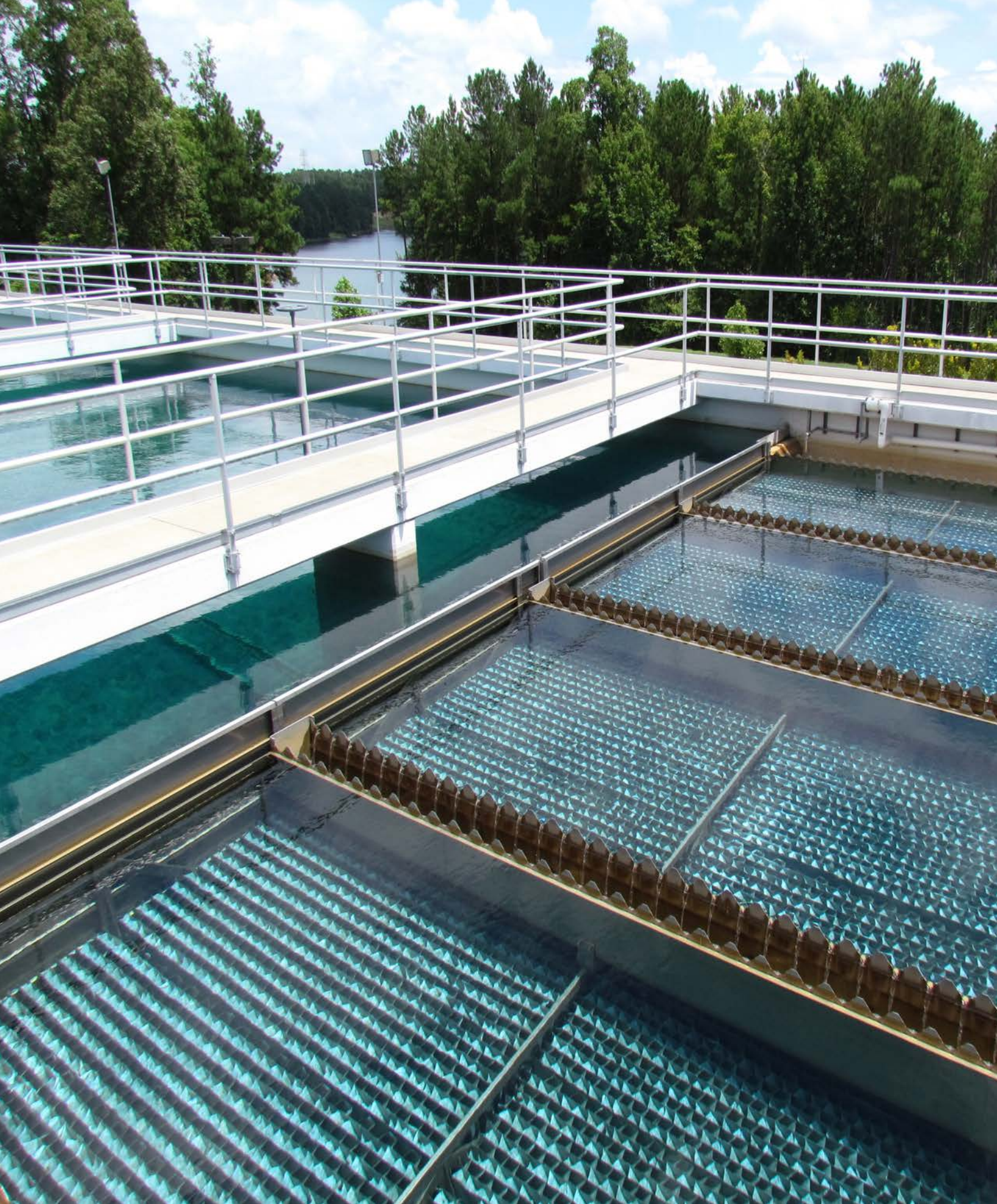


1,000

District staff **educated over 1,000 individuals** at community events

The District has received **8 prestigious national and local awards** for programs in water conservation and education and outreach.





Water Resource Management Plan

A Holistic, Integrated Approach to Water Planning

In June 2017, the Metro Water District Governing Board approved a Water Resource Management Plan that brings together water supply and conservation, wastewater management, and watershed management into a single, integrated document.

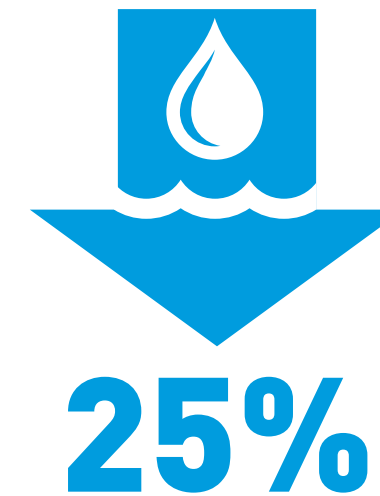
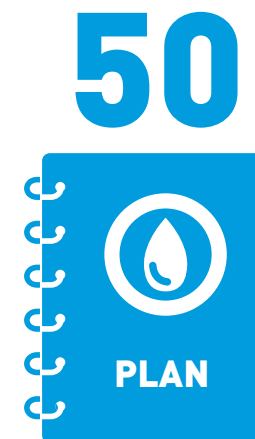
The plan update, the first since 2009, emphasizes how management measures across the three planning areas interact and often overlap. As such, the plan places a renewed emphasis on coordination among water providers and non-water related local government departments in the areas of water supply, wastewater, and stormwater management.

The plan features a range of action steps that build on the Metro Water District's water conservation and management achievements, including expansion of the residential Toilet Rebate Program to include apartment buildings and other multi-family housing units, as well as new requirements for irrigated landscapes greater than one acre.

The plan also includes a long-range water demand forecast that shows residents in the region will use about 25 percent less water in 2050 than was projected in 2009. Since 2001, per-capita water use has fallen by over 30 percent and total water use has dropped by more than 10 percent, even as population has increased by more than 1 million. The updated plan reflects these long-term savings by extending the life of existing infrastructure and pushing back the need for capacity expansions in many cases.

With the adoption of the 2017 Water Resource Management Plan, District staff sought to improve the quality of assistance offered to the member utilities, local governments, and authorities responsible for implementing the plan. District staff held six regional inter-governmental meetings to educate non-water government department managers and elected officials on the need for regional water management planning, the history of the District, how their involvement is needed to meet the requirements of the plan and where they can find technical assistance. Over 240 elected officials and local government staff from various non-water departments were in attendance.

The newly adopted Water Resource Management Plan includes over **50 action items** that aim to protect and conserve our shared water resources.



2017 long-range water demand forecast shows metro residents will use **25 percent less water in 2050** than was projected in 2009.

District staff educated over **240 community leaders and local government staff** about the need for integrated regional water planning.



Technical Assistance Program

One-Stop-Shop for Plan Implementation Needs

In 2016, the District formally launched the Technical Assistance Program (TAP), which consolidated all existing assistance offerings into a single, centralized program. The goal: ensuring high-quality, well-integrated plan implementation by helping communities identify resources and develop strategies to address specific problems.

In 2017, TAP focused on providing one-on-one assistance to local governments and water providers, training local government and utility staff, and developing new regional water conservation programs. The District worked with stakeholders throughout the year and began developing programs for a multi-family toilet replacement program and a commercial water assessment program.

The District expanded training efforts this year by developing a continuing education course for real estate professionals that focused on septic system basics and maintenance. The intent of the training is for real estate agents to be more informed about septic systems and better equipped to pass information along to homeowners.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The course is taught in partnership with local water utilities and county Departments of Environmental Health. Six seminars were held in 2017, attracting more than 100 real estate professionals. Training was provided in partnership with the Fulton County Public Works and the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources.

795 participants in workshops on different water resource topics since the TAP program began

795



18

18 events and workshops since the program began (roughly one per month)

District staff have recorded **engagements with over 90 local governments** where direct assistance was provided.

90



TAP expands training and education efforts to include information on septic system basics and maintenance.



Financials for 2017

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District operated on a calendar-year budget, with the majority of revenues coming from local government dues (\$966,549) and state of Georgia allocations (\$250,000). The \$0.20 per capita dues for 2017 represent an increase from the 2016 dues of \$0.16 per capita which were offset by an increase in state funding of \$500,000 for the District Management Plan update. The budget included funding to complete the District's Water Resource Management Plan update, begin a Septic Water Quality Study to assess the impact of septic systems on water quality in the region, and providing technical assistance to local governments on drought management related to the EPD Drought Rule.

Below is a review of the revenues and expenses for 2017. This accounting is subject to adjustment after fiscal year-end close and an independent audit.

Financials for 2018

In June of 2017, the Metro Water District Governing Board adopted a final budget of \$1,516,235 for 2018, with the majority of revenues coming from local governments (\$966,549) and the state (\$250,000). Local government dues for 2018 will remain at \$0.20 per capita (based on the 2010 Census) with \$250,000 from the state.

The District strives to maintain a minimum fund balance of \$300,000 for operating contingencies

	2017 Budget <small>(Adopted June 1, 2016)</small>	2017 End of Year Budget Revision <small>(Adopted December 6, 2017)</small>
Beginning General Fund Balance	\$547,309	\$755,720
Revenues		
Direct State Funding	\$250,000	\$250,000
Local Dues (2010 Census at \$0.20 per capita)	\$966,549	\$966,549
Interest Income	\$2,000	\$2,000
Misc. Fees	\$60,000	\$45,000
Total Revenues	\$1,278,549	\$1,263,459
Expenses by Type		
Chairman's Allowance	\$3,000	\$500
District Planning Function		
Salaries	\$476,777	\$445,155
Fringe Benefits	\$257,460	\$230,085
Contracts	\$310,000	\$216,000
Overhead	\$301,037	\$300,482
Miscellaneous Operating	\$75,000	\$85,000
Public Awareness / Education	\$100,000	\$70,000
Total Expenses	\$1,523,274	\$1,347,221
Projected Ending Fund Balance	\$302,584	\$672,047



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

We've moved! The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and the Atlanta Regional Commission moved in June of 2017 to Peachtree Center. Come see us in our new space.

International Tower, 229 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 100 | Atlanta, GA 30303

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District is staffed by the Atlanta Regional Commission and manages a comprehensive, integrated plan for water supply and water conservation, wastewater, and watershed management in the 15-county metro Atlanta region.

www.northgeorgiawater.org



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Metropolitan North Georgia
Water Planning District



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