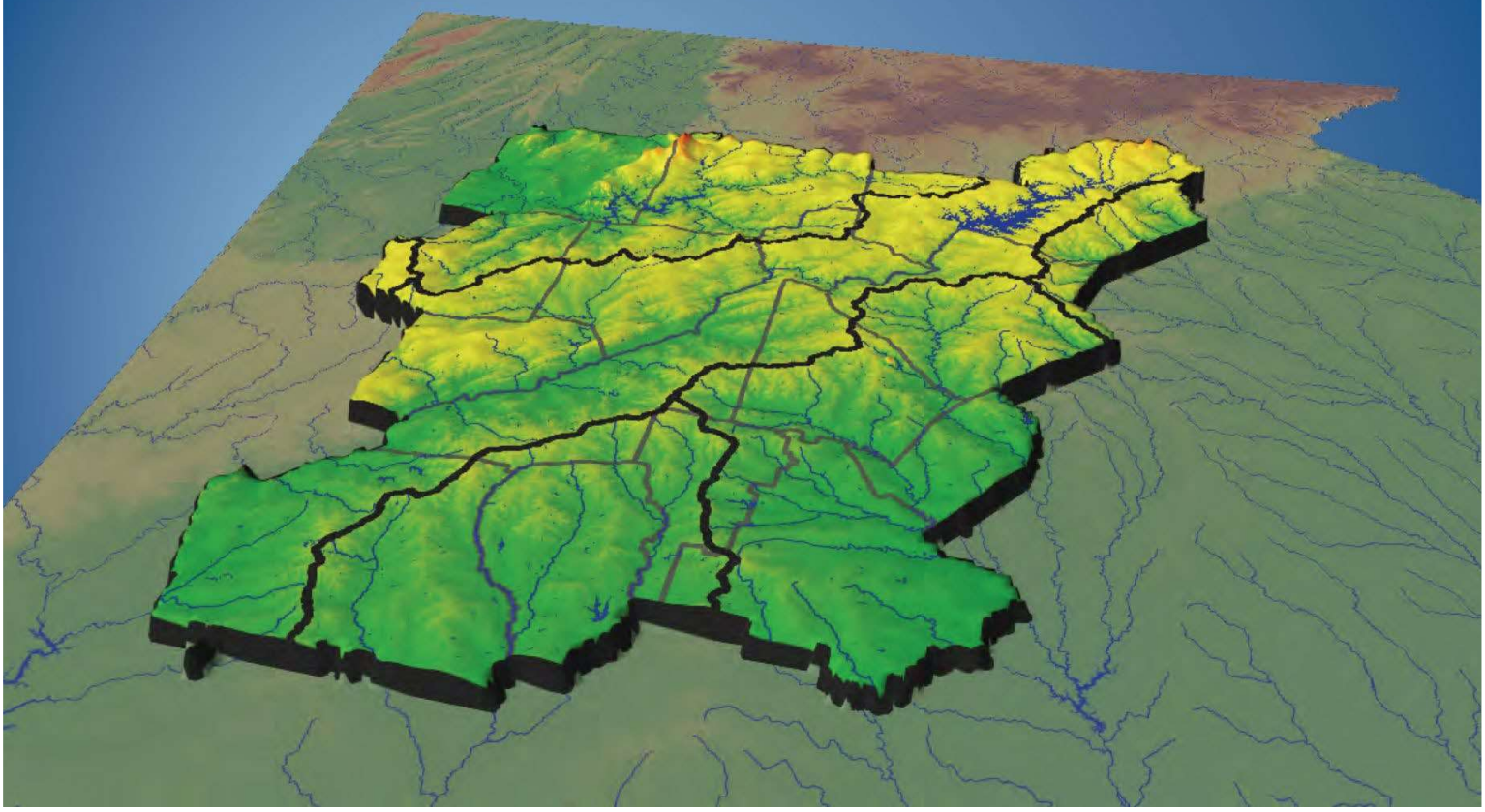
WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN

December 2022

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District



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WSWC-6: TOILET REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Responsible Party: Local Water Provider	**Intent:** To reduce indoor water use and speed the conversion of older, inefficient toilets toward WaterSense-labeled high-efficiency toilets in single- and multifamily homes.

Action Item: Implement a program to replace older, inefficient toilets with WaterSense-labeled ultra high-efficiency toilets (UHETs) using 1.1 gallons per flush (gpf) or less in single- and multifamily homes. WaterSense-labeled toilets using 1.28 gpf are no longer eligible for rebates.

Sub-Tasks: Each local water provider shall, until toilet replacement program sunset date of December 31, 2025:

1. Establish a program to replace each year 3.5-gpf or greater toilets in single- and multifamily homes constructed prior to 1994 with WaterSense UHETs.
2. Provide information on opportunities to recycle any toilet being discarded pursuant to the toilet replacement program by linking to the District website or other local resources.

Description and Implementation: Single- and multifamily homes built prior to 1994 may contain inefficient toilets. While new toilets meet high efficiency standards, the replacement of older, inefficient toilets is needed to address existing stock and reduce indoor water use.

Before the 1950s, new toilets typically used 7 gpf. By the end of the 1960s, new toilets typically used 5.5 gpf; in the 1980s, new toilets typically used 3.5 gpf. The federal Energy Policy Act of 1992 required all new toilets use no more than 1.6 gpf by 1994. In 2010, the Georgia Water Stewardship Act required that local governments adopt or amend local ordinances to require, among other things, that all new construction, on or after July 1, 2012, use WaterSense-labeled toilets. WaterSense is a voluntary program of the EPA designed to identify and promote water efficient products and practices. WaterSense-labeled toilets are independently certified to meet rigorous criteria for both performance and efficiency. Today, WaterSense UHETs are increasingly available with efficiency levels of 1.1 gpf or less.

This Action Item calls for a program to replace toilets in single- and multifamily homes constructed prior to 1994 with WaterSense UHETs.

The toilet replacement program must specifically address toilet replacement rather than provide toilet retrofit devices. Local water providers must be able to show that rebates were funded and made publicly available each calendar year to both single-family and multifamily customers. For rebate programs, the District encourages funding levels sufficient to meet all demand, and the District can recommend funding levels for each local water provider upon request based on the District's experience.

Examples of acceptable toilet replacement programs include the following:

- **Rebate incentive program:** Customer receives a water bill credit, cash, or voucher to offset the cost of a new WaterSense UHET to be installed in a pre-1994 single- or multifamily home. Rebates shall be $75.
- **Direct install program:** Customer exchanges a toilet from pre-1994 single- or multifamily homes for a WaterSense UHET with discounted installation through the local water provider.
- **Other:** Local water providers may create their own programs as long as the program actually results in the replacement of toilets in pre-1994 single- and multifamily homes with WaterSense UHETs. These programs may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to on-bill financing programs

for toilet replacements and programs requiring that toilets using 3.5 gpf or more be replaced as a condition of a customer establishing water service.

If a local water provider chooses to have a single replacement program covering both single- and multifamily homes, funds may be made available on a first come, first served basis.

As a matter of customer service, rebates on 1.28-gpf toilets may still be allowed as a hardship exception when a customer in good faith purchases a dual-flush toilet with one flush at 1.1 gpf or less or uses an outdated paper rebate application form provided by a retailer.

Due to the high value of rebate programs for multifamily homes, it is recommended that the local water provider include an inspection element in any multifamily rebate program to prevent possible fraud. This can be done through a physical inspection or by reviewing billing data post-installation.

The local water provider should provide information on available toilet recycling opportunities. There are recycling facilities in the region that will recycle crushed porcelain for various uses, such as a concrete aggregate or bathroom tile. Many homeowners may not be aware of recycling options when replacing a toilet.

Need Assistance? Contact the District at TechnicalAssistance@northgeorgiawater.com or visit our website at www.northgeorgiawater.org/technicalassistance.

Resources:

- EPA, WaterSense Toilets, information page, https://www3.epa.gov/watersense/products/toilets.html
- MaP Testing Premium Ultra-High-Efficiency Toilet page, 2022-02-02-ALL_MaP_PREMIUM-HETs.pdf (map-testing.com)

WSWC-8: METRO WATER DISTRICT – WATER EFFICIENCY CODE REQUIREMENTS

Responsible Party: Local Government	**Intent:** To increase indoor and outdoor water efficiency through new requirements adopted as local plumbing code amendments.

Action Item: Each local government shall adopt by January 1, 2024 and thereafter maintain the Metro Water District – Water Efficiency Code Requirements as a local amendment to the Georgia State Minimum Standard Plumbing Code. No modifications may be made to the water efficiency requirements or the effective date.

Description and Implementation: Georgia established itself as a national leader when the state passed the Water Stewardship Act of 2010, which directed the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to set more efficient state-wide minimums for indoor water efficiency. In the past 11 years, new water efficient technologies and standards have been developed, and more efficient technologies have become widely available at comparable prices in the marketplace that increase indoor and outdoor water efficiency.

The indoor fixture efficiency requirements in the Metro Water District – Water Efficiency Code Requirements are based on detailed market research on cost, availability, performance, and customer satisfaction performed by District staff. Other requirements are based on cost-benefit analyses performed during the plan update process. The latest WaterSense standards are included as part of the requirements, and while the EnergyStar program is primarily focused on energy use, it is included in the requirements because it also addresses water use in appliances connected to water sources. The requirements are also consistent with other nation-leading mandatory codes adopted by other states and local governments and other green codes and standards like International Association of Plumbing & Mechanical Officials (IAPMO) 2020 Water Efficiency and Sanitation Standard for the Built Environment, and the International Code Council 700-2020 National Green Building Standard.

Outdoor landscape irrigation often results in excessive water use from overspray, an uneven application of water, or high pressure in the line that can cause leaks. Outdoor water efficiency for landscape irrigation systems can be improved by maintaining optimum pressure with regulators, rain-sensor shutoffs, WaterSense irrigation controllers (non-single-family only), and monitoring the system for high-flow conditions (non-single-family only). There are also design practices that avoid water waste from landscape irrigation systems. These technologies and practices are included as requirements for new landscape irrigation systems as part of the Metro Water District – Water Efficiency Code Requirements. These requirements do not apply to landscape irrigation systems (a) used for agricultural operations as defined in O.C.G.A. § 1-3-3, (b) used for golf courses, and (c) dependent upon a nonpublic water source.

To reduce excessive outdoor water use, the Metro Atlanta Plumbing Code Efficiency requirements also prohibit irrigation with reclaimed water sourced from any new private reclaimed wastewater treatment system except for those irrigating golf courses and agriculture operations.

Local governments must follow the procedural requirements provided in O.C.G.A. § 8-2-25(c) for establishing local requirements that are more stringent than the state minimum standard code.

Need Assistance? Contact the District at TechnicalAssistance@northgeorgiawater.com or visit our website at www.northgeorgiawater.org/technicalassistance.

Resources:

- Metro Water District – Water Efficiency Code Requirements – Local Amendment to Plumbing Code, Model Findings Resolution, and Model Adoption Resolution.