

**A Report to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Resources  
Compact Council/Regional Body  
Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Review  
New York State  
December 7, 2012**

Lead Agency/Contact: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
Michael Holt P.E. – Chief, Water Quantity Management Section,  
625 Broadway, Albany, NY (518) 402-8099

Status of State’s Program: NYSDEC’s Division of Water currently regulates by permit all significant water withdrawals for public water supply purposes within the Great Lakes basin, and registers all non-potable water withdrawals greater than 100,000 gpd. Since 1988, 15 ECL 1503 requires the submittal of a water conservation plan with each new application for a permit. The main objective of the plans is to promote implementation of the most environmentally sound and economically feasible water conservation measures. Components of these plans must include, at a minimum, 1) customer and source metering, 2) water auditing, 3) leak detection and repair and 4) outdoor water use management. The manual currently used to develop these plans can be found at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/39346.html>.

Amendments to 15 ECL 1501, et.al. were passed into law in 2011 and became effective beginning February 15, 2012. The new law extends DEC’s permitting authority to withdrawals of 100,000 gpd or greater for any purpose throughout the state, and includes registration of existing agricultural withdrawals that are greater than 100,000 gpd (30 day average) and of major basin water diversions of greater than 1,000,000 gpd. Implementing regulations (NYCRR Part 601) have also been adopted and take effect on April 1, 2013. The statute and regulations strengthen the existing water conservation and efficient use provisions as described in the table below.

<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>LEGISLATIVE OR PROGRAM CITATION</b>
○ Guide programs toward long-term sustainable water use.	New 15 ECL 1501.8 requires the DEC to adopt a program based on the Compact’s five water conservation goals; 15 ECL 1503.2 adopts the Compact’s decision-making criteria for permit approval, including implementation in a manner that incorporates environmentally sound and economically feasible water conservation measures; and 1503.3 requires the DEC to publish a water conservation manual.
○ Adopt and implement supply and demand management to promote efficient use and conservation of water resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The new Water Conservation Manual (15 ECL 1501.8), being developed by DEC will begin to address various components of this objective which will be incorporated into conservation plans developed by all new permit applicants.</li> <li>- Water conservation plans are required to provide annual water audit data which compares produced water to metered sales.</li> <li>- All water supply permit applications for new or increased groundwater withdrawals must submit the results of a pumping test.</li> <li>- All water supply applications for new or increased surface withdrawals must submit hydrological data to confirm dependable</li> </ul>

	water supply yields while adequately protecting water levels and in-stream flows for habitat.
○ Improve monitoring and standardize data reporting among State and Provincial water conservation and efficiency programs.	All water withdrawers with the capacity to withdraw 100,000 gallons per day or greater are required to report their water use on an annual basis. Standard reporting forms for the submittal of this data have been developed. Information required is consistent with guidance developed by Compact Council/Regional Body.
○ Develop science, technology and research.	In developing the updated Water Conservation Manual, the DEC is working to identify best management practices and state of the art technologies for consideration by various water user categories.
○ Develop education programs and information sharing for all water users.	<p>DEC's current public guidance information is available on the Department's website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual Water Withdrawal Reporting: <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/55509.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/55509.html</a></li> <li>- Water Conservation Tips for the Public: <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5009.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5009.html</a></li> </ul> <p>The Water Conservation Manual is being designed specifically to enhance public understanding and access to best management practices for various water users. The manual will be available via internet when completed.</p>