

STATE OF OHIO
WATER CONSERVATION AND EFFICIENCY PROGRAM
ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

December 8, 2020

This Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Annual Assessment is submitted by the State of Ohio to the Compact Council pursuant to the requirements contained in Section 4.2.2 of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact (hereinafter “the Compact”) and to the Regional Body pursuant to the commitments made in Article 304 of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement (hereinafter “the Agreement”).

1. Lead Agency. The lead agency for Ohio’s water conservation and efficiency program is the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). The primary contact person is Dena Barnhouse, Chief of the ODNR-DWR (telephone: 614-265-6723, email: Dena.Barnhouse@dnr.ohio.gov). An additional contact person is Bradley Lodge, Manager of the Water Inventory and Planning Program (telephone: 614-265-6727, email: Bradley.Lodge@dnr.ohio.gov).

2. Status of Ohio Goals and Objectives. Ohio’s water conservation and efficiency goals are those contained in Section 4.2.1 of the Compact. Ohio’s water conservation and efficiency objectives have been developed and can be viewed online at [water conservation goals and objectives](#).

3. Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Overview. Ohio’s implementing laws, regulations and policies are contained in the Compact, codified in §1522.01 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC), and its state implementing provisions, codified by ORC §§1522.02–.40. ORC §1522.05 requires the Chief of the Division to adopt voluntary watershed-wide goals, objectives, and standards for water conservation and efficiency consistent with Section 4.2 of the Compact. ORC §1522.17 requires an applicant for a water withdrawal and consumptive use permit to submit a facility water conservation plan that, if it reasonably incorporates environmentally sound and economically feasible water conservation measures applicable to the facility, will be considered to be in compliance with Section 4.11.3 of the Compact. All other elements of Ohio’s water conservation and efficiency program are voluntary, except those authorized by pre-existing statutes, regulations, or programs. The only state program that provides for mandatory water use reductions is the Ohio Emergency Management Agency’s Emergency Operations Plan (authorized by ORC §5502.22), and then only when the Governor declares a Level Four Drought Emergency. The Emergency Operations Plan-Drought Incident Annex can be viewed online at [Ohio Drought Incident Annex](#).

Ohio’s program consists of education on the value of water conservation and efficiency and promotion of voluntary conservation activities. Such efforts are undertaken individually by state agencies pursuant to general education authorities and programs.

4. Consistency with Regional Objectives

Objective	Program Element
Guide programs toward long-term sustainable water use	<p>Water management plans have been completed for the Lake Erie Basin watersheds, including water resource inventory and assessment, analysis of water use trends and formulation of water use forecasts, and identification of potential water shortage areas.</p> <p>Required best management practices for manure management to improve water quality in the western Lake Erie Basin have been adopted in Ohio statute, which can be viewed online at ORC §1511.10. In addition, water quality management plans have been captured in Ohio’s Domestic Action Plan for Lake Erie and the H2Ohio program, and the plans are being implemented. Further, Ohio is currently working on a TMDL for the Western Lake Erie Basin.</p>
Adopt and implement supply and demand management to promote efficient use and conservation of water resources	<p>A report was prepared in 2015 for the Ohio Lake Erie Commission and the ODNR-DWR by a study team from the Cleveland State University entitled “Water Resources Shaping Ohio’s Future: Water Efficiency Manual for Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional Facilities.” The full report can be viewed on the water conservation webpage on ODNR’s Compact website at CSU-Full Report; the Technical Report can be viewed at CSU-Technical Report. Attention will be given to when the report needs to be updated and further circulated.</p>
Improve monitoring and standardize data reporting among state and provincial water conservation and efficiency programs	<p>Water use information for registered withdrawals continues to be collected, analyzed, and reported for the various categories of water use.</p> <p>Final beta testing of an online water-use reporting website is in progress, allowing registered facilities easy access to their reporting history and furthering the water users ability to track their own water conservation practices. The final application should be available by March 2021.</p>
Develop science, technology, and research	<p>Opportunities for research and development related to water conservation and efficiency and the interaction between ground water and surface water resources are being investigated; modeling of impacts on aquifers resulting from the mining of industrial minerals are being undertaken. The modeling should be completed by Summer 2021.</p>
Develop education programs and information sharing for all water users	<p>Current water conservation and efficiency education programs continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an online forum for submitting input from water withdrawal facility managers on best management practices and conservation and efficiency initiatives. Provide updated material conveniently accessible to the public containing information on water conservation and efficiency; the water conservation webpage can be viewed online on ODNR’s Compact webpage under Water Conservation and Efficiency Webpage. <p>Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) Educator’s workshops were conducted by Ohio EPA. These workshops include water conservation as part of the curriculum.</p> <p>The H2Ohio Program administered by Ohio EPA, Ohio Department of Agriculture and the ODNR is a comprehensive, data-driven water quality plan to reduce harmful algal blooms, improve wastewater infrastructure, and prevent lead contamination. Besides water quality conservation-based projects, education and information about conservation practices, wetlands, and more can be found at the H2Ohio website: Ohio Department of Natural Resources H2Ohio</p> <p>The ODNR H2Ohio water quality effort has also enlisted a group of researchers from various universities that will assess the effectiveness and future role of implemented and planned wetland restoration projects. The Lake Erie and Aquatic Research Network (LEARN) will share data, information, and educational resources throughout this effort.</p>

5. Program Implementation Timeline and Status. Ohio's Water Conservation and Efficiency Program, which does not include any mandatory conservation requirements on water users (except water withdrawal and consumptive use permittees), is currently being implemented as indicated, with further developments underway.