



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District  
Joint Water Supply/Wastewater  
TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY  
March 5, 2009**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Water Supply/Water Conservation and Wastewater Technical Coordinating Committees (WSWC/WW TCCs) met on Thursday, March 5, 2009, at 9:00 a.m. in the Amphitheatre, on "C" level of the R. Charles Loudermilk Center for the Regional Community in Atlanta, Georgia.

**Attendance**

Chris Browning, Fulton County  
Troy Besseche, City of Fairburn  
Ellis Cadenhead, Coweta County  
Gene Camp, Bartow County  
Todd Cleaver, Gwinnett Co  
Charles Corbin, Austell, Buford, Palmetto,  
Union City, Hapeville  
Bruce Coyle, Paulding County  
Brad Currey, Metro Water District Board  
Ernie Earn, Cobb County  
Rick Eastin, City of Fayetteville  
Jim Free, GA Onsite WW Assoc.  
Horace Gee, City of Gainesville  
Steve Green, Douglasville-Douglas County WSA  
Keith Higgs, Douglasville-Douglas County WSA  
Donna Joe, Gwinnett County  
Abdul Karim Khan, City of East Point  
Katie Kirkpatrick, Metro Water District Board  
Celia Klardie, City of Canton  
Charles Lambert, DeKalb County WSA  
George Lee, City of College Park

Billy Lunsford, City of East Point  
Tonja Mincey, Henry County WSA  
Becky Mixon, CCMWA  
Ed Mullinax, City of Cartersville  
Kathy Nguyen, Cobb Water System  
Tony Parrott, Fayette County Water System  
Steve Payne, Town of Braselton  
Tim Perkins, Forsyth County  
Guy Pihera, Clayton County Water Authority  
Jim Poff, Clayton County Water Authority  
Stephen Pope, Rockdale Water Resources  
Ken Rearden, Hall County  
Monica Robinson, Fulton County Dept. of Health  
Jerri Russel, City of Atlanta  
Jim Scarbrough, Gwinnett Public Utilities  
Kelen Shostak, City of Woodstock  
Keisha Thorpe, Peachtree City  
Dwight Wicks, Rockdale County  
Emily Wingo, Georgia EPD

Matt Harper of the Metro Water District staff opened the meeting, initiated introductions and reviewed the meeting agenda with the group.

**BAC and TCC Process**

Matt Harper briefly reviewed the Basin Advisory Council (BAC) and TCC process for reviewing comments received during the public comment period. The joint WSWC/WW TCC members present were strongly urged to review and consider the remarks made by the members of the BAC. He then reviewed the upcoming BAC and TCC schedule for reviewing the proposed changes to the Plans in response to comments received during the public comment period.

## **Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Technical Committee Meeting Notes**

**Page 2**

**March 5, 2008**

### **Cost Calculations**

Kim Shorter, with Metcalf and Eddy (M&E), reviewed the wastewater and water supply/water conservation cost calculations with the group. Due to many questions and comments on costs in the public comments and from TCC and BAC members M&E revised and clarified costs for each plan.

### **Discussion On Comments received for the Public Comment Draft Water Supply and Water Conservation Plan (Dec. 2008)**

Kim Shorter discussed a summary of comments that were received on the Water Supply and Wastewater Plan during the public comment period. Based on the comments received Kim discussed some of the changes to the plan that the staff was considering and asked that TCC members provide feedback.

Over 400 form letters and many other individual comments were received that asking the Metro Water District to reinstate the 20% water conservation goal from the 2003 plan. Kim explained that the draft plan update does not do a good job of showing that an aggressive goal is still in effect and that revisions will be made to more accurately reflect this. Some of the public comments received compared recent emergency drought response goals to the plan update's goals. A couple TCC members suggested that the plan needs to clearly explain that this plan addresses long term water efficiency and not emergency response measures. The State-wide Water Plan has definitions that may assist.

Most of the comments on existing measures in the plan update were regarding conservation pricing. TCC members thoroughly discussed conservation pricing. Many TCC members agreed that the plan should require water systems to review their rates every 5 years specifically for the purposes of determining if their rates are effective for conservation. TCC members agreed that it was a good idea to provide usage and pricing information on water bills if a water system was capable or when it was upgraded. TCC members agreed that requiring Automated Meter Reading (AMR) was expensive and too burdensome to require in the plan.

There were many additional suggested measures in the public comments. There were several comments that suggested additional rebates and TCC members voiced concerns about the financial burden of additional rebates during the current tough economic times. For instance, one comment suggests more restrictive year-round water restrictions that the State. Water systems would first need the authority from the State to do that before it could be considered.

It was suggested that an explanation of the base year adjustment used for projections be added to the plan. A discussion and general consensus was reached that the plan is not the forum to resolve any service delivery disputes regarding the Bear Creek Reservoir (Fulton County). Also, there was discussion on how groundwater is not a major source of water for the region but may be a viable resource for some small water systems, businesses and supplemental uses.

**Discussion On Comments received for the Public Comment Draft Long-term Wastewater Management Plan (Dec. 2008)**

Kim Shorter presented a summary of the comments received for the Long-term Wastewater Management Plan. Based on the comments received, she discussed changes to the Plan that were currently being considered by the staff. TCC members were asked to provide their input concerning the suggested changes, any additional changes they would like to see, and concerns they still had with the Plan.

Regarding the comment received concerning the consolidation of wastewater treatment facilities – a TCC member stated that the explanation concerning the appropriateness of small facilities as currently written should be left alone. A good job was done in explaining why the District is no longer recommending the consolidation of treatment facilities.

Changes to Section 7: Wastewater Collection System Inspection and Maintenance were discussed. A comment received suggested including the local county board of health as an “In-Coordination With” agency in Section 7.7 – Grease Management Program. It was agreed that this was an appropriate change in order to ensure local facilities had undergone inspection prior to the issuance of a food service permit. A TCC member also suggested specific changes to this section in regards to the appropriate citation for the regulation of waste transporters.

The discussion then moved to septic and decentralized systems. The implication of pumping septage every 5 years was questioned. Matt Harper responded by providing the group an explanation of critical areas and the reason the Board removed the mandatory septage pumping language in 2006. He also referenced the work conducted by the District in preparation of the Septic Systems Issues working paper and the findings of that work which resulted in the identification of 3 major issues which cause septic systems to fail. He re-iterated that mandatory pumping will not resolve these 3 major issues.

A recommendation was offered to change the second sentence under the Description of Measure heading for Action Item 8.2 – Septic System Critical Area Management on pg. 8-5 to read, “Each local waste provider and the County Board of Health must identify critical areas that have experienced problems or could possibly experience failures in the future.” It was stated that Georgia’s Department of Human Resources (DHR) – Environmental Health Division supports this change.

It was also requested that the 10<sup>th</sup> row of Table 8-1 on pg. 8-6 which prohibits the installation of serial distribution drain fields be removed from the Plan. On-site wastewater system professionals in attendance agreed with the request for removing the outright prohibition of serial drain fields stating that despite the poor reputation this design has seemed to develop, they work when installed in the correct manner and location. The question of whether to install a serial distribution drain field should be made on a site by site basis. It was also agreed that it would be appropriate to coordinate with the local water supplier when planning for septic systems as outlined in Action Item 8.1.

A question was asked concerning whether private wastewater systems are an issue in the District. Kim Shorter of AECOM stated that the Plan requires local jurisdictions have an ordinance outlining whether they allow the private systems or do not allow them at all. She stated that local jurisdictions who do allow them must reference specifications for the systems, must plan for transitioning private systems to public ownership, and must require that the private systems have a public trust indenture. A follow up question was then asked regarding whether public systems are required to take in private systems. Kim Shorter responded that public systems are not required to take in private systems.

**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Technical Committee Meeting Notes**

**Page 4**

**March 5, 2008**

Kim Shorter commented on the need to include language in Appendix B of both the Water Supply and Wastewater Plans emphasizing that the outlined facilities still require a permit from Georgia EPD. Language to explain that the phasing of facility expansions within the maximum capacities in the Plan are allowed without a Plan amendment should also be included.

A comment was made that the existing Anti-Degradation Policy conflicts with the desire to return flows to the river. Kim Shorter pointed out that the 2008 Plan makes a recommendation to the State to consider modification of the current Anti-Degradation Policy. This recommendation can be found on pg. 10-2 under Wastewater Returns and on pg. 12-6 in Table 12-4 State Agency Implementation Plan.

The Committee discussed the inclusion of metrics for measuring progress towards implementation of the wastewater plan. There was a general consensus that these metrics should be carefully developed to avoid creating an additional burden on the local governments. It was stated that the District does not need to get into the business of conducting audits. That is the job of Georgia EPD. It was agreed that the District should include some tentative metrics in the Plan, but should continue to meet with the TCC after the plan is adopted, to carefully develop targeted metrics that will correctly measure the effectiveness of the Plan.