



# Water Use Permitting

October 2011

New laws passed in 2008 established a water use permit program for large water **withdrawals in the Great Lakes Basin**. The new requirement will help Wisconsin achieve its goal to:

*“Sustainably manage the quantity and quality of water in the state to ensure that water is available to be used to protect and improve our health, economy and environment now and into the future.”*

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## What is the purpose of water use permits?

Water use permits help ensure that water withdrawals in the Great Lakes Basin do not result in harm to the rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, springs, groundwater or the plants and animals that depend upon them.

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## Who needs a water use permit?

Withdrawers in the Great Lakes Basin who withdraw water in quantities that average 100,000 gallons per day or more in any 30-day period.

Examples include public water systems, high capacity well owners, and certain people and businesses who withdraw water from lakes and streams such as fish farms and golf courses. (Note – 100,000 gallons per day is equivalent to 70 gallons per minute operated for 24 hours straight.)

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## Water Use Permit Basics

There are two types of Water Use permits – General and Individual.

**General Permit** - Required for withdrawals that average 100,000 gallons per day or more in any 30-day period but do not equal at least 1,000,000 gallons per day for 30 consecutive days.

**Individual Permit** - Required for withdrawals that equal at least 1,000,000 gallons per day for 30 consecutive days.



## What is the Great Lakes Basin?

In Wisconsin the Great Lakes Basin includes the land area that drains to Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. A more detailed map of the Great Lakes Basin is available on the [Water Use Program webpage](#).

## Is my property within the Great Lakes Basin?

Call the Water Use Program @ (608) 266-2299 to find out.

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## More Permit Facts

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- There are no permit application fees.
- Automatic Permits will be issued by December 8, 2011 to withdrawers that began their withdrawal before December 8, 2008. These permits include a withdrawal baseline, an authorized withdrawal amount, and requirements for water use monitoring and reporting.
- New Permits will contain the same items as the automatic permits plus requirements for water conservation and efficiency.
- New and existing withdrawers that want to increase their withdrawal will need to apply to the Department by submitting an application.
- New withdrawals or increases of 1 million gallons per day for 30 consecutive days or more will also be subject to an environmental review.

### **What is a withdrawal? What does it mean to withdraw?**

Withdraw or withdrawal means the taking of water from surface water or groundwater. There are many different methods for withdrawing water including wells, intake pipes, and ditches. When someone withdraws water, it is taken out of or redirected from its natural course making it unavailable for other purposes, even if only temporarily.

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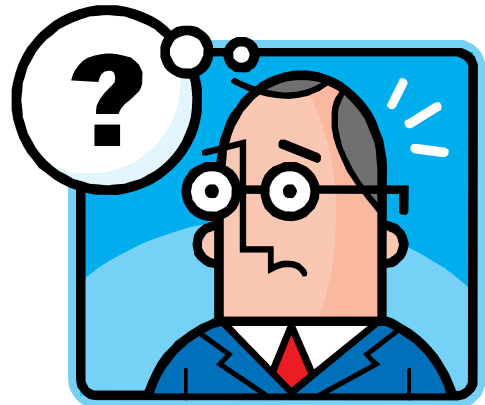
## How do I obtain a Water Use permit or get more information?

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Please visit the Water Use Permit webpage.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/dwg/greatlakes/permits.htm>

Questions can also be directed to the Water Use Program at (608) 266-2299 or [DNRWaterUseRegistration@wi.gov](mailto:DNRWaterUseRegistration@wi.gov)



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