



Water Use Fees

May 2012

Annual water use fees were enacted by the Wisconsin legislature to support the DNR Water Use Program working toward Wisconsin's 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."

Water use fee revenues will be used to:

- Develop and maintain a statewide water resources inventory of water use and water availability throughout the state
- Document and monitor water use through the new registration and reporting requirements
- Monitor groundwater and surface water quantity
- Implement the Great Lakes Compact through water use permitting and regulating diversions of Great Lakes Basin waters
- Help communities plan water supply needs
- Build a statewide water conservation and efficiency program

Where can I get more information?

Additional information, including a fee calculator for the Great Lakes Basin is available online at dnr.wi.gov search "water use."

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

Fee Basics

- An annual \$125 fee applies statewide for each property that has a water supply system with the **capacity** to withdraw 100,000 gallons per day or more from groundwater and/or surface water.
- An additional graduated fee applies in the **Great Lakes Basin** for withdrawals totaling more than 50 million gallons per year (see reverse page for more specifics.)
- Fee payments are due annually by **June 30th**.
- DNR mails fee invoices in late May.
- Fees can be paid online with the use of e-checks.

Can I or my operator pay this fee online?

- Yes, Fees can be paid online through the use of e-checks.
- Operators will need to know the invoice number of the owner and the property number(s) for those that they operate.



How is a property defined?

One property is defined in NR 850.03(3) as "all contiguous land controlled by one owner, lessee, or any other person having a possessory interest. Lands under single ownership bisected by highways or railroad right-of-ways are considered contiguous." If the wells are in a single water supply service area and are used for municipal water supply, all of the wells are considered to be within one property.

The \$125 annual fee is assessed per property, not per individual well or water source.

For example, if a property includes three high capacity wells and one surface water source, the \$125 annual fee will be assessed once for the property, not four times for each individual source. Wells and surface water sources owned by the same owner, but not located on one contiguous property will be assessed separate \$125 annual fees.

Calculating fees in the Great Lakes Basin

Withdrawals in the Great Lakes Basin are subject to an additional fee if the **withdrawal is greater than 50 million gallons per year**. This additional fee is applied to support the additional program requirements in the Great Lakes Basin. The fee is based on an increasing block structure, meaning the fee increases as the withdrawal amount increases.

This table will help you estimate your annual fee. It includes the base fee and the Great Lakes Basin specific fee. The DNR will bill you for actual fees based on your water use report.

Total Water Withdrawn in Millions of Gallons per Year (MGY)	Annual Fee in the Great Lakes Basin
0 - 50	\$125
50 - 100	\$126.50 - \$200
100 - 250	\$202 - \$575
250 - 500	\$578.50 - \$1,700
500 - 750	\$1,706 - \$3,200
750 - 1000	\$3,206 - \$4,700
1000 - 1250	\$4,706 - \$6,200
1250 - 1500	\$6,206 - \$7,700
1500 - 1750	\$7,706 - \$9,200
1750 - 1820	\$9,206 - \$9,625
>1820	\$9,625

Wisconsin Great Lakes Basins



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.

For properties that straddle the Great Lakes Basin divide, the Great Lakes Basin Fee only applies to withdrawals from the Great Lakes Basin.

The annual fee per property for a small business, as defined in [S. 227.114 \(1\)](#), in the Great Lakes Basin is capped at \$1125 (\$125 base fee + \$1,000 Great Lakes Basin fee). Please complete the **Water Use Fee Cap Certification Form for Small Businesses** to provide documentation of your small business status. This form is available on our website or by contacting Water Use Staff. The annual fee (for other than small businesses) is capped at \$9,625 for any one property or a single public water supply.