

SYNOPSIS

Proposed Rules for Public Water Systems to Improve Water Supply Efficiency, Chapter 391-3-33

The proposed Rules for Public Water Systems to Improve Water Supply Efficiency would create new **Chapter 391-3-33** including **Rules 391-3-33-.01** through **391-3-33-.05**.

Purpose: To propose Rules for Public Water Systems to Improve Water Supply Efficiency and to address the requirement under O.C.G.A. §12-5-4.1 for the DNR Board to adopt new rules and regulations establishing minimum standards and best practices for monitoring and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of water use by public water systems to improve water conservation.

Main Features: As called for in O.C.G.A. §12-5-4.1, the proposed Rules for Public Water Systems to Improve Water Supply Efficiency, 391-3-33, require public water systems to conduct an annual water loss audit and to submit the results of that audit to EPD. The proposed rules also require public water systems to develop and implement a water loss control program to investigate, assess, and implement efforts to improve water supply efficiency and to demonstrate progress toward improving water supply efficiency over time. The proposed rules take into consideration that all public water systems are different and therefore allow each system to establish their own individualized goals.

RULES FOR PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE WATER SUPPLY EFFICIENCY, CHAPTER 391-3-33

391-3-33-.01, “Purpose.” is being added to describe the purpose of the new Chapter as well as to describe the underlying authority for the new Chapter as provided for in O.C.G.A §12-5-4.

391-3-33-.02, “Definitions.” is being added to define key terms that are used in the new Chapter.

391-3-33-.03, “Applicability.” is being added to specify that the rule applies to public water systems that regularly serve 3,300 or more individuals. This threshold is provided in O.C.G.A. §12-5-4.1.

391-3-33-.04, “Water Loss Audits.” is being added to specify the provisions for public water systems to conduct an annual water loss audit and to submit the results of that audit to EPD. The water loss audits will be due by March 1 of each calendar year. The results are required to be reviewed by a person with the knowledge, skills and ability to validate water loss audits in accordance with the Georgia Water System Audits and

Water Loss Control Manual. This may be someone within the public water system or external to the public water system. The public water system will be expected to cooperate with EPD regarding any follow up questions or submittal of additional supporting information. The public water system may be required by EPD to revise and resubmit their audit results if EPD finds that the audit is of poor quality.

391-3-33-.05, “Water Supply Efficiency Improvement.” is being added to specify the provisions for public water systems to develop and implement a water loss control program to investigate, assess, and implement efforts to improve water supply efficiency. The rule takes into consideration that all public water systems are different and therefore allows each system to establish their own individualized goals. The rule requires public water systems to make progress toward improving water supply efficiency over time and provides a flexible approach for doing so. If public water systems fail to make progress toward improving water supply efficiency over time, EPD would consider that information when making permitting decisions, such as the decision to permit an increase in the public water system’s permitted drinking water service connections, to permit an increase in the public water system’s water withdrawal permit, or to renew the public water system’s water withdrawal permit at previously permitted levels.

STATEMENT OF RATIONALE
Proposed Rules for Public Water Systems to Improve Water Supply Efficiency,
Chapter 391-3-33

The new Rules for Public Water Systems to Improve Water Supply Efficiency, Chapter 391-3-33, are proposed for public water systems to improve water supply efficiency through the implementation of a water loss audit program and a water loss control program.

O.C.G.A. §12-5-4 calls for EPD to examine its rules to identify opportunities to provide enhanced programming and incentives for voluntary water conservation. In particular, it directs EPD to, without limitation, identify and provide for rules to encourage public water systems to develop and improve water loss abatement programs and to encourage public water systems to implement the industry's best management practices for controlling water loss. In addition, O.C.G.A. §12-5-4.1(b) specifically directs the DNR Board to adopt rules for the minimum standards and best practices for monitoring and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of water use by public water systems to improve water conservation. These specific Georgia Code sections are consistent with, and provide further support for, other sections of Georgia Code charging EPD with the responsibility to ensure that water resources are responsibly conserved.