



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources



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Another Step in the Governor's Conserve Wisconsin Agenda **PSC and DNR Presents Water Conservation Report to Governor Doyle**

MADISON –The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) submitted the report, *A Menu of Demand Side Initiatives for Water Utilities*, to Governor Jim Doyle today. The report is one of the initiatives in the Governor's Conserve Wisconsin agenda, an environmental conservation package designed to safeguard Wisconsin's great environmental legacy.

"This report acknowledges and advances sustainability as the critical factor governing future use of Wisconsin's water resources," said PSC Chairperson Dan Ebert. "Wisconsin's 585 water utilities have played an important role in managing the water under their jurisdiction, and a forward thinking framework based on sustainability is consistent with the good work already under way by the utilities." Chairperson Ebert also announced today the creation of a new Water Conservation Coordinator position at the PSC to serve as a resource to water utilities in their water conservation efforts.

DNR Secretary Scott Hassett called the report "a first step in a much broader approach being worked on to assure the conservation of Wisconsin's precious water."

The report is issued at an important time for water conservation policy efforts in Wisconsin. Pockets of the state have experienced dropping groundwater levels and major water conservation policy efforts are underway to protect the state's valuable water assets.

As Chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors, Governor Doyle is leading the implementation of the recently signed agreement between the Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces to manage the internationally significant Great Lakes as a whole. Additionally, the Governor signed in 2004 a groundwater protection law which, among other things, created a Groundwater Advisory Council to address complex and challenging issues regarding how to manage the state's groundwater to avoid depleting Wisconsin's groundwater reserves.

The report discusses the many demand side water management tools available to water utilities and explores the economic, environmental and social aspects connected to the different strategies. It's based on presentations from national experts and discussions at the Governor's Water Conservation Symposium held in May 2006 in Sheboygan, and on input from an advisory group with water consumers, environmental advocates, utilities and local governments.

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Hassett and Ebert said the agencies will work to continue the momentum gained through this effort. The two agencies will start benchmarking water use data and develop a proposal to implement a statewide water conservation education program. Both agencies will also focus on reaching out to environmental groups, local governments, industry and policymakers with the information provided in this report.

A copy of the report is available on the PSC's website at:

<http://psc.wi.gov/conservationWater/index-waterConservation.htm>.

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