

Water Quantity

Any withdrawal of surface water over 3 million gallons in any month is required to be permitted and reported to the Department per the *Surface Water Withdrawal, Permitting, Use and Reporting Act* 49-4-10 (effect as of January 1, 2011). Any withdrawal of groundwater over 3 million gallons in any month is required to be reported to the Department and permits are required in counties designated as Capacity Use Areas (per the *Groundwater Use and Reporting Act* 49-5-10). Capacity Use Areas consist mainly of coastal counties where significant groundwater use has resulted in the lowering of groundwater levels in major aquifers.

Interbasin Transfer of Water

Requirements pertaining to the interbasin transfer of surface water between major river basins in the South Carolina are contained in the Surface Water Withdrawal, Permitting, Use and Reporting Act 49-4-10 and the Surface Water Withdrawal, Permitting, Use and Reporting Regulation R.61-119. The Regulation designates eight river basins to be used when applying the interbasin transfer (IBT) requirements of the Act. The transfer of water from one of these basins to any other river basin such that more than three million gallons of water are permanently lost to the basin of origin in any one month is considered an interbasin transfer. The primary difference between the permitting requirements for a non-interbasin transfer permit and a permit including an interbasin transfer of water is in the requirement for public notice. A permit involving an IBT must meet more stringent public notice and public hearing requirements. Public notice of an IBT permit application must be sent to a wider audience and a public hearing is required for an IBT application where it is optional for a non-IBT application. The status of interbasin transfer permits and registrations issued under the now repealed Interbasin Transfer of Water Regulation (former R. 121-10) is addressed in the Surface Water Withdrawal, Permitting, Use and Reporting Act 49-4-10.

Capacity Use Program

As authorized under the Groundwater Use and Reporting Act, the Department may declare a capacity use area if the resource is threatened by increasing demand or the potential problems of saltwater intrusion. The Capacity Use Program requires large groundwater users to obtain a permit in capacity use areas. Permits are required for groundwater withdrawn in excess of 3 million gallons in a month. Permit owners are required to report the amount of groundwater withdrawn per month on an annual basis. As part of the Capacity Use Program, the Department monitors a large number of wells to determine the relationship between water levels and pumpage in order to determine regional impacts and evaluate reserve supply. A reserve supply is maintained to offset drought conditions.