

Michael F. Easley, Governor



William G. Ross Jr., Secretary

N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY OFFERS WATER CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE TO BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY IN DROUGHT-AFFECTED NORTH CAROLINA COUNTIES

RALEIGH – As North Carolina's drought deepens, now is the time for industrial, business and institutional water users to put water efficiency strategies in place to reduce demand in water-starved regions and municipalities. July 12, Gov. Mike Easley called on all public water systems, industries and other water users in the Cape Fear River Basin, the Yadkin River Basin and in the Piedmont areas classified as in "exceptional" or "extreme" drought, to reduce their water use by at least 20 percent. The N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA), a non-regulatory state technical assistance agency, is available at no cost to help businesses, industry, government agencies and institutions find ways to achieve these reductions.

DPPEA's water conservation assistance includes:

- On-site assessments that focus directly on identifying cost-saving options to reduce water and energy use. Assessors prepare reports with specific water efficiency recommendations, technical resources, vendor information, case studies and educational program suggestions.
- On-site industrial water conservation training/presentations, as well as "Train the Trainer" courses that provide team members with the necessary skills and tools to design and implement a water conservation program.
- Presentations and staff availability for business, municipal and regional meetings, forums and round-table discussions dealing with drought conditions and water conservation issues.
- A Water Conservation Web site (<http://www.p2pays.org/water>) for commercial, industrial and institutional facilities includes information for planning and budgeting, information on new water equipment and fixtures, information for new construction or process modifications, and information for drought situations.
- A partnership with Waste Reduction Partners (WRP) (<http://www.landofsky.org/wrp>), a team of highly experienced volunteer engineers, architects and scientists that provides western North Carolina businesses with water, waste and energy reduction assessments and technical assistance. Through its assistance to the Regional Water Authority of Asheville, Buncombe and Henderson during the 1998-99 drought, WRP estimates more than 90 million gallons per year of water savings following more than 40 drought technical assistance visits to industries, hotels, multifamily residences and other commercial owners.

Water efficiency programs reduce water demand, provide water and wastewater treatment savings, lessen environmental impact, and sustain water quality. Business and industry looking to conserve water and save money without hindering production processes should contact Rusty Harris-Bishop, DPPEA environmental engineer, at (919) 733-4398 or (800) 763-0136 or via e-mail at rusty.harris-bishop@ncmail.net.

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