

Drinking Water Program

The Directors of Utilities Committee is the Advisory Committee to the Commission for drinking water issues and guides the Drinking Water Program's priorities. Through this task, the HRPDC staff will facilitate Committee efforts to address these priorities, including undertaking appropriate technical studies and analyses.

The following efforts are included in this task:

- Research industry trends such as changing rate structures, affordability programs, salary ranges, and apprenticeship programs.
- Collect and compile annual water rate information and compare rates to other regions.
- Update the Water Quality Response Plan (WQRP) and distribute the WQRP points of contact and guidelines.
- Review the State Water Supply Plan and assess its applicability to the region.
- Research different state and regional approaches to water management and permitting.
- Maintain communication about economic development initiatives as related to utilities and shovel-ready goals.
- Facilitate communication and encourage coordinated project funding between military installations and utilities as needed.
- Regularly update data and maps for the Regional Source Water Protection Plan.
- Develop regional risk assessment plan for potential sources of contamination to the region's source water.
- Identify potential impacts from climate change and missing data. For example, changes in precipitation patterns, saltwater intrusion, and need to update drought planning policies due to temperature or storage changes.
- Monitor legislative and regulatory issues affecting public water supply and coordinate regional comments as needed.
- Serve on regulatory advisory panels and coordinate information sharing between regional representatives and other localities regarding potential regulatory changes.
- Facilitate discussions of best practices with focus on utility management.
- Continue enhancement of communications between the local Departments of Health and Utilities.
- Facilitate coordination between regional emergency management programs and utilities including input on regional hazard mitigation plan, defining critical infrastructure, VDEM/FEMA grant priorities.
- Provide administrative and technical support to the Directors of Utilities Committee and facilitate the Committee process.

On behalf of the local governments, the HRPDC will continue the Regional Groundwater Mitigation Program. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Groundwater Mitigation Program was renewed in July 2016, extending the program from January 1,

2016 to December 31, 2020. Through this program, the HRPDC provides groundwater hydrology and computer modeling expertise to the participating member local governments.

This effort includes the following activities:

- Hampton Roads Regional Mitigation Program, including analysis of impacts of groundwater withdrawals and administration of the program.
- Coordinate with USGS VA Water Center and DEQ to improve groundwater modeling efforts and understanding of the hydrogeology.
- Coordinate with DEQ to improve transparency with regards to groundwater permitting and policy decisions.
- Evaluate deviations between water level measurements and modeled water levels.
- Local groundwater studies and input for Comprehensive Plans.
- Groundwater education, including the development of web interactive maps showing groundwater levels and withdrawals.
- Develop tracking method of unpermitted groundwater withdrawals and projections of future demand and map growth areas.
- Continue analysis to estimate the sustainable yield of the Virginia Coastal Plain aquifer system.
- Participate in Mission H2O to provide stakeholder coordination and track regulatory initiatives.

This project is funded through a special local government contribution.

Product: Technical studies, Presentations, and analyses

Regional Wastewater Program

The HRPDC staff will facilitate a regional wastewater planning program to develop regional solutions to wastewater management issues identified by the Directors of Utilities Committee in cooperation with HRSD. Issues being addressed include:

Sanitary Sewer Overflows: The process of addressing this issue began in December 2000. Since that time, the Sanitary Sewer Overflow Reporting System (SSORS), training materials for local staff and a web-based reporting procedure have been developed. Consultant assistance is used to maintain SSORS. HRPDC staff will continue to manage the system and provide routine assistance to the localities, Virginia Health Department and DEQ.

Consent Orders: The HRPDC staff will continue to coordinate the regional process involving DEQ, HRSD and the thirteen localities, to develop the Regional Wet Weather Management Plan and related policies and standards required by the federal Consent Decree. HRSD is under the federal Consent Decree which establishes regional responsibilities for addressing sanitary sewer overflows. The original state Consent Order was executed by the localities, HRSD and DEQ in September 2007. The Consent Order has been terminated and replaced with a Consent Order signed in December 2014 as part of the sewer consolidation effort. The new order requires localities to implement their sanitary sewer maintenance, operation and management (MOM) programs. HRSD is not a party to the Consent Order. HRSD will develop the Regional Wet Weather Management Plan with locality input, but HRSD will fund the projects included in the plan. HRPDC staff will continue to support regional collaboration and communication related to HRSD's integrated plan which proposes to inject highly treated water into the Coastal Plain Aquifer, increases HRSD's bacteria source tracking capacity and implements high priority projects from the Regional Wet Weather Management Plan.

Wastewater Priority Projects: HRPDC staff is also focused on sharing best practices and innovations for water quality improvements, especially related to bacteria source tracking, beach closures and harmful algal blooms. Coordination between Hampton Roads stormwater program managers and HRSD will continue related to bacteria source tracking and the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Additional research will likely focus on affordability metrics and customer assistance programs across the country.

HRPDC staff will continue to track challenges related to septic tanks and look for funding solutions. For example, Virginia has included septic nutrient load reductions in the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Several localities have identified a need to upgrade or replace failing septic tanks with sewer connections but it is a challenge to find funding. Projected sea level rise may also impede the function of septic tanks so HRPDC staff will work with other coastal PDCs to define the problem and propose solutions.

New consultant contracts (Continuing Services Agreements) have been executed for wastewater related activities on an as-needed basis. During the course of the year, additional projects may be identified by the Directors of Utilities Committee.

This program is funded through a special local government contribution.

Products: Reports, Presentations, Contract Management