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Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 62.1-255, 62.1-262, and 62.1-266 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 62.1-258.1 as follows:

§ 62.1-255. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires otherwise:

“Agricultural irrigation” means the controlled application of water through manmade systems to supply water requirements not satisfied by rainfall that is artificially applied to support any operation devoted to the bona fide production of crops, or animals, or fowl including the production of fruits and vegetables of all kinds; meat, dairy, and poultry products; nuts, tobacco, nursery, and floral products; and the production and harvest of products from silviculture activity.

"Beneficial use" includes, but is not limited to, domestic (including public water supply), agricultural, commercial, and industrial uses.

"Board" means the State Water Control Board.

"Ground water" means any water, except capillary moisture, beneath the land surface in the zone of saturation or beneath the bed of any stream, lake, reservoir or other body of surface water wholly or partially within the boundaries of this Commonwealth, whatever the subsurface geologic structure in which such water stands, flows, percolates or otherwise occurs.

"Ground water withdrawal permit" means a certificate issued by the Board permitting the withdrawal of a specified quantity of ground water in a ground water management area.

“Irrigation” means the controlled application of water through manmade systems to supply water requirements not satisfied by rainfall to assist in the growing or maintenance of vegetative growth.

Non-agricultural irrigation means all irrigation except for agricultural irrigation.

"Person" means any and all persons, including individuals, firms, partnerships, associations, public or private institutions, municipalities or political subdivisions, governmental agencies, or private or public corporations organized under the laws of this Commonwealth or any other state or country.

“Surficial aquifer” means the upper surface of a zone of saturation, where the body of ground water is not confined by an overlying impermeable zone.

§ 62.1-258.1. Irrigation wells.

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It is unlawful in a ground water management area for any person to construct a well for non-agricultural irrigation purposes except in the surficial aquifer. The provisions of this section shall not apply to wells constructed prior to the effective date of regulations adopted pursuant to subsection H of § 62.1-266. The provisions of this section shall not apply if the Department of Environmental Quality has determined that the surficial aquifer is not adequate to supply the proposed beneficial use.

§ 62.1-262. Permits for other ground water withdrawals.

Any application for a ground water withdrawal permit, except as provided in §§ 62.1-260, ~~and 62.1-261~~, and subsection H of 62.1-266 shall include a water conservation and management plan approved by the Board. A water conservation and management plan shall include: (i) use of water-saving plumbing and processes including, where appropriate, use of water-saving fixtures in new and renovated plumbing as provided under the Uniform Statewide Building Code; (ii) a water-loss reduction program; (iii) a water-use education program; and (iv) mandatory reductions during water-shortage emergencies including, where appropriate, ordinances prohibiting waste of water generally and providing for mandatory water-use restrictions, with penalties, during water-shortage emergencies. The Board shall approve all water conservation plans in compliance with subdivisions (i) through (iv) of this section.

§ 62.1-266. Ground water withdrawal permits.

A. The Board may issue any ground water withdrawal permit upon terms, conditions and limitations necessary for the protection of the public welfare, safety and health.

B. Applications for ground water withdrawal permits shall be in a form prescribed by the Board and shall contain such information, consistent with this chapter, as the Board deems necessary.

C. All ground water withdrawal permits issued by the Board under this chapter shall have a fixed term not to exceed ten years. The term of a ground water withdrawal permit issued by the Board shall not be extended by modification beyond the maximum duration, and the permit shall expire at the end of the term unless a complete application for a new permit has been filed in a timely manner as required by the regulations of the Board, and the Board is unable, through no fault of the permittee, to issue a new permit before the expiration date of the previous permit. Any permit to withdraw ground water issued by the Board on or after July 1, 1991, and prior to July 1, 1992, shall expire ten years after the date of its issuance.

D. Renewed ground water withdrawal permits shall be for a withdrawal amount that includes such savings as can be demonstrated to have been achieved through water conservation, provided that a beneficial use of the permitted ground water can be demonstrated for the following permit term.

E. Any permit issued by the Board under this chapter may, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, be amended or revoked on any of the following grounds or for good cause as may be provided by the regulations of the Board:

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1. The permittee has violated any regulation or order of the Board pertaining to ground water, any condition of a ground water withdrawal permit, any provision of this chapter, or any order of a court, where such violation presents a hazard or potential hazard to human health or the environment or is representative of a pattern of serious or repeated violations which, in the opinion of the Board, demonstrates the permittee's disregard for or inability to comply with applicable laws, regulations, or requirements;
2. The permittee has failed to disclose fully all relevant material facts or has misrepresented a material fact in applying for a permit, or in any other report or document required under this chapter or under the ground water withdrawal regulations of the Board;
3. The activity for which the permit was issued endangers human health or the environment and can be regulated to acceptable levels by amendment or revocation of the permit; or
4. There exists a material change in the basis on which the permit was issued that requires either a temporary or a permanent reduction or elimination of the withdrawal controlled by the permit necessary to protect human health or the environment.

F. No application for a ground water withdrawal permit shall be considered complete unless the applicant has provided the Executive Director of the Board with notification from the governing body of the county, city or town in which the withdrawal is to occur that the location and operation of the withdrawing facility is in compliance with all ordinances adopted pursuant to Chapter 22 (§ 15.2-2200 et seq.) of Title 15.2. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to any applicant exempt from compliance under Chapter 22 (§ 15.2-2200 et seq.) of Title 15.2.

G. A ground water withdrawal permit shall authorize withdrawal of a specific amount of ground water through a single well or system of wells, including a backup well or wells, or such other means as the withdrawer specifies.

H. The Board is authorized to develop by regulations to be effective as soon as practicable a general permit or general permits for the regulation of irrigation withdrawals greater than 300,000 gallons in any one month from the surficial aquifer. Regulations adopted pursuant to this subsection shall provide that withdrawals from the surficial aquifer for agricultural irrigation may be permitted under either a general permit developed pursuant to this subsection or another ground water withdrawal permit.