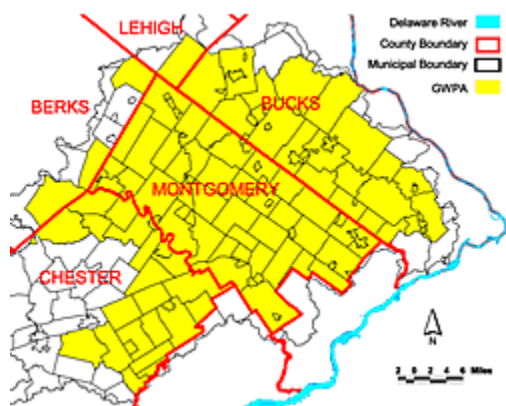


Southeastern Pennsylvania Ground Water Protected Area



Map of Pa. counties and municipalities that are part of the GWPA.

The **Southeastern Pennsylvania Ground Water Protected Area (GWPA)**, where more stringent regulations apply to ground water withdrawals than they do in the rest of the Delaware River Basin, was initially established by the DRBC in 1980 at the request of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania after it became evident that development was negatively impacting ground water levels.

DRBC's GWPA regulations state that new or expanded well water projects located within the delineated GWPA involving an average withdrawal of more than 10,000 gallons per day (gpd) during any consecutive 30-day period from a well or a group of wells operated as a system must obtain a DRBC Protected Area Permit. In the remainder of the Delaware River Basin, DRBC's review threshold for water withdrawal projects is for an average withdrawal of more than 100,000 gpd during any consecutive 30-day period.

The main goal of the GWPA is to prevent the depletion of ground water. Lowered water tables have reduced flows in some streams and dried up others. This reduction in baseflows affects downstream water uses, negatively impacts aquatic life, and can reduce the capacity of waterways in the region to assimilate pollutants.

Another goal is to protect the interests and rights of lawful users of the same water source, as well as balance and reconcile alternative and conflicting uses of limited water resources in the region.

Approximately one million residents of southeastern Pennsylvania currently rely entirely or substantially on the ground water resources underlying Berks, Bucks, Chester, Lehigh, and Montgomery counties for supplies of domestic, municipal, commercial, industrial, and agricultural water. The GWPA takes in 1,200 square miles and includes 127 municipalities. In addition to the Neshaminy Creek Watershed, other large drainage areas include the Brandywine creek, Perkiomen Creek, and Wissahickon Creek sub-basins.

Learn more: <http://www.nj.gov/drbc/programs/project/gwpa.html>

DRBC: Managing, Protecting & Improving the Basin's Water Resources Since 1961

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) is a federal-interstate compact agency created in 1961 to manage the water resources of the Delaware River Basin without regard to political boundaries. The commission's members are the governors of the four basin states (Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania) and the Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers North Atlantic Division, who serves as the federal representative.

The commission was formed in response to major water resource challenges requiring regional solutions, and to this day is a successful model for federal-state collaboration.

DRBC programs include water quality protection, water supply allocation, regulatory review, water conservation, drought management, watershed planning, flood loss reduction, and education/outreach.

Highlights of DRBC accomplishments, in addition to managing the GWPA, include the following:

- * DRBC's Special Protection Waters program protects the existing high quality waters of the river's non-tidal watershed;
- * DRBC's Pollutant Minimization Plan regulations have helped to significantly reduce PCB loadings to the river; and
- * DRBC has been recognized for its comprehensive water conservation, drought management, and watershed planning programs.

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