



Groundwater Recharge Areas

950 Senoia Rd, Tyrone, GA 30290

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<http://www.tyronega.gov>

To: Town of Tyrone Mayor and Council

From: Town Staff

Subject: Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Requirements for Data Center Development in Tyrone, Georgia

Purpose

This memorandum provides a summary of the principal groundwater recharge area protection requirements that should be considered during the planning and permitting of the proposed data center in the Town of Tyrone. Data centers are subject to state environmental regulations and local groundwater protection ordinances intended to protect groundwater resources, particularly where development occurs within a designated Significant Groundwater Recharge Area.

Discussion

The Town of Tyrone has adopted a Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Ordinance (Chapter 105, Article II of the Town Code) to safeguard public drinking water supplies and aquifer recharge areas identified by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The ordinance establishes groundwater recharge protection standards that apply to development within mapped recharge areas and requires compliance before the Town may approve building permits, rezoning requests, or subdivision plats. The ordinance also classifies recharge areas according to groundwater pollution susceptibility (high, medium, or low), with additional development restrictions applicable in highly susceptible areas.

For data center developments, compliance obligations may include designing fuel and chemical storage with appropriate secondary containment, providing impermeable surfaces for hazardous material handling, avoiding prohibited stormwater infiltration practices in highly susceptible recharge areas, and implementing measures to prevent groundwater contamination from operational activities. Emergency generator fuel systems, cooling water treatment chemicals, transformer oils, and battery storage systems should all be evaluated for consistency with the Town's groundwater protection standards.

In addition to local requirements, projects must comply with applicable Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) regulations. Georgia does not require a stand-alone groundwater recharge permit for industrial projects. However, an Industrial Groundwater Withdrawal Permit must be obtained from the EPD if the facility withdrawals over 100,000 gallons per day. The application for this permit will require the following submittals: (1) General System Information (2) Well Data and Groundwater Use Reports (3) Industrial Water Conservation Plan and (4) 5-Year Water Conservation Progress Report. The project must also comply with other EPD regulations governing erosion and sediment control, construction stormwater permitting, water withdrawals (if groundwater is proposed as a water supply), wastewater management, and other environmental permitting requirements. Depending on site conditions, additional state or federal permits may also be required.

The Town of Tyrone has also emphasized that data center projects remain subject to applicable local, state, and federal environmental review and permitting processes before construction may commence, including review of site plans, land disturbance permits, and other development approvals.

Conclusion

Given that a significant portion of Tyrone is located within a designated groundwater recharge area, early coordination with the Town and the Georgia EPD is recommended to identify applicable permitting requirements and incorporate groundwater protection measures into the project design. Addressing these obligations early in the development process will help facilitate regulatory compliance while minimizing permitting risk and protecting local groundwater resources.



Additional Information

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Groundwater Protection Standards (Ord. No. 379, 6-4-2001. Sec. 105-29)

Overall Objectives.

1. Protect groundwater quality by restricting land uses that generate, use or store dangerous pollutants in recharge areas.
2. Protect groundwater quality by limiting density of development.
3. Protect groundwater quality by ensuring that any development that occurs within the recharge area shall have no adverse effect on groundwater quality.

Town Ordinance Standards.

- For all pollution susceptibility areas, new waste disposal facilities must have synthetic liners and leachate collection systems.
- New agricultural impoundments shall meet the following requirements:
 1. For areas of high susceptibility, a liner shall be provided that is approved by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service (SCS).
 2. For areas of medium susceptibility, an SCS-approved liner shall be provided if the site exceeds 15 acres.
 3. For areas of low susceptibility, an SCS-approved liner shall be provided if the site exceeds 50 acres.
- No land disposal of hazardous waste shall be permitted within any significant groundwater recharge area.
- For all significant groundwater recharge areas, the handling, storage and disposal of hazardous materials shall take place on an impermeable surface having spill and leak protection approved by the state department of natural resources, environmental protection division (EPD).
- For all significant groundwater recharge areas, new aboveground chemical or petroleum storage tanks or cluster of tanks totaling more than 650 gallons must have the secondary containment for 110 percent of the tanks' volume.
- For high pollution susceptibility areas, new wastewater treatment basins shall have an impermeable liner approved by EPD and the county health department.
- For high pollution susceptibility areas, no new stormwater infiltration basins may be constructed.
- For high pollution susceptibility areas, wastewater spray irrigation systems or the land spreading of wastewater sludge shall be practiced in accordance with department of natural resources criteria for slow-rate land treatment. An application for development plans for activities involving wastewater spray irrigation or land spreading of wastewater sludge must be accompanied by proof that the applicant has received a land application system permit from EPD.