

Dep. of Natural Resources: Issues Waukesha diversion approval, implementing Great Lakes Compact Council decision

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DNR Issues Waukesha Diversion Approval, Implementing Great Lakes Compact Council Decision

WAUKESHA, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced that it [issued the state diversion approval to the City of Waukesha](#). This approval is the final step in the review process for the City of Waukesha's application to divert Lake Michigan water for public water supply to the City of Waukesha, and return treated wastewater to Lake Michigan via the Root River.

In 2016, the City's application was approved with conditions by the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council to divert up to 8.2 million gallons per day. Since 2016, the City has obtained the necessary permits and approvals to implement the diversion. The DNR's diversion approval is the final step in implementing the conditions required by the Compact Council.

The City first applied to the DNR for a diversion approval in 2010, because the City's ground water wells are contaminated by high radium concentrations. The City is under an amended court order to comply with radium standards by 2023.

The lengthy review process included multiple public hearings and comment periods at the state and Great Lakes regional level, review and approval by the Great Lake states and provinces and engagement with federally recognized U.S. tribes.

The City will purchase water from the City of Milwaukee and return treated wastewater to the Root River that flows into Lake Michigan. Following construction of the necessary infrastructure to implement the diversion, the City plans to begin using Great Lakes water for its water supply in 2023.

The DNR's final diversion approval includes all the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Resources Regional Body and Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council conditions. The diversion approval includes requirements such as continuing water conservation and monitoring return flow water quality in the Root River.

[For more information about the City of Waukesha water diversion project, visit our website.](#)