



# Waukesha Water Utility

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## **Regional cooperation led to Great Lakes Compact agreement, Waukesha Mayor says**

Regional cooperation led to Wisconsin's new law implementing the Great Lakes Compact, Waukesha Mayor Larry Nelson said today. "Officials from different regions and different parties recognized and addressed each others' needs and the needs of the state," the mayor said. "I hope the Compact agreement becomes a model for regional cooperation on issues that include water supplies, water quality and transportation needs in southeastern Wisconsin."

Nelson praised Governor Jim Doyle for first bringing the Great Lakes governors together to agree on the Compact and then for bringing Wisconsin legislators together to pass it. "Governor Doyle provided the leadership and vision needed to protect the Great Lakes for generations to come. He ensured that the viewpoints and interests of all the stakeholders were effectively addressed."

The mayor said the new water law "defines the process and standards for Waukesha to apply for Lake Michigan water." He said the Compact's most important provision "requires users to return or recycle water back to the lake after use, in order to protect lake levels. Waukesha is currently examining our options on how we could do that."

The mayor praised Governor Doyle and legislative committee chairs for their work to reach consensus on the legislation. "Governor Doyle, Rep. Gunderson, Sen. Miller and the DNR all deserve credit for their hard work in reaching consensus on the Compact. Sen. Kedzie also deserves credit for his chairing a legislative special committee on the topic, and we appreciated the support of County Executive Vrakas in reaching a deal," he said. "Amendments by the Senate and Assembly both add more precise definitions of key terms and helpful clarifications about the process of applying for Great Lakes water."

Nelson said "Waukesha is proud of our leadership on water issues, including conservation. I've been told we have the most comprehensive water conservation plan in the Midwest. We have totally banned daytime lawn sprinkling in order to prevent evaporation and reduce demand. We have recently reduced our water use by 7.5%."

The mayor added that "We were also the first community in Wisconsin to get state approval for water rates that increase as use increases. But conservation alone cannot solve the water supply problems brought on by years of overpumping by all of southeastern Wisconsin. We need a new water supply and Lake Michigan would be the most sustainable environmental option. This new law will allow us to pursue that option."

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