

Lake Michigan Water Project:
Public Hearing Regarding the Formation of Special Service Area #16

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) FAQ

Q: I would like to voice my concern that Lake Michigan water isn't an endless supply. Who monitors the usage of the water?

A: Lake Michigan water usage is governed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources which monitors water use as well as Lake Michigan water levels. Withdrawal of water from Lake Michigan serving Illinois is controlled through a heavily regulated permit process which promotes sustainability.

Q: Is Lake Michigan a long-term sustainable choice if it's at its lowest level in years?

A: The Lake Michigan water level is cyclical and the level depends more on Lake Superior than the amount of water being withdrawn for drinking water purposes. Lake Michigan water usage is governed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources which monitors water use as well as Lake Michigan water levels. The water level in Lake Michigan has varied no more than a range of 6 feet, which is sustainable for such a vast body of water where it reaches 921 feet at its deepest point.

Q: In order to keep our allocation, do we have to be in operation by 2016?

A: Within Illinois, the use of Lake Michigan water is controlled by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). The agencies involved in this project, Lake County, the Village of Lake Villa and Village of Lindenhurst, all applied for and received an IDNR Lake Michigan Water Allocation Permit in February 2011. The permit, however, is reviewed by the IDNR every 5 years. If the project participants do not make positive strides toward obtaining Lake Michigan Water, the IDNR can revoke the permit. As long as the project participants are making positive strides toward obtaining Lake Michigan Water, it is unlikely that the permit would be revoked.

Q: What happens if we don't act now, and wait 10 or 15? Do we have the option to get Lake Michigan Water in the future?

A: Within Illinois, the use of Lake Michigan water is controlled by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Approximately 96-97% of the Illinois Lake Michigan allowable water withdrawals have been allocated. The agencies involved in this project, Lake County, the Village of Lake Villa and Village of Lindenhurst, all applied for and received an IDNR Lake Michigan Water Allocation Permit in February 2011. The permit, however, is reviewed by the IDNR every 5 years. If the project participants do not make positive strides toward obtaining Lake Michigan Water, the IDNR can revoke the permit. In addition, the Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency (CLCJAWA) has a limited capacity of water that its system can deliver. Today, the system has capacity to provide service to the project participants. However, it is doubtful that capacity will still be available to us in the future.