

§401. Findings; purpose

The Legislature finds and declares that the protection of ground water resources is critical to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the State. Aquifers provide a significant amount of the water used by the people of the State. Aquifers and aquifer recharge areas are critical elements in the hydrologic cycle. Aquifer recharge areas collect, conduct and purify the water that replenishes aquifers. [PL 1979, c. 472, §12 (NEW).]

The Legislature further finds and declares that an adequate supply of safe drinking water is a matter of the highest priority and that it is the policy of the State to protect, conserve and maintain ground water supplies in the State. [PL 1979, c. 472, §12 (NEW).]

The Legislature further finds and declares that ground water resources are endangered by unwise uses and land use practices. [PL 1979, c. 472, §12 (NEW).]

The Legislature further finds that these resources may be threatened by certain agricultural chemicals and practices, but that the nature and extent of this impact is largely unknown. Failure to evaluate this potential problem is likely to result in costly contamination of some ground water supplies leading to increased risks to the public health. [PL 1985, c. 465, §1 (NEW).]

The Legislature further finds and declares it to be the purpose of this Article to require classification of the state's ground water resources. [PL 1979, c. 472, §12 (NEW).]

The Legislature further finds and declares that there are numerous existing state agencies, commissions, boards or similar entities administering various statutes and programs relating to ground water. Because of the importance of ground water to the safety and well-being of the State, there is an urgent need for the coordination and development of the programs to assess the quality and quantity of and to protect ground water. [PL 1979, c. 472, §12 (NEW).]

It is the intention of the Legislature that the Division of Geology, Natural Areas and Coastal Resources provide coordination and develop programs for the collection and analysis of information relating to the nature, extent and quality of aquifers and aquifer recharge areas. [PL 2013, c. 405, Pt. C, §20 (AMD).]

It is further the intention of the Legislature that existing programs related to ground water continue in their present form and that the Department of Environmental Protection provide coordination for the protection of ground water through existing statutes and regulations. [PL 1979, c. 472, §12 (NEW).]

This article is not intended to limit a municipality's power to enact ordinances under Title 30-A, section 3001, to protect and conserve the quality and quantity of ground water. [PL 1989, c. 890, Pt. A, §40 (AFF); PL 1989, c. 890, Pt. B, §21 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1979, c. 472, §12 (NEW). PL 1985, c. 465, §1 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 583, §60 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 890, §§A40,B21 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 655, Pt. KK, §25 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 655, Pt. KK, §34 (AFF). PL 2013, c. 405, Pt. C, §20 (AMD).

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