



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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Integrated water resources management a priority for County Planning Directors' Association of Pennsylvania

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In Pennsylvania, the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) includes provisions for comprehensive plans to include a plan for the reliable supply of water, considering current and future water resources availability, uses and limitations, including provisions adequate to protect water supply sources. To implement such a plan and provide a balanced approach, the interrelationships between water resource protection, future water supply needs and land use planning should be considered collectively. Since water resources extend beyond municipal borders, it is necessary to consider this integrated approach at the watershed or basin level. The MPC allows for this through its provisions for multimunicipal planning. Further, the Pennsylvania State Water Plan, released in 2009, provides recommendations to initiate integrated water resources management (IWRM) planning in the state; however, not much has been done at the state level since then. Integrated water resources management is defined as the coordinated planning, development, protection and management of water, land and related resources in a manner that fosters sustainable economic activity, improves or sustains environmental quality, ensures public health and

safety, and provides for the sustainability of communities and ecosystems.

In the past, water resources planning in Pennsylvania has generally been conducted in a fragmented manner, with water issues (such as water supply, groundwater protection, sewage facilities and floodplain management) often considered in isolation from one another and often only within municipal boundaries. The Pennsylvania Stormwater Management Act (Act 167) is an exception in that it provides for planning at the county level for entire watersheds rather than solely within municipal boundaries. However, stormwater plans still address only the single topic of stormwater. The County Planning Directors' Association of Pennsylvania (CPDAP) has recognized the complexities involved with an integrated approach to planning and is currently working toward the development of guiding principles and priority actions to help facilitate IWRM planning throughout Pennsylvania. The LVPC is assisting CPDAP with finalizing this work. Ultimately, the CPDAP principles and actions will be presented to the Pennsylvania Legislature.