



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

Regulation of Ground Water Resources/Greater Baton Rouge Area: Capital Area Ground Water Conservation Commission Audit

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The Louisiana Legislative Auditor ("Auditor") issued a May 9th document titled:

Regulation of Ground Water Resources - Greater Baton Rouge Area ("Audit")

The *Audit* states that it evaluates whether the Capital Area Ground Water Conservation Commission ("Commission") has sufficiently regulated ground water usage from the Southern Hills Aquifer System.

The Auditor is stated to have conducted the *Audit* due to United States Geological Survey data indicating the ground water withdrawals from the aquifer have resulted in salt water intrusion. The *Audit* notes in part:

Without effective regulation, salt water intrusion threatens the long-term sustainability of the aquifer on ground water resources. For example, if ground water cannot be used for drinking water, the greater Baton Rouge area will have to identify alternative sources, such as the Mississippi River, which could result in possible increases in costs for users.

The Southern Hills Aquifer System is stated to supply water for the greater Baton Rouge area.

Some conclusions reached in the *Audit* include:

- The Commission does not effectively regulate the withdrawal of water from the Southern Hills aquifer resulting in salt water encroachment
- The Commission does not have a complete inventory of all the wells it should be regulating
- Despite imposing certain limits, the amount of water being withdrawn from the aquifer has not decreased.
- During calendar year 2018 the Commission failed to monitor how much water was being withdrawn from 62 wells
- The Commission cannot ensure it is collecting all the fees owed from certain wells
- Permits were not issued for certain new wells in the district
- The Commission's plan to manage the aquifer is not as comprehensive as those in other districts
- The Commission can improve its public outreach efforts (as compared to water districts in Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Mississippi, and Texas)

A copy of the *Audit* can be downloaded [here](#).