

Section 1 – State / Local Laws, Ordinances, Regulations

Water Quality Control Act

(Enacted 1964)

Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) 12-5-20

Declares that water resources shall be utilized prudently for the maximum benefit of the people, in order to restore and maintain a reasonable degree of purity in the waters in the State and an adequate supply of such waters, and to require, when necessary, reasonable usage of the waters of the state and reasonable treatment of sewage, industrial waste, and other waste prior to their discharge into such waters. Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, 205 Butler St., Atlanta, Ga. 30334, 404/656-4905

Metropolitan River Protection Act

(Enacted 1973)

OCGA 12-5-440

Protects the health, welfare, and economic progress of the State by protection of floods and flood damage, and control of erosion, siltation, and intensity of development adjacent to major streams along the Chattahoochee Corridor, and to provide comprehensive planning for the stream corridor. This requires local governments to review land disturbing activities proposed in the Chattahoochee Corridor and certify those which are consistent with the guidelines for development. The Chattahoochee Corridor is that area of the Chattahoochee River between Buford Dam and the western side of Atlanta where the river and I-285 intersect. Source: Atlanta Regional Commission, 3715 Northside Parkway, 200 Northcreek, Suite 500, Atlanta, Ga. 30327, 404/364-2500

Erosion and Sediment Control Act

(Enacted 1975)

OCGA 12-7-1

Strengthens and extends erosion and sediment control programs to conserve and protect land, water, air, and other resources. This is accomplished through the adoption of comprehensive local ordinances, which govern land-disturbing activities in Georgia's 159 counties and 537 municipalities. Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, 205 Butler St., Atlanta, Ga. 30334, 404/656-4905

Safe Dams Act
(Enacted 1978)
OCGA 391-3-8

Requires a permit for the operation or construction of dams or artificial barriers in Georgia, to insure the proper design and operation of the dam or barrier thereby providing the maximum safety to human life. Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, 205 Butler St., Atlanta, Ga. 30334, 404/656-7404

Georgia Forest Fire Protection Act
(Enacted 1988)
OCGA 12-6-90

Mandates any person or organization burning any woods, land, marshes or other flammable vegetation obtain a permit from the Georgia Forestry Commission prior to burning. Georgia experiences more forest fires than any other Southern state. Smoke related accidents resulting in death to Georgia's motorists, as well as other smoke related problems involving smoke sensitive areas such as airports, hospitals, etc., prompted the General Assembly to pass this Act. Source: Georgia Forestry Commission, P.O. Box 819, Macon, Ga. 31298-4599, 912/751-3492.

Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act
(Enacted 1990)
OCGA 12-8-20

Develops a statewide program for solid waste management that encourages the reduction of solid waste by twenty-five percent by July 1, 1996, and the recycling of tires. Additionally, the Act grants the Department of Natural Resources the responsibility to monitor solid waste facilities, public and private, to insure they do not adversely affect human health, safety, or the environment. Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, Land Protection Branch, 4244 International Parkway, Suite 104, Atlanta, Ga. 30354, 404/362-2537.

Mountain Protection and River Corridor Act

(Enacted 1991)
OCGA 12-2-8

Specifies the minimum standards and procedures relative to the protection of mountains and river corridors. These standards and procedures include, but are not limited to the prohibition of land- disturbing activities on land that is greater than 2200 feet above mean sea level with a slope of 25 percent or more for at least 500 feet. Additionally, land disturbing activities are prohibited in areas within 100 feet on both sides of a perennial stream or watercourse with an average annual flow of 400 cubic feet per second. Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, 205 Butler St., Atlanta, Ga. 30334, 404/656-3214.

Abandoned Cemeteries Act

(Enacted 1991)
OCGA 36-72-1

Declares that human remains are not property to be owned by the person or entity that owns the land or water where human remains and burial objects are discovered. Human remains and burial objects are part of the finite, irreplaceable, and nonrenewable cultural heritage of Georgia and should be protected. Therefore, no known cemetery, burial ground, human remains, or burial objects shall be knowingly disturbed unless a permit is first obtained from the governing county or municipality. Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Section, 205 Butler St., Atlanta, Ga. 30334, 404/656-2840

Shore Protection Act

(Enacted 1992)
OCGA 12-5-230

This act amends the 1972 Shore Assistance Act to review and regulate any development or proposed land use involving Georgia's beaches or sand dunes. Under specific guidelines, a review committee grants permits to projects considered 'friendly' (i.e. do not alter the natural topography or vegetation within the beach and dune areas) to this fragile coastal environment, and rejects or - recommends revisions to projects which might harm or irreparably alter it. Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Resource Division, One Conservation Way, Brunswick, Ga. 31523-8600, 912/264-7218.

Coastal Marshlands Protection Act
(Enacted 1992)
OCGA 12-5-280

This act amends the Coastal Marshland Protection Act of 1970 to recognize the State's marshlands as vital natural resources that act as a habitat and provide food for wildlife, serve as a nursery for commercially and recreationally important fish, buffer against flooding and erosion, and help filter Pollutants. The Act creates a committee that evaluates proposed construction or development projects that might affect these areas and grants or denies permits for these projects based on their environmental impacts. Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Resources Division, One Conservation Way, Brunswick, Ga. 31523-8600, 912/264-7218.