

HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
HOUSE BILL 443

**48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2007**

AN ACT

RELATING TO WATER; AMENDING A SECTION OF CHAPTER 72 NMSA 1978  
TO CLARIFY A WATER ALLOWANCE UPON CONSERVATION OF WATER.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. Section 72-5-18 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1907,  
Chapter 49, Section 43, as amended) is amended to read:

"72-5-18. WATER ALLOWANCE.--

A. In the issuance of permits to appropriate water  
for irrigation or in the adjudication of the rights to the use  
of water for that purpose, the amount allowed shall be based  
upon beneficial use and in accordance with good agricultural  
practices and the amount allowed shall not exceed such amount.

The state engineer shall permit the amount allowed to be  
diverted at a rate that is consistent with good agricultural  
practices and that will result in the most effective use of

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1 available water in order to prevent waste.

2 B. Improved irrigation methods or changes in  
3 agriculture practices resulting in [~~the~~] conservation of water  
4 shall not diminish beneficial use or otherwise affect an  
5 owner's water rights or quantity of appurtenant acreage.

6 C. Any water rights owner who demonstrates that  
7 improved irrigation or changes in agricultural practices have  
8 resulted in the conservation of water shall be able to make an  
9 application to the state engineer for a change in the point of  
10 diversion or place or purpose of use of the quantity of  
11 conserved water, provided that:

12 (1) conservation of water shall not result in  
13 impairment or diminishment of other water rights; and

14 (2) priority and quality of right shall be  
15 assessed under the same standards as apply to transfers."

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