

Groundwater Amendments
2026 GENERAL SESSION
STATE OF UTAH
Chief Sponsor: Michael L. Kohler
Senate Sponsor:

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill addresses groundwater.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- defines terms;
- requires land use authorities to consider groundwater issues in approving a land use application or issuing a land use permit;
- addresses what may be considered related to groundwater preservation; and
- requires the Utah Geological Survey to provide information.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

ENACTS:

10-20-625, Utah Code Annotated 1953

17-79-621, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **10-20-625** is enacted to read:

10-20-625 . Groundwater and land use decisions.

(1) As used in this section:

- (a) "Agricultural land" means land that, for at least six years during the 10-year period immediately before when a land use decision is made, is land in agricultural use as defined in Section 59-2-502.
- (b) "Groundwater preservation amounts and methods" means an amount or method used to preserve the level of groundwater traditionally measured for the groundwater

- 31 subsurface area associated with the agricultural land.
- 32 (2) If agricultural land would be put to a use other than agricultural use because of a
33 development, a land use authority shall consider groundwater preservation amounts and
34 methods in determining whether to approve a land use application or issue a land use
35 permit related to the development.
- 36 (3) In considering a groundwater preservation method, a land use authority may consider
37 requiring the use of:
- 38 (a) land irrigation;
- 39 (b) a flood basin as a recharge basin;
- 40 (c) an injection well; or
- 41 (d) another available method.
- 42 (4) If requested by a municipality, the Utah Geological Survey shall provide information to
43 the municipality regarding the measurement of groundwater levels for purposes of
44 determining groundwater preservation amounts and methods.

45 Section 2. Section **17-79-621** is enacted to read:

46 **17-79-621 . Groundwater and land use decisions.**

- 47 (1) As used in this section:
- 48 (a) "Agricultural land" means land that, for at least six years during the 10-year period
49 immediately before when a land use decision is made, is land in agricultural use as
50 defined in Section 59-2-502.
- 51 (b) "Groundwater preservation amounts and methods" means an amount or method used
52 to preserve the level of groundwater traditionally measured for the groundwater
53 subsurface area associated with the agricultural land.
- 54 (2) If agricultural land would be put to a use other than agricultural use because of a
55 development, a land use authority shall consider groundwater preservation amounts and
56 methods in determining whether to approve a land use application or issue a land use
57 permit related to the development.
- 58 (3) In considering a groundwater preservation method, a land use authority may consider
59 requiring the use of:
- 60 (a) land irrigation;
- 61 (b) a flood basin as a recharge basin;
- 62 (c) an injection well; or
- 63 (d) another available method.
- 64 (4) If requested by a county, the Utah Geological Survey shall provide information to the

65 county regarding the measurement of groundwater levels for purposes of determining
66 groundwater preservation amounts and methods.

67 Section 3. **Effective Date.**

68 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.