

Permits

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 EPD now must sift through a backlog of more than 1,100 applications for irrigation permits in the Flint River basin. According to Early County Extension director Brian Cresswell, approximately 80 Early County farmers are affected by the plan. He also stated that approximately 54 of the backlogged permits are those of Early County farmers.

The goals of the plan, as defined by statute, are to promote conservation and reuse of water, guard against a shortage of water, promote the efficient use of water resources, and manage the water resources of the Flint River Basin such that they are sustainable and consistent with the

public welfare.

Future applications for southwest Georgia farm irrigation permits could undergo much stricter scrutiny.

If passed, Senate Bill 191 would allow the EPD director to revoke future irrigation permits in the Flint River basin that aren't being used.

Permitting decisions will be based on the requested amount of water, the connections between groundwater and surface water as determined by computer models, the impact of water withdrawals on stream flows and the presence of endangered or threatened species.

The EPD study shows that the most pressing danger during droughts is to

the river's major tributaries, specifically Spring Creek and Ichawaynochaway Creek. The Flint River Basin Regional Water Development and Conservation Plan, which cost \$7.5 million, can be viewed online at www.gadnr.org

EPD regional water planner Rob McDowell said the seven-year study taught the state that heavy irrigation pumping has only localized effects, but that about 10 percent of the lower Flint River is already maxed out. Additional permits in areas already at capacity will only be issued to farmers willing to drill deeper — below the Floridan aquifer — to tap other groundwater supplies, McDowell said.

Ag week

From page 1
 Agriculture Advisory Commission brings together members of various sectors within the agricultural community to act as a sounding board for economic development ideas and to implement the Governor's agriculture strategies and initiatives.

The commission is divided into four subcommittees — economic development and retention, education, envi-

ronmental, and agriculture awareness. One of the recommendations of the commission was to distribute materials to fifth grade classes across Georgia for use during National Agriculture awareness Week to create lesson plans highlighting Georgia's agricultural history, agriscience and technology, and careers in agriculture.

Georgia has one of the nation's most vital and

diversified farm economies, leading the country in the production of poultry, pecans, peanuts, eggs and forestry products.

Georgia consistently ranks as a top producer of watermelons, rye, peaches, sweet potatoes and cotton and is home to the world famous Vidalia onion.

Tips

From page 1
 • Set time limits on surfing and restrict most computer use for specific purposes, such as school work.
 • Consider installing soft-

ware that monitors Internet surfing.

For more safety tips go to WiredKids.org and www.wiredsafety.org.

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Historical cemetery walk to be held in Columbia

The Columbia Historical will be taking visitors back in time this weekend when they present "Walk In History: Columbia Cemetery" March 25 and 26.

Saturday's program begins at 7 p.m. Visitors will hear stories about the long history of the oldest town in Southeast Alabama during an eerie night-time walk through the cemetery.

The Sunday afternoon program begins at 2 p.m. allowing visitors to see the many beautiful monuments in the 167 year-old cemetery.

The historical stories of the community's people will include one about a merchant who purchased a large shipment of clothing from New York, unwittingly bringing a serious disease

to the community, and about a young John T. Davis who worked for the merchant.

There will also be the sad love story from 1897 when a groom-to-be dropped a bombshell. And the story of William J. McGriff will answer many questions about the Columbia Cemetery.

And a husband and wife's lives and their interest and dedication to the community will be depicted, a story which will be of special interest to all who remember them.

Tickets to the programs are \$7 for visitors 10 and older. Tickets will be available at the cemetery entrance.

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Bridal Registry

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Shemekia Mackeroy Christopher Thornton March 4	Brooke Cox Brandon Fulford April 29	Talia Harrell Michael Stewart June 10	Emily Scott Freddie Odum July 8
Cara Lee St. Martin Robert Puckett Franklin March 4	Jeanna Clinkscales Sam Purdy May 6	Jamie Cannon Bill Sharpton June 24	Kathleen Rogers Joey Cazenavette July 22
Catinia Blocker Frank Hardrick March 10	Dea Houston Justin Durden May 13		
Abby Hattaway Robert Hopkins March 11	Katie Naramore Steven Bonner May 20		
Jessica Harris Joey Miller March 25	Heather Gee Will Chandler June 10		



Baby Registry
 Brittany Blocker
 Eve Vickers-Smith

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