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IFAS EXTENSION

Handbook of Florida Water Regulation: Florida Department of Health¹

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Preface

This handbook is designed to provide an accurate, current, and authoritative summary of the principle Federal and Florida laws that directly or indirectly relate to agriculture. This handbook should provide a basic overview of the many rights and responsibilities that farmers and farmland owners have under both Federal and Florida laws as well as the appropriate contact information to obtain more detailed information. However, the reader should be aware that because the laws, administrative rulings, and court decisions on which this handbook is based are subject to constant revision, portions of this publication could become outdated at anytime. Several details of cited laws are also left out due to space limitations.

This handbook is distributed with the understanding that the authors are not engaged in rendering legal or other professional advice, and the information contained herein should not be regarded as a substitute for professional advice. This handbook is not all inclusive in providing information to

achieve compliance with the Federal and Florida laws and regulations governing water protection. For these reasons, the use of these materials by any person constitutes an agreement to hold harmless the authors, the Florida Cooperative Extension Service, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, and the University of Florida for any liability claims, damages, or expenses that may be incurred by any person as a result of reference to or reliance on the information contained in this handbook.

Overview

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) is largely responsible for implementing procedures to promote and protect public health and safety. Farmers must be concerned with DOH when they are involved in activities that might pollute public drinking supplies. Of particular concern to the agency is sewage pollution of Florida's groundwater.

The department issues permits for construction or installation of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems. These permits include requirements for the following:

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- Distance and set backs from wells and surface waters.
- Soil conditions.
- Estimated seasonal high water table.

Daily flow thresholds (see FE614, Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal).

Written permits issued through the local county health department branch of the DOH are required prior to constructing any onsite sewage treatment and disposal system. Unlawful deposition of filth or polluting substances can be punished by DOH.

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