

The Florida Handbook of Solid and Hazardous Waste Regulation: Local Government Structuring¹

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What do I need to know about local governments?

The laws of local governments are called ordinances. These local laws have the authority of the state behind them, and you can be prosecuted for violating them, much the same as with state laws. Local governments have procedural protections similar to those of the state, but these may vary among the local governments. The legislature can also affect local policy and issues through the passage of special laws that apply only to a certain locale.

What is the structure of local government?

The structure of local government varies. Elected commissions usually head counties and cities. These commissions are the authority of the local government and just as the state and federal legislatures delegate the details, so do local commissions. Usually, running the day-to-day aspects of government is delegated to a professional manager and/or local agencies. As a result, these agencies may have the

power to make decisions that would otherwise be made by the commission.

How are local governments involved in waste management?

Local governments are very involved in waste management. They frequently administer collection and disposal facilities. In addition, each county:

- has a resource recovery and management program
- performs hazardous waste assessments on a regular basis
- maintains records of small quantity generators
- is involved with a Regional Planning Council, or RPC (RPCs coordinate on many issues, including waste management)

Although Local Emergency Planning Committees are not directly involved with local governments, they do play an important part in waste management by being responsible for the following:

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- developing emergency plans for dealing with spills
- coordinating local and state authorities under federal and state right-to-know laws

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