

UPCOMING CHANGES TO SEPTIC SYSTEMS IN FLORIDA

There are currently more than 2.7 million septic tanks buried in Florida providing wastewater disposal for 30 percent of the state's population. An estimated half of these septic tanks are over 30 years old. State officials estimate that 9.5 percent of septic tanks throughout Florida are continuously failing and are in dire need of repair, presenting a significant and growing threat to water quality in the state.

To help address the water quality problems being created by these failing systems, the Florida Legislature passed comprehensive environmental protection legislation in 2023 that supports the goals of **Executive Order 23-06** (Achieving Even More Now for Florida's Environment). These policies contain various dates and deadlines that impact the use of existing and new septic systems in Florida. The purposes of these changes are to build on Florida's historic investments and accomplishments over the last four years in advancing the protection of the state's environmental resources.

It is vital that Realtors® in Florida understand these septic system policy changes so they can advise their clients appropriately before, during and after the real estate transaction process.

DEFINITIONS AND HELPFUL RESOURCES



ENHANCED NUTRIENT-REDUCING SYSTEMS – are advanced septic systems that reduce nitrogen better than conventional septic systems. They can also be referred to as a “nitrogen-reducing system”. These systems meet an overall 65% nitrogen-reducing standard. There are three types of these systems: aerobic treatment units; nitrogen-reducing performance-based treatment systems, and inground nitrogen-reducing biofilters.



BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (BMAP) is a framework for water quality restoration that contains local and state commitments to reduce pollutant loading through current and future projects and strategies. BMAPs contain a comprehensive set of solutions, such as permit limits on wastewater facilities, urban and agricultural best management practices, and conservation programs designed to achieve pollutant reductions established by a total maximum daily load.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLANS serve as a blueprint for future commercial and residential land uses, housing, and conservation, as well as cultural and recreational amenities. An important component of the comprehensive plan is identifying the new infrastructure and growth demands needed to support the future physical and economic development of the community.



ON-SITE SEPTIC TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL VARIANCE BOARD for persons who apply for an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system (OSTDS) construction permit but cannot meet the requirements of the rule or statute will have their permit denied and may request a variance from the standards.

IMPORTANT DATES TO KNOW

Changes Impacting the Indian River Lagoon Area

JANUARY 1, 2024

Start date for prohibition on the installation of new septic systems (if not previously) where sewer is available.

JULY 1, 2030

Deadline for existing septic systems to connect to central sewer or upgrade to enhanced nutrient-reducing system.

Changes Impacting Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP)/ Reasonable Assurance Plan Areas

JANUARY 1, 2033

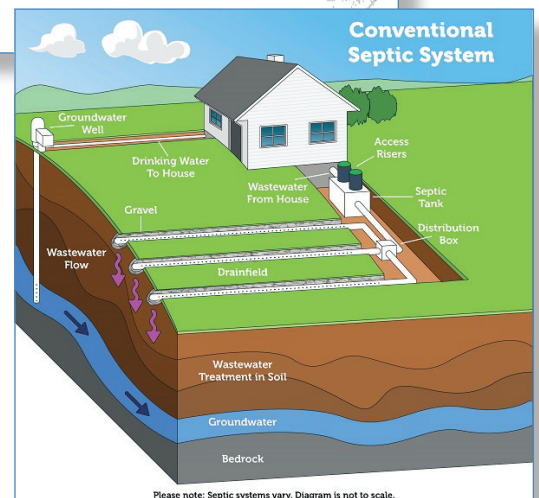
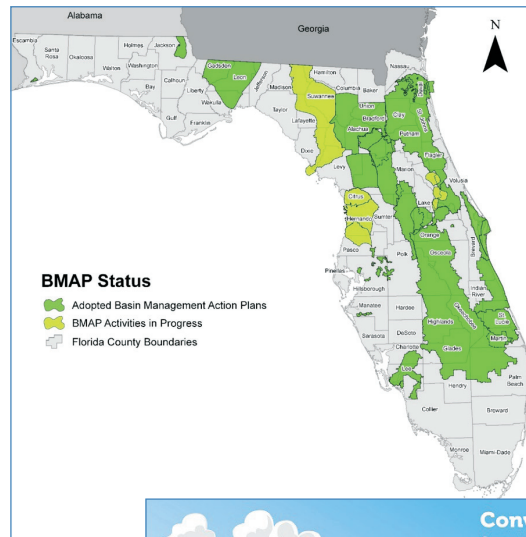
All wastewater facilities discharging to an impaired waterway must be upgraded to Advanced Wastewater Treatment.

New construction on lots 1 acre or less will be required to connect to central sewer if available, or upgrade to enhanced nutrient-reducing system if unavailable.

Local Government Long-term Comprehensive Planning

JULY 1, 2024

Deadline for all comprehensive plans to be updated with new sanitary sewer requirements.



Please note: Septic systems vary. Diagram is not to scale.



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