

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 73 Environmental Regulation
SPONSOR(S): Overdorf
TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 326

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee	14 Y, 0 N	Melkun	Moore
2) Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) State Affairs Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Recyclable Materials and Contamination

Counties must implement a recyclable materials recycling program within their boundaries and are encouraged to work with municipalities to do so. Contamination of recyclable material occurs when residents place materials that are not recyclable into curbside recycling bins. While facilities are equipped to handle some non-recyclable materials, excessive contamination can undermine the recycling process and result in increased costs due to equipment downtime, repair, or replacement needs. In addition to increased recycling processing costs, contamination also results in poorer quality recyclables, increased rejection, and landfilling of unusable materials. Counties and municipalities may contract with private companies to operate their recycling programs. If they do so, current law does not require the contracts to address contamination of recyclable materials.

The bill requires counties and municipalities to address non-hazardous contamination of recyclable materials in contracts with residential recycling collectors and recovered materials processing facilities. Contracts executed or renewed after October 1, 2020, must define the term "contaminated recyclable material" in a manner that is appropriate for the local community; include strategies and obligations of the parties to reduce the amount of contaminated recyclable material being collected or processed; create procedures for identifying, documenting, managing, and rejecting contaminated recyclable materials; authorize remedies in handling contaminated containers; and provide education and enforcement measures for collection contracts.

Environmental Resource Permits

State law allows water management districts and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to impose reasonable conditions and require environmental resource permits (ERP) to ensure certain construction activities comply with the law and will not harm water resources. Some projects can be exempted from ERP permitting if the project meets specific statutory restrictions, and local governments may require an applicant to submit proof of the exception. An ERP exception exists for the replacement or repair of a dock or pier in the same location and under specific conditions. The exception allows for minor deviations to upgrade the dock or pier to current structural and design standards.

The bill prohibits local governments from requiring further verification from DEP that a particular construction activity meets an ERP permit exception. In addition, the bill revises the ERP exception for the replacement or repair of existing docks and piers to allow for the repair or replacement if it is within five feet of the same location and no larger than the existing dock or pier, and no additional aquatic resources are adversely and permanently impacted.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Recyclable Materials and Contamination

Present Situation

Recycling is any process by which solid waste¹ or materials that would otherwise become solid waste are collected, separated, or processed and then reused or returned to use in the form of raw materials or intermediate or final products.² Recyclable materials are materials that are capable of being recycled and would otherwise be processed or disposed of as solid waste.³

Local Government Recycling Programs

Each county is required to implement a recyclable materials recycling program with a goal of recycling 60 percent of recyclable solid waste by December 31, 2016; 70 percent by December 31, 2018; and 75 percent by December 31, 2020 (recycling goal).⁴ To assess the progress in meeting the recycling goal, counties must provide information to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding their annual solid waste management program and recycling activities by April 1 of each year.⁵

Counties and municipalities are encouraged to form cooperative agreements for implementing recycling programs.⁶ Recycling programs must recycle a significant portion of at least four of the following materials from the solid waste stream prior to final disposal at a solid waste disposal facility: newspaper, aluminum cans, steel cans, glass, plastic bottles, cardboard, office paper, and yard trash.⁷ Counties and municipalities are also encouraged to separate all plastics, metal, and all grades of paper for recycling prior to final disposal and are further encouraged to recycle yard trash and other mechanically treated solid waste into compost available for agricultural and other acceptable uses.⁸

Local Government Contracting for Solid Waste

A county or municipality may enter into a written agreement with other entities to fulfill some or all of its solid waste responsibilities.⁹ In developing and implementing recycling programs, counties and municipalities are required to consider having the collection, marketing, and disposition of recyclable materials conducted by entities engaged in the business of recycling.¹⁰ Counties and municipalities are encouraged to use both for-profit and nonprofit organizations in fulfilling their solid waste responsibilities.¹¹

Curbside Recyclable Materials Collection

In developing and implementing a curbside recyclable materials collection program, a county or municipality must first negotiate with any franchisee operating to exclusively collect solid waste within a

¹ Section 403.703(36), F.S., defines “solid waste” as sludge unregulated under the federal Clean Water Act or Clean Air Act, sludge from a waste treatment works, water supply treatment plant, or air pollution control facility, or garbage, rubbish, refuse, special waste, or other discarded material, including solid, liquid, semisolid, or contained gaseous material resulting from domestic, industrial, commercial, mining, agricultural, or governmental operations.

² Section 403.703(31), F.S.

³ Section 403.703(30), F.S.

⁴ Section 403.706(2)(a), F.S.

⁵ Section 403.706(7), F.S.

⁶ Section 403.706(2), F.S.

⁷ Section 403.706(2)(f), F.S.

⁸ Section 403.706(2)(g), F.S.

⁹ Section 403.706(8), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 403.706(10), F.S.

¹¹ *Id.*

service area of the county or municipality.¹² If, within 60 days, the county or municipality and franchisee fail to reach an agreement under which the franchisee undertakes the county or municipality's curbside recyclable materials collection responsibilities, the county or municipality may solicit proposals (Requests for Proposals, or RFPs) from other entities. The county or municipality may undertake, or enter into an agreement with the entity that submitted the lowest responsible proposal to undertake, the curbside recyclable materials collection responsibilities for the county or municipality notwithstanding the exclusivity of the franchise agreement.¹³

Contamination of Recyclable Material

Contamination of recyclable material occurs when residents place materials that are not recyclable into curbside recycling bins (e.g., plastic bags, Styrofoam peanuts, and other thin plastics).¹⁴ While a material recovery facility is equipped to handle some non-recyclable materials, excessive contamination can undermine the recycling process resulting in additional sorting, processing, energy consumption, and other increased costs due to equipment downtime, repair, or replacement needs.¹⁵ In addition to increased recycling processing costs, contamination also results in poorer quality recyclables, increased rejection, and landfilling of unusable materials.¹⁶ Some local governments have contamination rates reaching more than 30-40 percent by weight.¹⁷

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill requires counties and municipalities to address the contamination of recyclable material in contracts for the collection, transportation, and processing of residential recyclable material. Counties and municipalities may not require residential recycling collectors or recovered materials processing facilities to collect or process contaminated recyclable material except pursuant to a contract.

The bill defines a "residential recycling collector" as a for-profit business entity that collects and transports residential recyclable material on behalf of a county or municipality.

The bill requires each contract to define the term "contaminated recyclable material" in a manner that is appropriate for the local community, taking into consideration available markets for recyclable material, available waste composition studies, and other relevant factors.

The bill requires county and municipality contracts, RFPs, and other solicitations with residential recycling collectors to include:

- Respective strategies and obligations of the county or municipality and the residential recycling collector to reduce the amount of contaminated recyclable material being collected;
- Procedures for identifying, documenting, managing, and rejecting residential recycling containers, truck loads, carts, or bins that contain contaminated recyclable material;
- Authorized remedies if a container, cart, or bin contains contaminated recyclable material; and
- Education and enforcement measures to reduce the amount of contaminated recyclable material.

The bill requires county and municipal contracts, RFPs, and other solicitations with a recovered materials processing facility to include:

- Respective strategies and obligations of the county or municipality and the facility to reduce the amount of contaminated recyclable material being collected and processed;
- Procedures for identifying, documenting, managing, and rejecting residential recycling containers, truck loads, carts, or bins that contain contaminated recyclable material; and

¹² Section 403.706(9), F.S.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ See DEP, *Florida and the 2020 75% Recycling Goal – Volume 1 Report* (Dec 2017), p. 11, available at https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/FinalRecyclingReportVolume1_0_0.pdf (last visited Oct. 1, 2019).

¹⁵ *Id.* at 13.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*

- Authorized remedies if a container or truck load contains contaminated recyclable material.

The bill clarifies that the term “contaminated recyclable material” refers to recyclable material that is comingled or mixed with solid waste or other nonhazardous material and not “contamination” as used in ch. 376, F.S. (pollutant discharge) or other sections of ch. 403, F.S., related to hazardous waste remediation.

The bill specifies that these new contract requirements apply to contracts executed or renewed after October 1, 2020.

Verification of Environmental Resource Permit Exemptions

Present Situation

State law provides that a water management district (WMD) or DEP may require an environmental resource permit (ERP) and impose reasonable conditions necessary to assure the construction or alteration of any stormwater management system,¹⁸ dam,¹⁹ impoundment,²⁰ reservoir,²¹ appurtenant work,²² or works²³ complies with state law and applicable rules, and will not be harmful to water resources.²⁴ A person proposing such construction or alteration must apply to the WMD or DEP for an ERP permit authorizing the construction or alteration. The application must contain the applicant’s name and address; the name and address of the owner of the land where the works are to be constructed; a legal description of the land; location of the work; sketches of construction; name and address of the person who prepared the plans and specifications of construction and the person who will construct the proposed work; general purpose of the proposed work; and other information as DEP or the WMD may require.²⁵

Notice Requirements for ERP Applications and Intended Agency Action

After receiving an application for an ERP permit, DEP or the WMD must send a notice of receipt of permit application to anyone who filed a written request for notification of any pending applications affecting the particular designated area. The notice must contain the applicant’s name and address; a brief description of the proposed activity, including any mitigation; the location of the proposed activity, including whether it is located within an Outstanding Florida Water or aquatic preserve; a map identifying the location of the proposed activity; a depiction of the proposed activity; a name or number identifying the application and the office where the application can be inspected; and any other information required by rule.²⁶

DEP or the WMD may also publish, or require an applicant to publish at the applicant’s expense, in a newspaper of general circulation within the affected area, a notice of receipt of the application and a

¹⁸ Section 373.403(10), F.S., defines “stormwater management system” to mean a system which is designed and constructed or implemented to control discharges which are necessitated by rainfall events, incorporating methods to collect, convey, store, absorb, inhibit, treat, use, or reuse water to prevent or reduce flooding, overdrainage, environmental degradation, and water pollution or otherwise affect the quantity and quality of discharges from the system.

¹⁹ Section 373.403(1), F.S., defines “dam” to mean any artificial or natural barrier, with appurtenant works, raised to obstruct or impound, or which does obstruct or impound, any of the surface waters of the state.

²⁰ Section 373.403(3), F.S., defines “impoundment” to mean any lake, reservoir, pond, or other containment of surface water occupying a bed or depression in the earth’s surface and having a discernible shoreline.

²¹ Section 373.403(4), F.S., defines “reservoir” to mean any artificial or natural holding area which contains or will contain the water impounded by a dam.

²² Section 373.403(2), F.S., defines “appurtenant works” to mean any artificial improvements to a dam which might affect the safety of such dam or, when employed, might affect the holding capacity of such dam or of the reservoir or impoundment created by such dam.

²³ Section 373.403(5), F.S., defines “works” to mean all artificial structures, including, but not limited to, ditches, canals, conduits, channels, culverts, pipes, and other construction that connects to, draws water from, drains water into, or is placed in or across the waters in the state.

²⁴ Section 373.413(1), F.S.

²⁵ Section 373.413(2), F.S.

²⁶ Section 373.413(3), F.S.

notice of intended agency action. DEP or the WMD must provide notice of this intended agency action to the applicant and to anyone who requested a copy of the intended agency action for that specific application.²⁷

Types and Duration of ERPs

General permits are issued for certain activities determined to have minimal adverse environmental effects to the water resources of the state when conducted in compliance with the terms and conditions of the permit.²⁸ Individual permits are required for activities that do not qualify for a general permit.²⁹ Individual permits are issued for five years, but an applicant may request a longer permit duration by providing reasonable assurance that the project cannot reasonably be expected to be completed within five years after commencement of construction, and the impacts of the activity, considering its nature, the size of the project, and any required mitigation, can be accurately assessed and offset where appropriate, and the terms of the permit can be met for the duration of the requested permit.³⁰

A permittee may also request to extend the duration of an individual permit. The request must be granted under certain conditions if the request is received by DEP or the WMD before the permit expires. A request to extend the permit for up to five years is processed as a minor modification of the permit and is not subject to public notification requirements.³¹

ERP Permitting Exceptions

Current law provides exceptions from ERP³² permitting for certain types of projects.³³ Generally, these permit exceptions restrict how the project is undertaken, provide size and location requirements, or provide for maintenance, repair, or replacement of existing structures.³⁴ These exceptions do not relieve an applicant from obtaining permission to use or occupy lands owned by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund or a WMD or from complying with local pollution control programs or other requirements of local governments.³⁵

A local government, as part of its permitting process, may require applicants to provide verification from DEP that the activity qualifies for an exception from ERP permitting requirements. To expedite this process, DEP developed an online self-certification process for individuals to verify whether the activity falls within an exception.³⁶ Currently, there is no fee for using the online self-certification process, but DEP is authorized to charge a \$100 fee to determine if an activity falls within an exception.³⁷

Dock and Pier Replacement and Repair ERP Exception

An exception from ERP permitting applies for the replacement or repair of existing docks and piers if fill³⁸ material is not used and the replacement or repaired dock or pier is in the same location and of the same configuration and dimensions as the dock or pier being replaced or repaired. The exception

²⁷ Section 373.413(4), F.S.

²⁸ Section 403.814(1), F.S.

²⁹ Rule 62-330.054(1), F.A.C.

³⁰ Rule 62-330.320(2), F.A.C.; r. 62-330.010, F.A.C., *Environmental Resource Permit Applicant's Handbook Volume I*, 6.1.2.2 (June 1, 2018).

³¹ Rule 62-330.315(2), F.A.C.

³² See chs. 373 and 403, F.S.

³³ Section 403.813(1), F.S.

³⁴ See s. 403.813(1)(a)-(v), F.S.

³⁵ Section 403.813(1), F.S.

³⁶ DEP, *Submitting an ERP*, available at <https://floridadep.gov/water/submerged-lands-environmental-resources-coordination/content/submitting-erp> (last visited Oct. 2, 2019).

³⁷ DEP, *Submitting an ERP*, available at <https://floridadep.gov/water/submerged-lands-environmental-resources-coordination/content/submitting-erp> (last visited Oct. 2, 2019); see also r. 62-4.050(4)(e)9., F.A.C.

³⁸ Section 373.403(14), F.S., defines “filling” to mean the deposition, by any means, of materials in surface waters or wetlands, as delineated in s. 373.421(1), F.S.

allows the use of different construction materials or minor deviations to allow upgrades to current structural and design standards.³⁹

Other ERP permit exceptions that allow for repair or replacement also require the repair or replacement to be of the same configuration, location, length, and dimensions. These include the repair or replacement of stormwater pipes or culverts,⁴⁰ open-trestle foot bridges and vehicular bridges that are 100 feet or less in length and two lanes or less in width,⁴¹ and insect control impoundment dikes, which are less than 100 feet in length.⁴² Another ERP exception, regarding the restoration of seawalls, allows for the restoration of the seawall to take place at the previous location or upland of, or within 18 inches waterward of, the previous location.⁴³

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill prohibits local governments from requiring further verification from DEP that a particular construction activity meets an ERP permit exception.

The bill removes the requirement that a dock or pier replacement or repair remain in the same location and be of the same configuration and dimensions as the existing dock or pier. The bill provides that an ERP exception for the replacement or repair of an existing dock or pier is allowed if the replaced or repaired dock is within five feet of the same location and is no larger in size than the existing dock or pier, and there are no additional aquatic resources that are adversely and permanently impacted by the replacement or repair.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Amends s. 403.706, F.S., requiring counties and municipalities to address the contamination of recyclable material in contracts for the collection, transportation, and processing of residential recyclable material.

Section 2. Amends s. 403.813, F.S., prohibiting a local government from requiring proof from DEP of an ERP exception and removing the requirement that a dock or pier replacement or repair remain in the same location and be of the same configuration and dimensions as the existing dock or pier.

Section 3. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2020.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

³⁹ Section 403.813(1)(d), F.S.

⁴⁰ Section 403.813(1)(h), F.S.

⁴¹ Section 403.813(1)(l), F.S.

⁴² Section 403.813(1)(p), F.S.

⁴³ Section 403.813(1)(e), F.S.

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

The bill may have a negative fiscal impact on local governments that must negotiate new required contract terms, including defining "contaminated recyclable materials," with residential recycling collectors and recovered materials processing facilities.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

The bill may have a positive fiscal impact on the private sector because residential recycling collectors are not required to collect or transport contaminated recyclable materials and recovered materials processing facilities are not required to process contaminated recyclable materials except pursuant to contract terms provided by the bill. This could decrease machinery issues and thereby save on costs of repair.

The bill may have a positive fiscal impact on the private sector by prohibiting a local government from requiring verification from DEP of an ERP exception. The bill may also have a positive fiscal impact on the private sector by expanding the permit exception for the replacement or repair of existing docks and piers if it results in more docks being built or repaired.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to require counties or municipalities to spend funds or take action requiring the expenditure of funds; reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenues in the aggregate; or reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill would require DEP to update its existing handbook to incorporate the new exemption as well as the self-certification instructions; however, DEP possesses sufficient rulemaking authority to adopt rules to comply with the statutory changes.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.