

(m) An identification of lands needed to protect or recharge groundwater and a plan for their acquisition as necessary to protect potable water supplies. Lands which serve to protect or recharge groundwater identified pursuant to this paragraph shall also serve to protect other valuable natural resources or provide space for natural resource based recreation.

(5) The list of projects shall indicate the relative significance of each project within the particular water management district's boundaries, and the schedule of activities and sums of money earmarked should reflect those rankings as much as possible over a 5-year planning horizon.

(6) Each district shall remove the property of an unwilling seller from its 5-year work plan at the next scheduled update of the plan, if in receipt of a request to do so by the property owner.

(7) By June 1, 2001, each district shall file with the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Secretary of Environmental Protection the initial 5-year work plan as required under subsection (2). By March 1 of each year thereafter, as part of the consolidated annual report required by s. 373.036(7), each district shall report on acquisitions completed during the year together with modifications or additions to its 5-year work plan. Included in the report shall be:

(a) A description of land management activity for each property or project area owned by the water management district.

(b) A list of any lands surplused and the amount of compensation received.

(c) The progress of funding, staffing, and resource management of every project funded pursuant to former s. 259.101(3), Florida Statutes 2014, s. 259.105, or former s. 373.59(2), Florida Statutes 2014, for which the district is responsible.

The secretary shall submit the report referenced in this subsection to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund together with the Acquisition and Restoration Council's project list as required under s. 259.105.

History.—s. 36, ch. 99-247; s. 16, ch. 2000-170; s. 9, ch. 2005-36; s. 12, ch. 2005-87; s. 17, ch. 2008-229; s. 248, ch. 2011-142; s. 38, ch. 2015-229.

373.200 Seminole Tribe Water Rights Compact.—Pursuant to the provisions of s. 285.165, the South Florida Water Management District is authorized to act in accordance with the Seminole Tribe Water Rights Compact incorporated by reference therein.

History.—s. 6, ch. 2000-133.

PART II

PERMITTING OF CONSUMPTIVE USES OF WATER

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373.203 Definitions.—

- (1) “Abandoned artesian well” is defined as an artesian well:
- (a) That does not have a properly functioning valve;
 - (b) The use of which has been permanently discontinued;
 - (c) That does not meet current well construction standards;
 - (d) That is discharging water containing greater than 500 milligrams per liter of chlorides into a drinking water aquifer;
 - (e) That is in such a state of disrepair that it cannot be used for its intended purpose without having an adverse impact upon an aquifer which serves as a source of drinking water or which is likely to be such a source in the future; or
 - (f) That does not have proper flow control on or below the land surface.
- (2) An “artesian well” is defined as an artificial hole in the ground from which water supplies may be obtained and which penetrates any water-bearing rock, the water in which is raised to the surface by natural flow, or which rises to an elevation above the top of the water-bearing bed. “Artesian wells” are defined further to include all holes, drilled as a source of water, that penetrate any water-bearing beds that are a part of the artesian water system of Florida, as determined by representatives of the Florida Geological Survey or the Department of Environmental Protection.
- (3) “Plugging” is defined as plugging, capping, or otherwise controlling a well as deemed appropriate by the department or by the appropriate water management district.
- (4) “Waste” is defined to be the causing, suffering, or permitting any water flowing from, or being pumped from, an artesian well to run into any river, creek, or other natural watercourse or channel, or into any bay or pond (unless used thereafter for the beneficial purposes of irrigation of land, mining, or other industrial purposes of domestic use), or into any street, road or highway, or upon the land of any person, or upon the public lands of the United States or of the state, unless it is used thereon for the beneficial purposes of the irrigation thereof, industrial purposes, domestic use, or the propagation of fish. The use of any water flowing from an artesian well for the irrigation of land shall be restricted to a minimum by the use of proper structural devices in the irrigation system.

History.— ss. 3, 4, ch. 28253, 1953; s. 1, ch. 59-248; ss. 25, 35, ch. 69-106; s. 25, ch. 73-190; s. 44, ch. 79-65; s. 6, ch. 83-310; s. 261, ch. 94-356.

Note.— Former ss. 370.051, 373.021.

373.206 Artesian wells; flow regulated.— Every person, stock company, association, corporation, county, or municipality owning or controlling the real estate upon which is located a flowing artesian well in this state shall, within 90 days after June 15, 1953, provide each such well with a valve capable of controlling the discharge from the well and shall keep the valve so adjusted that only a supply of water is available which is necessary for ordinary use

by the owner, tenant, occupant, or person in control of the land for personal use and for conducting his or her business. Upon the determination by the Department of Environmental Protection or the appropriate water management district that the water in an artesian well is of such poor quality as to have an adverse impact upon an aquifer or other water body which serves as a source of public drinking water or which is likely to be such a source in the future, such well shall be plugged in accordance with department or appropriate water management district specifications for well plugging.

History.—s. 1, ch. 28253, 1953; s. 1, ch. 65-460; ss. 25, 35, ch. 69-106; s. 25, ch. 73-190; s. 45, ch. 79-65; s. 7, ch. 83-310; s. 262, ch. 94-356; s. 1009, ch. 95-148.

Note.—Former ss. 370.052, 373.031.

373.207 Abandoned artesian wells.— Each water management district shall develop a work plan which identifies the location of all known abandoned artesian wells within its jurisdictional boundaries and defines the actions which the district must take in order to ensure that each such well is plugged on or before January 1, 1992. The work plan shall include the following:

- (1) An initial inventory which accounts for all known abandoned artesian wells in the district.
- (2) The location and owner of each known abandoned well.
- (3) The methodology proposed by the district to accomplish the plugging of all known abandoned wells within the district on or before January 1, 1992.
- (4) Data relating to costs to be incurred for the plugging of all wells, including the per-well cost and personnel costs.
- (5) A schedule of priority for the plugging of wells, which schedule is established to mitigate damage to the groundwater resource due to water quality degradation.

History.—s. 8, ch. 83-310; s. 263, ch. 94-356; s. 10, ch. 2005-36.

373.209 Artesian wells; penalties for violation.—

- (1) No owner, tenant, occupant, or person in control of an artesian well shall knowingly and intentionally:
 - (a) Allow the well to flow continuously without a valve or mechanical device for checking or controlling the flow.
 - (b) Permit the water to flow unnecessarily.
 - (c) Pump a well unnecessarily.
 - (d) Permit the water from the well to go to waste.
- (2) A well is exempt from the provisions of this section unless the Department of Environmental Protection can show that the uncontrolled flow of water from the well does not have a reasonable-beneficial use, as defined in s. 373.019.
- (3) Any person who violates any provision of this section shall be subject to either:
 - (a) The remedial measures provided for in s. 373.436; or
 - (b) A civil penalty of \$100 a day for each and every day of such violation and for each and every act of violation. The civil penalty may be recovered by the water management board of the water management district in which the well is located or by the department in a suit in a court of competent jurisdiction in the county where the defendant resides, in the county of residence of any defendant if there is more than one defendant, or in the county where the violation took place. The place of suit shall be selected by the board or department, and the suit, by direction of the board or department, shall be instituted and conducted in the name of the board or department by appropriate counsel. The payment of any such damages does not impair or abridge any cause of action which any person may have against the person violating any provision of this section.
- (4) The penalties provided by this section shall apply notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary.

History.—s. 2, ch. 28253, 1953; s. 323, ch. 71-136; s. 25, ch. 73-190; s. 1, ch. 74-279; s. 46, ch. 79-65; s. 146, ch. 79-400; s. 264, ch. 94-356; s. 93, ch. 95-143; s. 8, ch. 98-88.

Note.—Former ss. 370.053, 373.041.

373.213 Certain artesian wells exempt.— Nothing in ss. 373.203, 373.206, 373.209, or this section shall be construed to apply to an artesian well feeding a lake already in existence prior to June 15, 1953, which lake is used or intended to

be used for public bathing and/or the propagation of fish, where the continuous flow of water is necessary to maintain its purity for bathing and the water level of said lake for fish.

History.—s. 6, ch. 28253, 1953; s. 25, ch. 73-190; s. 167, ch. 99-13.

Note.—Former ss. 370.055, 373.061.

373.216 Implementation of program for regulating the consumptive use of water.—The governing board of each water management district shall, no later than October 31, 1983, implement a program for the issuance of permits authorizing the consumptive use of particular quantities of water covering those areas deemed appropriate by the governing board. Appropriate monitoring efforts shall be a part of any such program implemented. Notice of any required hearing on the proposed implementation of these regulations shall be published at least once a week for 2 weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the area to be affected by such regulations, the last notice appearing no less than 10 days prior to the date of the public hearing, in addition to any notice required by chapter 120.

History.—s. 1, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 8, ch. 73-190; s. 14, ch. 78-95; s. 8, ch. 82-101.

373.217 Superseded laws and regulations.—

(1) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide a means whereby reasonable programs for the issuance of permits authorizing the consumptive use of particular quantities of water may be authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection, subject to judicial review and also subject to review by the Governor and Cabinet, sitting as the Land and Water Adjudicatory Commission as provided in s. 373.114.

(2) It is the further intent of the Legislature that Part II of the Florida Water Resources Act of 1972, as amended, as set forth in ss. 373.203-373.249, shall provide the exclusive authority for requiring permits for the consumptive use of water and for authorizing transportation thereof pursuant to s. 373.223(2).

(3) If any provision of Part II of the Florida Water Resources Act of 1972, as amended, as set forth in ss. 373.203-373.249, is in conflict with any other provision, limitation, or restriction which is now in effect under any law or ordinance of this state or any political subdivision or municipality, or any rule or regulation promulgated thereunder, Part II shall govern and control, and such other law or ordinance or rule or regulation promulgated thereunder shall be deemed superseded for the purpose of regulating the consumptive use of water. However, this section shall not be construed to supersede the provisions of the Florida Electrical Power Plant Siting Act.

(4) Other than as provided in subsection (3) of this section, Part II of the Florida Water Resources Act of 1972, as amended, preempts the regulation of the consumptive use of water as defined in this act.

History.—s. 9, ch. 76-243; s. 1, ch. 77-174; s. 265, ch. 94-356.

373.219 Permits required.—

(1) The governing board or the department may require such permits for consumptive use of water and may impose such reasonable conditions as are necessary to assure that such use is consistent with the overall objectives of the district or department and is not harmful to the water resources of the area. However, no permit shall be required for domestic consumption of water by individual users.

(2) In the event that any person shall file a complaint with the governing board or the department that any other person is making a diversion, withdrawal, impoundment, or consumptive use of water not expressly exempted under the provisions of this chapter and without a permit to do so, the governing board or the department shall cause an investigation to be made, and if the facts stated in the complaint are verified the governing board or the department shall order the discontinuance of the use.

(3) For Outstanding Florida Springs, the department shall adopt uniform rules for issuing permits which prevent groundwater withdrawals that are harmful to the water resources and adopt by rule a uniform definition of the term “harmful to the water resources” to provide water management districts with minimum standards necessary to be consistent with the overall water policy of the state. This subsection does not prohibit a water management district from adopting a definition that is more protective of the water resources consistent with local or regional conditions and objectives.

History.—s. 2, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 9, ch. 73-190; s. 9, ch. 2016-1.

373.223 Conditions for a permit.—

(1) To obtain a permit pursuant to the provisions of this chapter, the applicant must establish that the proposed use of water:

- (a) Is a reasonable-beneficial use as defined in s. 373.019;
- (b) Will not interfere with any presently existing legal use of water; and
- (c) Is consistent with the public interest.

(2) The governing board or the department may authorize the holder of a use permit to transport and use ground or surface water beyond overlying land, across county boundaries, or outside the watershed from which it is taken if the governing board or department determines that such transport and use is consistent with the public interest, and no local government shall adopt or enforce any law, ordinance, rule, regulation, or order to the contrary.

(3) Except for the transport and use of water supplied by the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project, and anywhere in the state when the transport and use of water is supplied exclusively for bottled water as defined in s. 500.03(1)(d), any water use permit applications pending as of April 1, 1998, with the Northwest Florida Water Management District and self-suppliers of water for which the proposed water source and area of use or application are located on contiguous private properties, when evaluating whether a potential transport and use of ground or surface water across county boundaries is consistent with the public interest, pursuant to paragraph (1)(c), the governing board or department shall consider:

(a) The proximity of the proposed water source to the area of use or application.

(b) All impoundments, streams, groundwater sources, or watercourses that are geographically closer to the area of use or application than the proposed source, and that are technically and economically feasible for the proposed transport and use.

(c) All economically and technically feasible alternatives to the proposed source, including, but not limited to, desalination, conservation, reuse of nonpotable reclaimed water and stormwater, and aquifer storage and recovery.

(d) The potential environmental impacts that may result from the transport and use of water from the proposed source, and the potential environmental impacts that may result from use of the other water sources identified in paragraphs (b) and (c).

(e) Whether existing and reasonably anticipated sources of water and conservation efforts are adequate to supply water for existing legal uses and reasonably anticipated future needs of the water supply planning region in which the proposed water source is located.

(f) Consultations with local governments affected by the proposed transport and use.

(g) The value of the existing capital investment in water-related infrastructure made by the applicant.

Where districtwide water supply assessments and regional water supply plans have been prepared pursuant to ss. 373.036 and 373.709, the governing board or the department shall use the applicable plans and assessments as the basis for its consideration of the applicable factors in this subsection.

(4) The governing board or the department, by regulation, may reserve from use by permit applicants, water in such locations and quantities, and for such seasons of the year, as in its judgment may be required for the protection of fish and wildlife or the public health and safety. Such reservations shall be subject to periodic review and revision in the light of changed conditions. However, all presently existing legal uses of water shall be protected so long as such use is not contrary to the public interest.

(5) In evaluating an application for consumptive use of water which proposes the use of an alternative water supply project as described in the regional water supply plan and provides reasonable assurances of the applicant's capability to design, construct, operate, and maintain the project, the governing board or department shall presume that the alternative water supply use is consistent with the public interest under paragraph (1)(c). However, where the governing board identifies the need for a multijurisdictional water supply entity or regional water supply authority to develop the alternative water supply project pursuant to s. 373.709(2)(a)2., the presumption shall be accorded only to that use proposed by such entity or authority. This subsection does not affect evaluation of the use pursuant to the provisions of paragraphs (1)(a) and (b), subsections (2) and (3), and ss. 373.2295 and 373.233.

(6) A new consumptive use permit, or the renewal or modification of a consumptive use permit, that authorizes groundwater withdrawals of 100,000 gallons or more per day from a well with an inside diameter of 8 inches or more shall be monitored for water usage at intervals using methods determined by the applicable water management district, and the results of such monitoring shall be reported to the applicable water management district at least annually. The water management districts may adopt rules to implement this subsection. In lieu of the requirements of this subsection, a water management district may enforce rules that govern water usage monitoring in effect on July 1, 2016, or may adopt rules that are more stringent than this subsection.

History.—s. 3, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 10, ch. 73-190; s. 10, ch. 76-243; s. 35, ch. 85-81; s. 4, ch. 98-88; s. 6, ch. 2005-291; s. 15, ch. 2010-205; s. 31, ch. 2015-2; s. 10, ch. 2016-1.

373.2234 Preferred water supply sources.—

(1) The governing board of a water management district is authorized to adopt rules that identify preferred water supply sources for consumptive uses for which there is sufficient data to establish that a preferred source will provide a substantial new water supply to meet the existing and projected reasonable-beneficial uses of a water supply planning region identified pursuant to s. 373.709(1), while sustaining existing water resources and natural systems. At a minimum, such rules must contain a description of the preferred water supply source and an assessment of the water the preferred source is projected to produce.

(2)(a) If an applicant proposes to use a preferred water supply source, that applicant's proposed water use is subject to s. 373.223(1), except that the proposed use of a preferred water supply source must be considered by a water management district when determining whether a permit applicant's proposed use of water is consistent with the public interest pursuant to s. 373.223(1)(c).

(b) The governing board of a water management district shall consider the identification of preferred water supply sources for water users for whom access to or development of new water supplies is not technically or financially feasible. Identification of preferred water supply sources for such water users must be consistent with s. 373.016.

(c) A consumptive use permit issued for the use of a preferred water supply source must be granted, when requested by the applicant, for at least a 20-year period and may be subject to the compliance reporting provisions of s. 373.236(4).

(3)(a) This section does not:

1. Exempt the use of preferred water supply sources from ss. 373.016(4) and 373.223(2) and (3);
2. Provide that permits issued for the use of a nonpreferred water supply source must be issued for a duration of less than 20 years or that the use of a nonpreferred water supply source is not consistent with the public interest; or
3. Require the use of a preferred water supply source or to restrict or prohibit the use of a nonpreferred water supply source.

(b) Rules adopted by the governing board of a water management district to implement this section shall specify that the use of a preferred water supply source is not required and that the use of a nonpreferred water supply source is not restricted or prohibited.

History.—s. 4, ch. 2004-381; s. 6, ch. 2006-255; s. 16, ch. 2010-205; s. 11, ch. 2016-1.

373.2235 Effect of prior land acquisition on consumptive use permitting.— The fact that any applicant has acquired, by the exercise of eminent domain or otherwise, any land for the specific purpose of serving as a site for a wellfield or right-of-way prior to obtaining a consumptive use permit from a water management district does not create any presumption of entitlement to a consumptive use permit. Evidence relating to such prior acquisition of land or right-of-way by any applicant is not admissible in any proceeding related to consumptive use permitting and has no bearing upon any water management district's determination of reasonable beneficial use in the permitting process. In the event that any applicant elects to acquire land prior to obtaining a consumptive use permit from a water management district, such action shall be considered a voluntary risk assumed by the applicant, and the fact of such prior acquisition shall not be admissible in any administrative or judicial proceeding relating to consumptive use permitting under this chapter, including any appeal taken from a water management district decision.

History.—s. 85, ch. 83-310.

373.224 Existing permits.— Any permits or permit agreements for consumptive use of water executed or issued by an existing flood control, water management, or water regulatory district pursuant to this chapter or chapter 378 prior to December 31, 1976, shall remain in full force and effect in accordance with their terms until otherwise modified or revoked as authorized herein.

History.—s. 11, ch. 73-190; s. 3, ch. 75-125.

373.226 Existing uses.—

(1) All existing uses of water, unless otherwise exempted from regulation by the provisions of this chapter, may be continued after adoption of this permit system only with a permit issued as provided herein.

(2) The governing board or the department shall issue an initial permit for the continuation of all uses in existence before the effective date of implementation of this part if the existing use is a reasonable-beneficial use as defined in s. 373.019 and is allowable under the common law of this state.

(3) Application for permit under the provisions of subsection (2) must be made within a period of 2 years from the effective date of implementation of these regulations in an area. Failure to apply within this period shall create a conclusive presumption of abandonment of the use, and the user, if he or she desires to revive the use, must apply for a permit under the provisions of s. 373.229.

History.—s. 4, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 12, ch. 73-190; s. 598, ch. 95-148; s. 9, ch. 98-88.

373.227 Water conservation; legislative findings and intent; objectives; comprehensive statewide water conservation program requirements.—

(1) The Legislature recognizes that the proper conservation of water is an important means of achieving the economical and efficient utilization of water necessary, in part, to constitute a reasonable-beneficial use. The overall water conservation goal of the state is to prevent and reduce wasteful, uneconomical, impractical, or unreasonable use of water resources. The Legislature finds that the social, economic, and cultural conditions of the state relating to the use of public water supply vary by service area and that public water supply utilities must have the flexibility to tailor water conservation measures to best suit their individual circumstances. The Legislature encourages the use of efficient, effective, and affordable water conservation measures. Where water is provided by a public water supply utility, the Legislature intends that a variety of conservation measures be made available and used to encourage efficient water use. To achieve these conservation objectives, the state should emphasize goal-based, accountable, tailored, and measurable water conservation programs for public water supply. For purposes of this section, the term “public water supply utility” includes both publicly owned and privately owned public water supply utilities that sell potable water on a retail basis to end users.

(2) To implement the findings in subsection (1), the department, in cooperation with the water management districts and other stakeholders, shall develop a comprehensive statewide water conservation program for public water supply. The program should:

(a) Encourage utilities to implement water conservation programs that are economically efficient, effective, affordable, and appropriate;

(b) Allow no reduction in, and increase where possible, utility-specific water conservation effectiveness over current programs;

(c) Be goal-based, accountable, measurable, and implemented collaboratively with water suppliers, water users, and water management agencies;

(d) Include cost and benefit data on individual water conservation practices to assist in tailoring practices to be effective for the unique characteristics of particular utility service areas, focusing upon cost-effective measures;

(e) Use standardized public water supply conservation definitions and standardized quantitative and qualitative performance measures for an overall system of assessing and benchmarking the effectiveness of water conservation programs and practices;

(f) Create a clearinghouse or inventory for water conservation programs and practices available to public water supply utilities which will provide an integrated statewide database for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative information on public water supply conservation programs and practices and their

effectiveness. The clearinghouse or inventory should have technical assistance capabilities to aid in the design, refinement, and implementation of water conservation programs and practices. The clearinghouse or inventory shall also provide for continual assessment of the effectiveness of water conservation programs and practices;

(g) Develop a standardized water conservation planning process for utilities; and

(h) Develop and maintain a Florida-specific water conservation guidance document containing a menu of affordable and effective water conservation practices to assist public water supply utilities in the design and implementation of goal-based, utility-specific water conservation plans tailored for their individual service areas as provided in subsection (4).

(3) Regarding the use of water conservation or drought rate structures as a conservation practice, a water management district shall afford a public water supply utility wide latitude in selecting a rate structure and shall limit its review to whether the utility has provided reasonable assurance that the rate structure contains a schedule of rates designed to promote efficient use of water by providing economic incentives. A water management district shall not fix or revise rates.

(4) As part of an application for a consumptive use permit, a public water supply utility may propose a goal-based water conservation plan that is tailored to its individual circumstances. Progress towards goals must be measurable. If the utility provides reasonable assurance that the plan will achieve effective water conservation at least as well as the water conservation requirements adopted by the appropriate water management district and is otherwise consistent with s. 373.223, the district must approve the plan which shall satisfy water conservation requirements imposed as a condition of obtaining a consumptive use permit. The conservation measures included in an approved goal-based water conservation plan may be reviewed periodically and updated as needed to ensure efficient water use for the duration of the permit. If the plan fails to meet the water conservation goal or goals by the timeframes specified in the permit, the public water supply utility shall revise the plan to address the deficiency or employ the water conservation requirements that would otherwise apply in the absence of an approved goal-based plan.

(5) To incentivize water conservation, if actual water use is less than permitted water use due to documented implementation of water conservation measures beyond those required in a consumptive use permit, including, but not limited to, those measures identified in best management practices pursuant to s. 570.93, the permitted allocation may not be modified solely due to such water conservation during the term of the permit. To promote water conservation and the implementation of measures that produce significant water savings beyond those required in a consumptive use permit, each water management district shall adopt rules providing water conservation incentives, which may include limited permit extensions.

(6) For consumptive use permits for agricultural irrigation, if actual water use is less than permitted water use due to weather events, crop diseases, nursery stock availability, market conditions, or changes in crop type, a district may not, as a result, reduce permitted allocation amounts during the term of the permit.

(7) The department or a water management district may adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to carry out the purposes of this section.

History.—s. 8, ch. 2004-381; s. 58, ch. 2013-15; s. 12, ch. 2016-1.

373.228 Landscape irrigation design.—

(1) The Legislature finds that multiple areas throughout the state have been identified by water management districts as water resource caution areas, which indicates that in the near future water demand in those areas will exceed the current available water supply and that conservation is one of the mechanisms by which future water demand will be met.

(2) The Legislature finds that landscape irrigation comprises a significant portion of water use and that current typical landscape irrigation systems and Florida-friendly landscaping designs offer significant potential water conservation benefits.

(3) It is the intent of the Legislature to improve landscape irrigation water use efficiency by ensuring that landscape irrigation systems meet or exceed minimum design criteria.

(4) The water management districts shall work with the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association, the Florida Native Plant Society, the Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Florida

Irrigation Society, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Transportation, the Florida League of Cities, the Florida Association of Counties, and the Florida Association of Community Developers to develop landscape irrigation and Florida-friendly landscaping design standards for new construction which incorporate a landscape irrigation system and develop scientifically based model guidelines for urban, commercial, and residential landscape irrigation, including drip irrigation, for plants, trees, sod, and other landscaping. The standards shall be based on the irrigation code defined in the Florida Building Code, Plumbing Volume, Appendix F. Local governments shall use the standards and guidelines when developing landscape irrigation and Florida-friendly landscaping ordinances. By January 1, 2011, the agencies and entities specified in this subsection shall review the standards and guidelines to determine whether new research findings require a change or modification of the standards and guidelines.

(5) In evaluating water use applications from public water suppliers, water management districts shall consider whether the applicable local government has adopted ordinances for landscaping and irrigation systems consistent with the Florida-friendly landscaping provisions of s. 373.185.

History.—s. 6, ch. 2004-381; s. 13, ch. 2008-150; s. 19, ch. 2009-243.

373.229 Application for permit.—

(1) All permit applications filed with the governing board or the department under this part and notice thereof required under s. 373.116 shall contain:

(a) The name of the applicant and his or her address or, in the case of a corporation, the address of its principal business office;

(b) The date of filing;

(c) The date set for a hearing, if any;

(d) The source of the water supply;

(e) The quantity of water applied for;

(f) The use to be made of the water and any limitation thereon;

(g) The place of use;

(h) The location of the well or point of diversion; and

(i) Such other information as the governing board or the department may deem necessary.

(2) The notice shall state that written objections to the proposed permit may be filed with the governing board or the department by a specified date. The governing board or the department, at its discretion, may request further information from either applicant or objectors, and a reasonable time shall be allowed for such responses.

(3) In addition to the information required in subsection (1), all permit applications filed with the governing board or the department which propose the transport and use of water across county boundaries shall include information pertaining to factors to be considered, pursuant to s. 373.223(3), unless exempt under s. 373.713(9).

(4) If the proposed application is for less than 100,000 gallons per day, the governing board or the department may consider the application and any objections thereto without a hearing. If the proposed application is for 100,000 gallons per day or more and no objection is received, the governing board or the department, after proper investigation by its staff, may, at its discretion, approve the application without a hearing.

History.—s. 5, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 13, ch. 73-190; s. 11, ch. 76-243; s. 1, ch. 77-174; s. 599, ch. 95-148; s. 5, ch. 98-88; s. 17, ch. 2010-205.

373.2295 Interdistrict transfers of groundwater.—

(1) As used in this section, the term “interdistrict transfer and use” means a consumptive water use that involves the withdrawal of groundwater from a point within one water management district for use outside the boundaries of that district, but does not include a withdrawal and use within the same county. In case of withdrawal of groundwater from a point within one water management district for use outside the boundaries of that district but within the same county, the provisions of subsections (4), (11), and (13) shall apply, and the district considering a permit application for such a consumptive use shall apply the applicable provisions of this chapter, and its rules, to the withdrawal and use.

(2) To obtain a permit for an interdistrict transfer and use of groundwater, an applicant must file an application in accordance with s. 373.229 with the water management district having jurisdiction over the area from which the applicant proposes to withdraw groundwater and submit a copy of the application to the water management district having jurisdiction over the area where the water is to be used.

(3) The governing board of the water management district where the groundwater is proposed to be withdrawn shall review the application in accordance with this part, the rules of the district which relate to consumptive water use permitting, and other applicable provisions of this chapter.

(4) In determining if an application is consistent with the public interest as required by s. 373.223, the projected populations, as contained in the future land use elements of the comprehensive plans adopted pursuant to chapter 163 by the local governments within which the withdrawal areas and the proposed use areas are located, will be considered together with other evidence presented on future needs of those areas. If the proposed interdistrict transfer of groundwater meets the requirements of this chapter, and if the needs of the area where the use will occur and the specific area from which the groundwater will be withdrawn can be satisfied, the permit for the interdistrict transfer and use shall be issued.

(5) In addition to other requirements contained in this part, the water management district where the groundwater is proposed to be withdrawn shall:

(a) Furnish copies of any application, information, correspondence, or other related material to the water management district having jurisdiction over the area where the water is to be used; and

(b) Request comments on the application and the future water needs of the proposed use area from the water management district having jurisdiction over the area where the water is to be used. If comments are received, they must be attached to the preliminary notice of intended agency action and may not create a point of entry for review whether issued by the governing board or district staff.

(6) Upon completion of review of the application, the water management district where the groundwater is proposed to be withdrawn shall prepare a notice of preliminary intended agency action which shall include an evaluation of the application and a recommendation of approval, denial, or approval with conditions. The notice shall be furnished to the district where the water is to be used, the applicant, the Department of Environmental Protection, the local governments having jurisdiction over the area from which the groundwater is to be withdrawn and where the water is to be used, and any person requesting a copy of the notice.

(a) Any interested person may, within the time specified in the notice, notify in writing the district from where the groundwater is to be withdrawn of such person's position and comments or objections, if any, to the preliminary intended action.

(b) The filing of the notice of intended agency action shall toll the time periods contained in s. 120.60 for the granting or denial of a permit for an interdistrict transfer and use of groundwater.

(c) The preliminary intended agency action and any comments or objections of interested persons made pursuant to paragraph (a) shall be considered by the governing board of the water management district where the groundwater is proposed to be withdrawn. Following such consideration, the governing board shall issue a notice of intended agency action.

(d) Any substantially affected person who submitted a notification pursuant to paragraph (a) may request review by the department within 14 days after the filing of the notice of intended agency action. If no request for review is filed, the notice of intended agency action shall become the final order of the governing board.

(7) Notwithstanding the provisions of chapter 120, the department shall, within 30 days after its receipt of a request for review of the water management district's action, approve, deny, or modify the water management district's action on the proposed interdistrict transfer and use of groundwater. The department shall issue a notice of its intended action. Any substantially affected person who requested review pursuant to paragraph (6)(a) may request an administrative hearing pursuant to chapter 120 within 14 days after notice of the department's intended action. The parties to such proceeding shall include, at a minimum, the affected water management districts and the applicant. The proceedings initiated by a petition under ss. 120.569 and 120.57, following the department's issuance of a notice of intended agency action, is the exclusive proceeding authorized for the review of agency action on the interdistrict

transfer and use of groundwater. This procedure is to give effect to the legislative intent that this section provide a single, efficient, simplified, coordinated permitting process for the interdistrict transfer and use of groundwater.

(8) The department shall issue a final order which is subject to review pursuant to s. 120.68 or s. 373.114.

(9) In administering this part, the department or the water management districts may enter into interagency agreements. However, such agreements are not subject to the provisions of s. 373.046 and chapter 120.

(10) The state hereby preempts any regulation of the interdistrict transfer and use of groundwater. If any provision of this section is in conflict with any other provision or restriction under any law, administrative rule, or ordinance, this section shall govern and such law, rule, or ordinance shall be deemed superseded for the purposes of this section. A water management district or the department may not adopt special rules which prohibit or restrict interdistrict transfer and use of groundwater in a manner inconsistent with this section.

(11) If, after the final order of the department or final agency action under this section, the proposed use of the site designated in the application for groundwater production, treatment, or transmission facilities does not conform with the existing zoning ordinances, a rezoning application may be submitted. If local authorities deny the application for rezoning, the applicant may appeal this decision to the Land and Water Adjudicatory Commission, which shall authorize a variance or nonconforming use to the existing comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances, unless the commission determines after notice and hearing that such variance or nonconforming use is contrary to the public interest.

(12) The permit required under this section and other sections of this chapter and chapter 403 are the sole permits required for interdistrict transfer and use of groundwater, and such permits are in lieu of any license, permit, or similar document required by any state agency or political subdivision pursuant to chapter 163, chapter 380, or chapter 381, and the Florida Transportation Code.

(13) When a consumptive use permit under this section is granted for water use beyond the boundaries of a local government from which or through which the groundwater is withdrawn or transferred and a local government denies a permit required under chapter 125 or chapter 153 for a facility or any infrastructure which produces, treats, transmits, or distributes such groundwater, the person or unit of government applying for the permit under chapter 125 or chapter 153 may appeal the denial to the Land and Water Adjudicatory Commission. The commission shall review the local government action for consistency with this chapter and the interdistrict groundwater transfer permit and may reverse, modify, or approve the local government's action.

History.—s. 1, ch. 87-347; s. 266, ch. 94-356; s. 99, ch. 96-410; s. 11, ch. 2000-212; s. 1, ch. 2003-64; s. 2, ch. 2003-265.

373.22951 Validation of prior agreements between water management districts.— Any agreements between water management districts entered into before the effective date of this act pursuant to s. 373.046 authorizing the issuance of permits for the interdistrict withdrawal and use of water within a county are validated and shall continue in effect until otherwise rescinded.

History.—s. 2, ch. 2003-64; s. 3, ch. 2003-265.

373.232 Citation of rule.— In addition to any other provisions within this part or any rules promulgated hereunder, the permitting agency shall, when requesting information for a permit application pursuant to this part or such rules promulgated hereunder, cite a specific rule. If a request for information cannot be accompanied by a rule citation, failure to provide such information cannot be grounds to deny a permit.

History.—s. 4, ch. 79-161.

373.233 Competing applications.—

(1) If two or more applications that otherwise comply with the provisions of this part are pending for a quantity of water that is inadequate for both or all, or that for any other reason are in conflict, and the water management district or department has deemed the applications complete, the water management district or the department has the right to approve or modify the application that best serves the public interest.

(2)(a) If two or more competing applications qualify equally under subsection (1), the governing board or the department shall give preference to a renewal application over an initial application.

(b) If two or more competing applications qualify equally under subsection (1) and none of the competing applications is a renewal application, the governing board or the department shall give preference to the application for the use where the source is nearest to the area of use or application consistent with s. 373.016(4)(a).

History.—s. 6, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 9, ch. 2013-92; s. 13, ch. 2016-1.

373.236 Duration of permits; compliance reports.—

(1) Permits shall be granted for a period of 20 years, if requested for that period of time, if there is sufficient data to provide reasonable assurance that the conditions for permit issuance will be met for the duration of the permit; otherwise, permits may be issued for shorter durations which reflect the period for which such reasonable assurances can be provided. The governing board or the department may base the duration of permits on a reasonable system of classification according to source of supply or type of use, or both.

(2) The Legislature finds that some agricultural landowners remain unaware of their ability to request a 20-year consumptive use permit under subsection (1) for initial permits or for renewals. Therefore, the water management districts shall inform agricultural applicants of this option in the application form.

(3) The governing board or the department may authorize a permit of duration of up to 50 years in the case of a municipality or other governmental body or of a public works or public service corporation where such a period is required to provide for the retirement of bonds for the construction of waterworks and waste disposal facilities.

(4) Where necessary to maintain reasonable assurance that the conditions for issuance of a 20-year permit can continue to be met, the governing board or department, in addition to any conditions required pursuant to s. 373.219, may require a compliance report by the permittee every 10 years during the term of a permit. The Suwannee River Water Management District may require a compliance report by the permittee every 5 years through July 1, 2015, and thereafter every 10 years during the term of the permit. This report shall contain sufficient data to maintain reasonable assurance that the initial conditions for permit issuance are met. Following review of this report, the governing board or the department may modify the permit to ensure that the use meets the conditions for issuance. Permit modifications pursuant to this subsection shall not be subject to competing applications, provided there is no increase in the permitted allocation or permit duration, and no change in source, except for changes in source requested by the district. In order to promote the sustainability of natural systems through the diversification of water supplies through the development of seawater desalination plants, a water management district may not reduce an existing permitted allocation of water during the permit term as a result of planned future construction of, or additional water becoming available from, a new seawater desalination plant that does not receive funding from a water management district. Except as expressly provided in this subsection, this subsection does not alter the existing authority of a water management district to modify a consumptive use permit pursuant to this chapter.

(5)(a) A permit approved for the development of alternative water supplies shall be granted for a term of at least 20 years if there is sufficient data to provide reasonable assurance that the conditions for permit issuance will be met for the duration of the permit. However, if the permittee issues bonds for the construction of the project, upon request of the permittee before the expiration of the permit, the permit shall be extended for such additional time as is required for the retirement of bonds, not including any refunding or refinancing of such bonds, if the governing board determines that the use will continue to meet the conditions for the issuance of the permit. The permit is subject to compliance reports under subsection (4).

(b)1. A permit approved on or after July 1, 2013, for the development of alternative water supplies shall be granted for a term of at least 30 years if there is sufficient data to provide reasonable assurance that the conditions for permit issuance will be met for the duration of the permit. If, within 7 years after a permit is granted, the permittee issues bonds to finance the project, completes construction of the project, and requests an extension of the permit duration, the permit shall be extended to expire upon the retirement of such bonds or 30 years after the date that construction of the project is complete, whichever occurs later. However, a permit's duration may not be extended by more than 7 years beyond the permit's original expiration date.

2. A permit issued under this paragraph is subject to compliance reports under subsection (4). If the permittee demonstrates that bonds issued to finance the project are outstanding, the quantity of alternative water allocated in the permit may not be reduced during a compliance report review unless a reduction is needed to address harm to water

resources or to existing legal uses present when the permit was issued. A reduction required by an applicable water shortage order applies to a permit issued under this paragraph.

3. A permit issued under this paragraph may not authorize the use of nonbrackish groundwater supplies or nonalternative water supplies.

(c) An entity that wishes to develop alternative water supplies may apply for a permit under paragraph (a) or paragraph (b).

(6)(a) The Legislature finds that the need for alternative water supply development projects to meet anticipated public water supply demands of the state is so important that it is essential to encourage participation in and contribution to these projects by private-rural-land owners who characteristically have relatively modest near-term water demands but substantially increasing demands after the 20-year planning period in s. 373.709. Therefore, where such landowners make extraordinary contributions of lands or construction funding to enable the expeditious implementation of such projects, water management districts and the department may grant permits for such projects for a period of up to 50 years to municipalities, counties, special districts, regional water supply authorities, multijurisdictional water supply entities, and publicly or privately owned utilities, with the exception of any publicly or privately owned utilities created for or by a private landowner after April 1, 2008, which have entered into an agreement with the private landowner for the purpose of more efficiently pursuing alternative public water supply development projects identified in a district's regional water supply plan and meeting water demands of both the applicant and the landowner.

(b) A permit under paragraph (a) may be granted only for that period for which there is sufficient data to provide reasonable assurance that the conditions for permit issuance will be met. Such a permit shall require a compliance report by the permittee every 5 years during the term of the permit. The report shall contain sufficient data to maintain reasonable assurance that the conditions for permit issuance applicable at the time of district review of the compliance report are met. After review of this report, the governing board or the department may modify the permit to ensure that the use meets the conditions for issuance. This subsection does not limit the existing authority of the department or the governing board to modify or revoke a consumptive use permit.

(7) A permit approved for a renewable energy generating facility or the cultivation of agricultural products on lands consisting of 1,000 acres or more for use in the production of renewable energy, as defined in s. 366.91(2)(d), shall be granted for a term of at least 25 years at the applicant's request based on the anticipated life of the facility if there is sufficient data to provide reasonable assurance that the conditions for permit issuance will be met for the duration of the permit; otherwise, a permit may be issued for a shorter duration that reflects the longest period for which such reasonable assurances are provided. Such a permit is subject to compliance reports under subsection (4).

(8) A water management district may issue a permit to an applicant, as set forth in s. 163.3245(13), for the same period of time as the applicant's approved master development order if the master development order was issued under s. 380.06(9) by a county which, at the time the order was issued, was designated as a rural area of opportunity under s. 288.0656, was not located in an area encompassed by a regional water supply plan as set forth in s. 373.709(1), and was not located within the basin management action plan of a first magnitude spring. In reviewing the permit application and determining the permit duration, the water management district shall apply s. 163.3245(4)(b).

History.—s. 7, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 13, ch. 97-160; s. 7, ch. 2005-291; s. 7, ch. 2006-255; s. 10, ch. 2009-243; s. 70, ch. 2010-5; ss. 18, 55, ch. 2010-205; s. 10, ch. 2013-92; s. 1, ch. 2013-169; s. 17, ch. 2015-30; s. 37, ch. 2016-10; s. 15, ch. 2018-158.

373.239 Modification and renewal of permit terms.—

(1) A permittee may seek modification of any terms of an unexpired permit.

(2) If the proposed modification involves water use of 100,000 gallons or more per day, the application shall be treated under the provisions of s. 373.229 in the same manner as the initial permit application. Otherwise, the governing board or the department may at its discretion approve the proposed modification without a hearing, provided the permittee establishes that:

(a) A change in conditions has resulted in the water allowed under the permit becoming inadequate for the permittee's need, or

(b) The proposed modification would result in a more efficient utilization of water than is possible under the existing permit.

(3) All permit renewal applications shall be treated under this part in the same manner as the initial permit application.

History.—s. 8, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 14, ch. 73-190.

373.243 Revocation of permits.— The governing board or the department may revoke a permit as follows:

(1) For any material false statement in an application to continue, initiate, or modify a use, or for any material false statement in any report or statement of fact required of the user pursuant to the provisions of this chapter, the governing board or the department may revoke the user's permit, in whole or in part, permanently.

(2) For willful violation of the conditions of the permit, the governing board or the department may permanently or temporarily revoke the permit, in whole or in part.

(3) For violation of any provision of this chapter, the governing board or the department may revoke the permit, in whole or in part, for a period not to exceed 1 year.

(4) For nonuse of the water supply allowed by the permit for a period of 2 years or more, the governing board or the department may revoke the permit permanently and in whole unless the user can prove that his or her nonuse was due to extreme hardship caused by factors beyond the user's control. For a permit issued pursuant to s. 373.236(7), the governing board or the department may revoke the permit only if the nonuse of the water supply allowed by the permit is for a period of 4 years or more.

(5) The governing board or the department may revoke a permit, permanently and in whole, with the written consent of the permittee.

History.—s. 9, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 14, ch. 78-95; s. 600, ch. 95-148; s. 11, ch. 2009-243.

373.244 Temporary permits.—

(1) The governing board of a water management district may issue, or may authorize its executive director to issue, temporary permits for the consumptive use of water while an application is pending for a permit pursuant to ss. 373.219 and 373.229.

(2) Such a temporary permit shall be issued for a period of time to expire on the day following the next regular meeting of the governing board. At such meeting, the governing board shall consider whether it appears that the proposed use meets the criteria set forth in s. 373.223(1) and that such temporary permit is necessary for consumptive use of water prior to final action on an application for a permit pursuant to ss. 373.219 and 373.229.

(3) The governing board may summarily extend the term of a temporary permit for subsequent periods of time to expire on or before the day following the next regular meeting of the governing board.

(4) The board shall review temporary permits at each regular meeting and may terminate a temporary permit or refuse to extend it further upon a finding that the water use does not meet the criteria set forth in s. 373.223(1) or that adverse effects are occurring as a result of water use under the temporary permit or that the water authorized to be used under such permit is no longer required by the permit holder.

(5) The notice and hearing that might otherwise be required pursuant to s. 373.116(2) and chapter 120 shall not be required prior to issuance or extension of a temporary permit pursuant to the provisions of this section.

(6) Issuance of a temporary permit pursuant to the provisions of this section shall not in any way be construed as a commitment to issue a permit pursuant to ss. 373.219 and 373.229. No action taken by the governing board, or by the executive director if so authorized, shall be construed to estop the governing board from subsequently denying an application for a permit pursuant to ss. 373.219 and 373.229.

History.—s. 1, ch. 79-160.

373.246 Declaration of water shortage or emergency.—

(1) The governing board or the department by regulation shall formulate a plan for implementation during periods of water shortage. As a part of this plan the governing board or the department shall adopt a reasonable system of water-use classification according to source of water supply; method of extraction, withdrawal, or diversion;

or use of water or a combination thereof. The plan may include provisions for variances and alternative measures to prevent undue hardship and ensure equitable distribution of water resources.

(2) The governing board or the department by order may declare that a water shortage exists for a source or sources within all or part of the district when insufficient water is or will be available to meet the present and anticipated requirements of the users or when conditions are such as to require temporary reduction in total use within the area to protect water resources from serious harm. Such orders will be final agency action.

(3) In accordance with the plan adopted under subsection (1), the governing board or the department may impose such restrictions on one or more classes of water uses as may be necessary to protect the water resources of the area from serious harm and to restore them to their previous condition.

(4) A declaration of water shortage and any measures adopted pursuant thereto may be rescinded by the governing board or the department.

(5) When a water shortage is declared, the governing board or the department shall cause notice thereof to be published in a prominent place within a newspaper of general circulation throughout the area. Publication of such notice will serve as notice to all users in the area of the condition of water shortage.

(6) The governing board or the department shall notify each permittee in the district by electronic mail or regular mail of any change in the condition of his or her permit or any suspension of his or her permit or of any other restriction on the permittee's use of water for the duration of the water shortage.

(7) If an emergency condition exists due to a water shortage within any area of the district, and if the department, or the executive director of the district with the concurrence of the governing board, finds that the exercise of powers under subsection (1) is not sufficient to protect the public health, safety, or welfare; the health of animals, fish, or aquatic life; a public water supply; or recreational, commercial, industrial, agricultural, or other reasonable uses, it or he or she may, pursuant to the provisions of s. 373.119, issue emergency orders reciting the existence of such an emergency and requiring that such action, including, but not limited to, apportioning, rotating, limiting, or prohibiting the use of the water resources of the district, be taken as the department or the executive director deems necessary to meet the emergency.

(8) An affected party to whom an emergency order is directed under subsection (7) shall comply immediately, but may challenge such an order in the manner set forth in s. 373.119.

History.—s. 10, part II, ch. 72-299; s. 14, ch. 78-95; s. 11, ch. 82-101; s. 10, ch. 84-341; s. 601, ch. 95-148; s. 168, ch. 99-13; s. 11, ch. 2013-92.

373.249 Existing regulatory districts preserved.— The enactment of this chapter shall not affect any existing water regulatory districts pursuant to chapter 373, or orders issued by said regulatory districts, unless specifically revoked, modified, or amended by such regulatory district or by the department.

History.—s. 11, part II, ch. 72-299.

373.250 Reuse of reclaimed water.—

(1)(a) The encouragement and promotion of water conservation and reuse of reclaimed water, as defined by the department and used in this chapter, are state objectives and considered to be in the public interest. The Legislature finds that the use of reclaimed water provided by domestic wastewater treatment plants permitted and operated under a reuse program approved by the department is environmentally acceptable and not a threat to public health and safety.

(b) The Legislature recognizes that the interest of the state to sustain water resources for the future through the use of reclaimed water must be balanced with the need of reuse utilities to operate and manage reclaimed water systems in accordance with a variety and range of circumstances, including regulatory and financial considerations, which influence the development and operation of reclaimed water systems across the state.

(2) Reclaimed water is an alternative water supply as defined in s. 373.019(1) and is eligible for alternative water supply funding. A contract for state or district funding assistance for the development of reclaimed water as an alternative water supply may include provisions listed under s. 373.707(9). The use of reclaimed water may not be excluded from regional water supply planning under s. 373.709.

(3)(a) Reclaimed water may be presumed available to a consumptive use permit applicant when a utility exists which provides reclaimed water, which has determined that it has uncommitted reclaimed water capacity, and which has distribution facilities, which are initially provided by the utility at its cost, to the site of the affected applicant's proposed use.

(b) A water management district may not require a permit for the use of reclaimed water. However, when a use includes surface water or groundwater, the permit for such sources may include conditions that govern the use of the permitted sources in relation to the feasibility or use of reclaimed water.

(c) A water management district may require the use of reclaimed water in lieu of all or a portion of a proposed use of surface water or groundwater by an applicant when the use of reclaimed water is available; is environmentally, economically, and technically feasible; and is of such quality and reliability as is necessary to the user. However, a water management district may neither specify any user to whom the reuse utility must provide reclaimed water nor restrict the use of reclaimed water provided by a reuse utility to a customer in a permit or, unless requested by the reuse utility, in a water shortage order or water shortage emergency order.

(d) The South Florida Water Management District shall require the use of reclaimed water made available by the elimination of wastewater ocean outfall discharges as provided for in s. 403.086(9) in lieu of surface water or groundwater when the use of reclaimed water is available; is environmentally, economically, and technically feasible; and is of such quality and reliability as is necessary to the user. Such reclaimed water may also be required in lieu of other alternative sources. In determining whether to require such reclaimed water in lieu of other alternative sources, the water management district shall consider existing infrastructure investments in place or obligated to be constructed by an executed contract or similar binding agreement as of July 1, 2011, for the development of other alternative sources.

(4) The water management district shall, in consultation with the department, adopt rules to implement this section. Such rules shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Provisions to permit use of water from other sources in emergency situations or if reclaimed water becomes unavailable, for the duration of the emergency or the unavailability of reclaimed water. These provisions shall also specify the method for establishing the quantity of water to be set aside for use in emergencies or when reclaimed water becomes unavailable. The amount set aside is subject to periodic review and revision. The methodology shall take into account the risk that reclaimed water may not be available in the future, the risk that other sources may be fully allocated to other uses in the future, the nature of the uses served with reclaimed water, the extent to which the applicant intends to rely upon reclaimed water, and the extent of economic harm which may result if other sources are not available to replace the reclaimed water. It is the intent of this paragraph to ensure that users of reclaimed water have the same access to ground or surface water and will otherwise be treated in the same manner as other users of the same class not relying on reclaimed water.

(b) Provisions to require permit applicants that are not reuse utilities to provide, as part of their reclaimed water feasibility evaluation for a nonpotable use, written documentation from a reuse utility addressing the availability of reclaimed water. This requirement shall apply when the applicant's proposed use is within an area that is or may be served with reclaimed water by a reuse utility within a 5-year horizon, as established by the reuse utility and provided to the district. If the applicable reuse utility fails to respond or does not provide the information required under paragraph (c) within 30 days after receipt of the request, the applicant shall provide to the district a copy of the written request and a statement that the utility failed to provide the requested information. The district is not required to adopt, by rule, the area where written documentation from a reuse utility is required, but the district shall publish the area, and any updates thereto, on the district's website. This paragraph may not be construed to limit the ability of a district to require the use of reclaimed water or to limit a utility's ability to plan reclaimed water infrastructure.

(c) Provisions specifying the content of the documentation required in paragraph (b), including sufficient information regarding the availability and costs associated with the connection to and the use of reclaimed water, to facilitate the permit applicant's reclaimed water feasibility evaluation.

A water management district may not adopt any rule that gives preference to users within any class of use established under s. 373.246 who do not use reclaimed water over users within the same class who use reclaimed water.

(5)(a) No later than October 1, 2012, the department shall initiate rulemaking to adopt revisions to the water resource implementation rule, as defined in s. 373.019(25), which shall include:

1. Criteria for the use of a proposed impact offset derived from the use of reclaimed water when a water management district evaluates an application for a consumptive use permit. As used in this subparagraph, the term “impact offset” means the use of reclaimed water to reduce or eliminate a harmful impact that has occurred or would otherwise occur as a result of other surface water or groundwater withdrawals.

2. Criteria for the use of substitution credits where a water management district has adopted rules establishing withdrawal limits from a specified water resource within a defined geographic area. As used in this subparagraph, the term “substitution credit” means the use of reclaimed water to replace all or a portion of an existing permitted use of resource-limited surface water or groundwater, allowing a different user or use to initiate a withdrawal or increase its withdrawal from the same resource-limited surface water or groundwater source provided that the withdrawal creates no net adverse impact on the limited water resource or creates a net positive impact if required by water management district rule as part of a strategy to protect or recover a water resource.

(b) Within 60 days after the final adoption by the department of the revisions to the water resource implementation rule required under paragraph (a), each water management district shall initiate rulemaking to incorporate those revisions by reference into the rules of the district.

(6) Reuse utilities and the applicable water management district or districts are encouraged to periodically coordinate and share information concerning the status of reclaimed water distribution system construction, the availability of reclaimed water supplies, and existing consumptive use permits in areas served by the reuse utility.

(7) This section does not impair or limit the authority of a water management district to plan for and regulate consumptive uses of water under this chapter or regulate the use of surface water or groundwater to supplement a reclaimed water system.

(8) This section applies to applications for new consumptive use permits and renewals and modifications of existing consumptive use permits.

History.—s. 2, ch. 94-243; s. 35, ch. 97-160; s. 18, ch. 97-164; s. 37, ch. 99-247; s. 5, ch. 2004-381; s. 4, ch. 2008-232; s. 56, ch. 2010-205; s. 2, ch. 2012-150; s. 59, ch. 2013-15.

PART III

REGULATION OF WELLS

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