

By Senator Bradley

6-01334-25

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to general permits for distributed
3 wastewater treatment systems; amending s. 403.814,
4 F.S.; defining terms; authorizing the Secretary of
5 Environmental Protection to grant a general permit for
6 the replacement of an existing onsite sewage treatment
7 and disposal system with a distributed wastewater
8 treatment system under certain circumstances;
9 providing for the installation of distributed
10 wastewater treatment units to proceed without any
11 further action by the Department of Environmental
12 Protection if a permittee submits a notification to
13 the department at least a specified number of days
14 before installation; providing requirements for such
15 notification; requiring such a permittee to take
16 specified actions for distributed wastewater treatment
17 units they install; providing an effective date.

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19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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21 Section 1. Subsection (13) is added to section 403.814,
22 Florida Statutes, to read:

23 403.814 General permits; delegation.—

24 (13) (a) For the purposes of this subsection, the term:

25 1. "Distributed wastewater treatment system" or "DWTS"
26 means an integrated system approach to treating wastewater
27 consisting of one or more distributed wastewater treatment
28 units.

29 2. "Distributed wastewater treatment unit" or "DWTU" means

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30 an advanced onsite closed-tank wastewater treatment system that
31 is remotely operated and controlled by the permittee using an
32 electronic control system and designed to achieve secondary
33 treatment standards and a minimum of 80 percent total nitrogen
34 removal before discharge to a subsurface application system.

35 (b) A general permit is granted for the replacement of an
36 existing onsite sewage treatment and disposal system, otherwise
37 subject to s. 381.0065, with a DWTU if the DWTU and DWTS are
38 commonly owned and operated by the permittee. Pursuant to
39 obtaining this permit, the installation of each DWTU may proceed
40 without further action by the department if the permittee
41 submits a notification to the department at least 30 days before
42 installation. Such notification must certify that a Florida
43 registered professional designed the DWTU in accordance with
44 applicable rules adopted pursuant to this chapter and that the
45 proposed DWTU meets all of the following requirements:

46 1. The design capacity of the DWTU does not exceed 10,000
47 gallons per day of domestic wastewater or 5,000 gallons per day
48 of commercial wastewater.

49 2. The DWTU may discharge without disinfection into a slow-
50 rate subsurface application system designed and operated to
51 protect public health and safety and maintain the current
52 separation, and in no case has less than 12 inches of
53 separation, between the bottom surface of the drainfield and the
54 water table elevation at the wettest season of the year.

55 3. The horizontal setback distance from the DWTU and
56 subsurface application system to property lines, surface
57 waterbodies, potable water wells, and utilities is consistent
58 with rules adopted under this chapter and s. 381.0065.

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59 4. The permittee has legal access to maintain and operate
60 the DWTU and remove the DWTU in case of termination of service.

61 5. The permittee has submitted a plan for conducting
62 monthly effluent compliance sampling of a representative number
63 of deployed DWTUs, the results of which may be aggregated to
64 determine compliance with performance standards consistent with
65 this subsection and the rules adopted under this chapter.

66 6. The operation of the DWTU does not:

- 67 a. Create saturated conditions on the ground surface;
68 b. Adversely impact wetlands or other surface waters; or
69 c. Cause or contribute to a violation of state water
70 quality standards.

71 (c) The permittee shall:

72 1. Conduct monthly reporting, annual inspections,
73 recordkeeping, and biosolids management for the DWTU consistent
74 with the rules adopted under this chapter.

75 2. Schedule staffing and visitation by licensed operators
76 for the DWTU in a manner that is consistent with the rules
77 adopted under this chapter, except that visitation may be
78 accomplished using an electronic control system.

79 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.