

Septic System Management for Wakulla County



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What is the Most Suitable OSTDS Management Entity for Wakulla County?

- Wakulla County, through ordinance and policies, has determined that water quality is of primary importance.
- The selection of a suitable management entity depends on the maintenance needs of the septic systems.
- Research and public discussion are integral to the management selection process.
- Technical, legal, and financial advice should be tapped early to assess the options.

Factors to consider when establishing a Management System:

- Ability to provide policy and management continuity;
- Ability to charge fees for service;
- Ability to compel users of the services to comply with the requirements of the management system (e.g., service and inspections);
- Capacity to maintain adequate financial responsibility;

Factors (cont.)

- Ability to hire and retain qualified employees;
- Ability to provide adequate enforcement of septic systems requirements;
- Billing options such as monthly or annual fees added to property tax bill needs to be addressed.

Recommendations for Wakulla County

- Public should be educated and involved in wastewater management decision making processes and include homeowners, public officials, developers and real estate professionals, scientists, and the business community.
- Centralized management by the Wakulla County Health Department.
- Annual assessments for all septic systems in the county. (Lower fees for standard septic systems.)

Wakulla County Health Department should be responsible for the following:

- Maintaining data base of all systems in the county.
- Annual inspections of all septic systems.
- Contracting with local contractors for pump outs and for maintenance contracts for Performance Based Septic Systems.
- Permitting of repair and new systems.
- Recommending policy changes to Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).
- Recommending annual fees.

Property rights and the education of homeowners

- Concern for homeowners property rights.
- Requirement for education of homeowners:
 - Reasons for maintenance;
 - Types of systems available;
 - Permitting process;
 - Financial resources available for homeowners to make repairs or upgrade systems.

Major Points

- Should be a centralized management system under County Health Department.
- Strong requirement for public involvement and education.
- Property rights of homeowners need to be discussed with homeowners.
- State funds acquired for grants or low interest loans for homeowners.

Sunrise at Shell Point

Photo by: Sue Damon

