

District Permitting



The information in this publication applies only to permits issued by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District). Following the information presented in this publication does not guarantee issuance of a permit, since each application is unique and must be evaluated individually. This information is provided for general guidance only. Please contact the District (see back) for more specific information on permitting requirements.

Environmental permits also may be required by other federal, state and local agencies.

Why does the District issue permits?

Water is a public resource that belongs to all of us. However, fresh water is not limitless. Excessive withdrawals can harm the resources. Other human activities also pose threats. Without the proper safeguards for wetlands, floodplain encroachment and stormwater runoff can cause pollution and flooding. District permitting benefits residents, property owners and businesses by reducing the risk of flooding and protecting water quality and water supplies for current and future generations.

Do I need a District permit?

If you want to withdraw large quantities of water, develop property or construct a well, there's a good chance you'll need a District permit.

The District issues three kinds of permits:

- **Water use permits** (WUPs) ensure that withdrawals are necessary, do not harm the resources and do not prevent existing legal users from withdrawing their permitted quantities.
- **Environmental resource permits** (ERPs) protect wetlands and floodplain functions, treat water quality of stormwater runoff and reduce the risk of new development causing flooding.
- **Well construction permits** ensure that wells are properly constructed to protect the water resources.



What type of permit do I need?

Water use permits allow the withdrawal of specific quantities of groundwater or surface water for limited periods of time under certain conditions.

You need a **water use permit** if:

- You plan to withdraw more than 100,000 gallons per day, **OR**
- The outside diameter of your groundwater well is six inches or larger, **OR**

- The outside diameter of your withdrawal pipe from a surface water body is four inches or larger, **OR**
- The total withdrawal capacity of your system is 1 million gallons per day or larger.

Generally, a withdrawal for personal domestic use for an individual home is small enough to fall below the threshold for requiring a water use permit. However, if you are constructing a well, your water well contractor will still need to get a well construction permit.

ERPs ensure that new development properly treats stormwater runoff to remove pollutants, compensates for any losses in floodplain storage, mitigates for any impacts to wetlands, and does not increase the rate of stormwater runoff onto neighboring properties.

You need an ERP if your construction project:

- Disrupts wetlands, **OR**
- Encroaches on a floodplain, **OR**
- Increases, decreases or diverts stormwater runoff, **OR**
- Contributes to water pollution.

Examples of activities covered by an ERP include:

- Dredging and filling in wetlands
- Constructing flood protection facilities
- Constructing subdivisions or businesses
- Providing stormwater containment and treatment
- Site grading
- Building dams or reservoirs
- Other activities affecting state waters

The District and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) have an operating agreement that identifies which agency will process ERPs for different types of projects. The District processes residential and commercial developments, while the FDEP processes power plants, wastewater treatment plants and single-family home projects.

Well construction permits are required prior to installation of a well within the District. The permits ensure that wells are constructed by qualified contractors and meet rigid safety and durability standards.



Where do I get my permit?

Permit applications can be obtained at WaterMatters.org/permits or by submitting a permit application to your local service office. All District offices (see back) assist with permit applications. However, permits are issued in the Tampa office.

Southwest Florida Water Management District Offices

Tampa Service Office
7601 Highway 301 North
Tampa, FL 33637-6759
(813) 985-7481
1-800-836-0797 (FL only)

This office issues all permits and provides assistance to residents in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties.

Brooksville Headquarters
2379 Broad Street
Brooksville, FL 34604-6899
(352) 796-7211
1-800-423-1476 (FL only)

This office provides assistance to residents in Hernando, Pasco, Citrus, Lake, Levy, Marion and Sumter counties.

Bartow Service Office
170 Century Boulevard
Bartow, FL 33830-7700
(863) 534-1448
1-800-492-7862 (FL only)

This office provides assistance to residents in Polk, Highlands and Hardee counties.

Sarasota Service Office
6750 Fruitville Road
Sarasota, FL 34240-9711
(941) 377-3722
1-800-320-3503 (FL only)

This office provides assistance to residents in Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte and DeSoto counties.



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The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) does not discriminate on the basis of disability. This nondiscrimination policy involves every aspect of the District's functions, including access to and participation in the District's programs and activities. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation as provided for in the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the District's Human Resources Bureau Chief, 2379 Broad St., Brooksville, FL 34604-6899; telephone (352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only), ext. 4702; TDD 1-800-231-6103 (FL only); or email ADACoordinator@WaterMatters.org.