



Charlie Crist
Governor

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State Surgeon General

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

**INFORMATION
HSES 09-006**

DATE: June 19, 2009

TO: County Health Department Directors/Administrators
ATTN: Environmental Health and Engineering Directors

THROUGH: Lisa Conti, D.V.M., M.P.H., Dipl. ACVPM, CEHP
Director, Division of Environmental Health

FROM: Gerald Briggs, Chief
Bureau of Onsite Sewage Programs

SUBJECT: Surface water boundary documentation

The following guidance is to be used for proper documentation of the boundary of any surface water body. On new, existing or modification applications, the boundaries of all surface water bodies must be shown and correctly labeled on the site plan. Once the boundary is shown on the site plan, proper setbacks from the system can be determined, unobstructed area calculated, and the area of the surface water body deducted from the overall property size. Where the application is a repair, the boundaries must be identified in order to measure setbacks. Authorized flow and unobstructed area are not issues on repairs applications.

The mean annual flood line (MAFL) for permanent nontidal surface water bodies shall be determined using the criteria in s. 381.0065(2) (i), FS, and the definition in 64E-6.002, FAC. Persons authorized to perform this function consists of only two groups: a certified professional surveyor and mapper with experience in the determination of flood water elevation lines or, at the option of the applicant, department personnel. The person performing the boundary determination shall cite the indicator(s) used to define the boundary. When using 10 years of data, the source of the data shall be included. When using data only, the elevation must be set by a surveyor and not department personnel.

The determination of the mean high water line (MHWL) for tidally influenced surface water bodies is governed by Chapter 177, Florida Statutes. The statute allows for only licensed surveyors and mappers to determine the MHWL. DEP maintains information on MHWLs on state lands based on tidal data from over 19 year epochs. MHWLs are specific elevations. DEP also allows a mathematical calculation. A DEP letter is necessary in these situations to validate the MHWL. CHD employees are not authorized to delineate the MHWL. Questions regarding MHWL determinations can be directed to Lamar Evers at 850-245-2636 or Sim Smith



Environmental Health is Core Public Health at your Service!
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at 850-245-2638 at DEP. Note that where DEP does not have jurisdiction, they do not have to approve the methodology, however, a transfer from the nearest tidal station could be used.

Sea walls or any similar structure intended to constrain water from adjoining property do not exempt properties from the determination of the surface water boundary. There must be confirmation that the height of the sea wall or other similar structure meets or exceeds the surface water boundary.

Please address any questions regarding this memo to your program consultant. Please distribute this memo to licensed contractors, site evaluators and engineers working in your county.