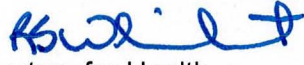



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

HSES 12-007

DATE: June 4, 2012

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

THROUGH: Sterling Whisenhunt 
Assistant Deputy Secretary for Health

FROM: Patti Anderson, P.E., Interim Director
Division of Environmental Health 

SUBJECT: HB 1263 – Onsite Sewage System Evaluation Program

A new law passed in 2012 (HB 1263) that changes the law related to when to have your septic system evaluated. Previously, inspection of a septic tank was required every five years. The new bill gives local governments the choice to adopt an evaluation program for their area or not. A county or municipality where a first magnitude spring is located must decide whether or not to require an evaluation program for their area by January 1, 2013. All other counties may choose to adopt the program in their area at any time. Additional information and resources are on our web page at: www.MyFloridaEH.com/septic tanksystems/

If your local governments take action, one way or the other, please update the spreadsheet on sharepoint at: <http://def.sharepoint.doh.ad.state.fl.us/DEH/DEHIT/Lists/County%20Master%20Information%20List/AllItems.aspx?ShowInGrid=True&View=%7B0D6D5C70%2D9B44%2D4AF8%2D82B8%2DEDA2491E06CB%7D>

If your county or a municipality adopts an evaluation program the county health department is responsible for administering the program and all evaluations are to be documented in the Environmental Health Database (EHD). County health departments are required to make notifications to owners which will be done through EHD. Our GIS section will work with you on developing the potential property list using EHD, Department of Revenue database, and utility records. Evaluators are required to submit reports to the department within 30 days after the evaluation is completed. We will provide an interface for them to do this online into EHD. If your local government adopts a program we would recommend working with the Florida Onsite Wastewater Association to provide training on the evaluation program to qualified contractors and their employees. We can assist in coordinating that training for you.

If your local government is considering adopting an evaluation program, please recommend the following:

1. A phased-in implementation over five years starting not earlier than July 1, 2013 or one year after the first county opts-in. The department will need time to make changes to the EHD to support the evaluation program.
2. Use of existing application, site plan, and existing system evaluation forms. Use of these forms will simplify the process in EHD since failures will require repair permits using these forms.
3. Inclusion in the fee schedule of \$5.00 per evaluation for maintenance and support of the EHD.
4. Disciplinary procedures and penalties for qualified contractors and system owners. While the CHD are tasked with administering the program, it is under a local ordinance and the department does not have authority to establish penalties for violations of a local ordinance. Any local ordinance adopted should provide procedures and penalties for violations.

If you have any questions please call Gerald Briggs at (850) 245-4075.