



ALACHUA COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

201 SE 2nd Avenue, Suite 201, Gainesville, Florida 32601

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Home Page: <http://environment.alachua-county.org>

Board of County Commissioners

Chris Bird

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Administrative Support
Manager

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May 19, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners

VIA: Randall H. Reid, County Manager *RHR*

FROM: Chris Bird, Environmental Protection Director *CB*

RE: Response to questions regarding duplication of services

The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to recent questions regarding the potential duplication of services provided by the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department (ACEPD).

For clarification, attached is an environmental services provider matrix. This matrix presents a detailed functional comparison between ACEPD and other agencies.

I cannot overemphasize the point that ACEPD programs are specifically developed and conducted to avoid duplication with other agencies. The purpose of ACEPD programming is to supplement, not duplicate, the functions of the water management districts, state, and federal environmental agencies. With respect to municipalities, there are no functional "counterparts" to ACEPD or ACEPD services.

Interagency environmental partnerships, including contracts, grants, and other agreements, further ensure that ACEPD services are not duplicative. With respect to regulatory functions, ACEPD staff work closely with other agencies to coordinate compliance inspections, enforcement, and monitoring activities. Certain ACEPD programs fill in gaps in environmental protection that are not covered by other agencies. ACEPD planning and review services, related to the comprehensive plan and land development regulations, involve exclusively local land use prerogatives.

Please let me know if you have any additional concerns about this issue.

JCB/jcb
Attachment

An Equal Opportunity Employer M.F.V.D.



Comparison of Environmental Services Providers in Alachua County

Description of Function	Agency				Comments
	ACEPD	WMDs	FDEP	Other	
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING Conservation planning services to ensure compliance with Comprehensive Plan and land use development regulations	YES	NO	NO	NO	State mandated to local governments by Section 9J5, Florida Administrative Code
Early identification of natural resources through land use planning increases opportunities to avoid and minimize impacts	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Local technical response to requests from property owners, citizens, development representatives, municipalities and government agencies	YES	NO	NO	NO	ACEPD staff has relevant education and training in local natural resource requirements to provide answers and guidance to public
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW Review of land development applications for compliance with natural resource protection requirements of the Comprehensive Plan and land development regulations	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Determines if, when and where a particular land use activity may impact natural resources based on the comprehensive plan and land development regulations	YES	NO	NO	NO	Other agencies, through their environmental permitting authorities, only make the determination of how, not if, when, and where.

ACEPD	Alachua County Environmental Protection Department
WMDs	Water Management Districts
FDEP	Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Comparison of Environmental Services Providers in Alachua County

Description of Function	Agency				Comments
	ACEPD	WMD	FDEP	Other	
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (cont.)					
Local response for natural resource complaint investigations and enforcement activities	YES	NO	NO	NO	ACEPD is the first responder to natural resource complaints. Implements and enforces local regulations. After initial evaluation, where state rules apply, complaints referred to other agencies.
Wetland and surface water permitting	NO	YES	YES	YES, Army Corps of Engineers	Environmental permitting authorities, only make the determination of how, not if, when, and where.
Upland protection/wildlife habitat protection through local land use requirements	YES	NO	NO	NO	Comprehensive Plan Conservation Policies and Land Development Regulations
Endangered species habitat protection through local land use requirements	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Endangered species regulation	NO	YES	YES	YES, US Fish & Wildlife Service; Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission	Complaints referred to state and federal wildlife agencies. State law pre-empt local regulation of endangered species.

ACEPD Alachua County Environmental Protection Department
WMDs Water Management Districts
FDEP Florida Department of Environmental Protection

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Description of Function	Agency				Comments
	ACEPD	WMD	FDEP	Other	
<p>LAND CONSERVATION</p> <p>Acquisition activities associated with Alachua County Forever (ACF)</p>	YES	YES	YES	FCT; Cities and non-profits	Through project specific partnership agreements, Alachua County Forever program staff works closely with public, non-profit, and private partners to maximize the effectiveness of ACF acquisition funds and avoid duplication.
<p>Stewardship activities associated with Alachua County Forever</p>	YES	YES	YES	Cities and non-profits	Through project specific partnership agreements, Alachua County Forever program staff works closely with public, non-profit, and private partners to maximize the effectiveness of County land stewardship funds and avoid duplication.

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Description of Function	Agency			Comments
	ACEPD	WMD	FDEP	
WATER QUALITY COUNTY-FUNDED PROGRAMS			Other	
County-funded Surface Water Program	YES	NO	NO	ACEPD monitors water resources at locations where other agencies do not monitor. Local program supplements WMD activities and fills in gaps.
County-funded Groundwater Program	YES	NO	NO	ACEPD performs selective monitoring of groundwater in the vicinity of the springs on the Santa Fe River, in coordination with SRWMD.
Water Quality Codes and Wellfield Protection Code Enforcement and Complaint Investigations	50%	10%	20% Dept. of Health (lead agency on private drinking water wells)	ACEPD is typically the first responder for groundwater and surface water complaints. After initial evaluation, where state rules apply, complaints are referred to appropriate agencies for investigation and enforcement.
Implements the Alachua County Wastewater Treatment Plant Code	70%	NO	30%	ACEPD program focuses on inspection and monitoring of treatment plant operations, supplementing FDEP permitting activities. Purpose of ACEPD program is to improve permit compliance and the quality of treated wastewater.

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WATER QUALITY PARTNERSHIP FUNDED PROGRAMS Implements the Federally Mandated Water Quality Improvement Program	YES	NO	NO	NO	By contract, ACEPD enforces the illicit stormwater discharge program.
FDEP Ambient Monitoring	YES	NO	NO	NO	By contract, ACEPD acts on behalf of FDEP to assess groundwater, surface water, and in-stream biological health.
Orange Creek Basin Urban Creek Monitoring	YES	NO	NO	NO	By contract, ACEPD acts on behalf of SJRWMD to conduct monitoring and reporting. ACEPD is the only agency monitoring the urban creeks.
Coastal Impact Assistance Grant	YES	NO	NO	NO	By contract, ACEPD acts on behalf of NOAA to implement special environmental projects.

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HAZARDOUS MATERIALS PROTECTION Compliance inspections for Alachua County Hazardous Materials Management Code	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Compliance inspections for hazardous wastes management requirements	99%	NO	1%	NO	ACEPD performs over 800 compliance inspections annually. FDEP inspects an average of 10 of the largest hazardous waste generators in Alachua County
Local environmental response to hazardous materials spills	95%	NO	5%	NO	ACEPD provides on-call environmental response to an annual average of 40 hazardous materials spills. FDEP provides on-site response to an annual average of 2 catastrophic spills, in coordination with ACEPD.
Investigates hazardous materials complaints	99%	NO	1%	NO	FDEP responds to a very limited number of hazardous materials complaints in Alachua County, typically in coordination with ACEPD.
Compliance assistance, pollution prevention and training to hazmat facilities	99%	NO	1%	NO	ACEPD provides daily technical assistance, pollution prevention and training to businesses. FDEP provides compliance assistance and pollution prevention information as requested, in coordination with ACEPD.
Local oversight of hazardous materials site clean-ups	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Hazardous materials environmental support function for County Emergency Management (ESF-10)	YES	NO	NO	NO	

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PETROLEUM MANAGEMENT					
Manages clean-up of over 100 petroleum contaminated sites in Alachua County	YES	NO	NO	NO	By FDEP contract
Annual compliance and enforcement inspections of 270 underground and aboveground petroleum tanks	YES	NO	NO	NO	By FDEP contract
Local technical assistance to citizens, banking, real estate interests and property owners on petroleum clean-up and tanks issues.	YES	NO	NO	NO	BY FDEP contract
Local engineering and geo-hydrology expertise and oversight for petroleum clean-up sites.	YES	NO	NO	NO	By FDEP contract
Local environmental response to petroleum spills and leaks.	95%	NO	5%	NO	ACEPD provides on-call emergency response to all petroleum discharges. FDEP provides response to only large catastrophic spills, in coordination with ACEPD.

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HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION Provides county-wide hazardous waste collection, recycling, and disposal network for households and small businesses.	YES	NO	NO	NO	ACEPD provides full service recycling and disposal for a wide variety of household and automotive hazardous chemicals. Certain businesses provide recycling for waste oil and batteries.
Operates Hazardous Waste Collection Center at the Leveda Brown Environmental Park	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Operates Reuse Center for distribution of useable household, automotive and electronic products	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Manages collection of recyclable hazardous waste at five Rural Collection Centers	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Provides recycled and used products such as latex paint and electronic equipment to people in need	YES	NO	NO	NO	
Conducts neighborhood and municipal hazardous waste collection events	YES	NO	NO	NO	

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Department of Environmental Protection

Jeb Bush
Governor

Twin Towers Office Building
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2400

David B. Struhs
Secretary

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

July 21, 2003

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JUL 25 2003
ALACHUA COUNTY
BOARD OF CO. COMMISSIONERS

Becc
C. Becc

Mr. Randall H. Reid, County Manager
Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
Post Office Box 2877
Gainesville, Florida 32602-2877

Dear Mr. Reid:

The Office of Inspector General for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has been asked to respond to your June 13, 2003, letter to Secretary Struhs. In order to accurately assess your inquiry, the services identified by your Environmental Protection Department's staff have been reviewed by members of FDEP operational units.

This response is prepared in direct relation to the matrix that was originally completed by your Department. The response will follow each function in the order they are presented in the matrix with FDEP operational staff's responses. For the most part FDEP operational staff concurs with your staff's assessment with some minor variations and some of this is likely due to the differing services your department offers on a strictly local basis. For this correspondence I have followed your matrix and numbered each function from 1 to 38 so each can be responded to specifically without recreating the matrix.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Conservation planning... | FDEP program staff agree |
| 2. Early identification... | FDEP program staff agree |
| 3. Local technical response... | FDEP program staff agree |
| 4. Review of land development... | FDEP program staff agree |
| 5. Determines if, when and where... | FDEP program staff agree |
| 6. Local response for natural... | FDEP staff agree that your local staff are providing this service but not exclusive of responses by WMD or FDEP if we receive the complaint or become aware of needed enforcement that is not being addressed locally. |

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7. Wetland and surface... FDEP program staff agree, with the single exception that we have the authority to deny permits on the basis of if, when and where.
8. Upland protection/wildlife... FDEP program staff agree
9. Endangered species habitat... FDEP program staff agree
10. Endangered species regulation... FDEP program staff agree
11. Acquisition activities... FDEP program staff agree
12. Stewardship activities... FDEP program staff agree
13. County Funded Surface... FDEP program staff agree, however the FDEP does have similar state-funded programs in this area.
14. County-funded Groundwater... FDEP program staff agree, however the FDEP does have similar state funded programs in this area.
15. Water Quality Codes... FDEP program staff agrees with the understanding that the state has the enforcement authority over the Water Quality Standards.
16. Implements the Alachua... FDEP program staff agrees, adding that the FDEP permits the waste water plants.
17. Implements the Federally... FDEP program staff feels that this activity is primarily a state operational activity under federal National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) guidelines.
18. FDEP Ambient Monitoring FDEP program staff agree with the understanding that the State contracts to the County, but, FDEP funds and directs this activity.
19. Orange Creek Basin... FDEP program staff agree
20. Coastal Impact Assistance... FDEP program staff agree
21. Compliance inspections for... FDEP program staff agree
22. Compliance inspections for... FDEP program staff agree but cannot verify the percentages represented because they are not fully aware of the number of inspections completed by county staff, but the representations of the numbers for FDEP were relatively accurate. These inspections do not appear to be a duplication of services.

23. Local environmental response... FDEP program staff agree but emphasize that FDEP's Division of Law Enforcement, Bureau of Emergency Response also responds to complaints that it receives and percentages may vary.
24. Investigates hazardous materials... FDEP program staff agree with the statement from your staff with the same uncertainty about the percentages, but they seem accurate. FDEP program staff are complimentary of the effort made in Alachua County to avoid duplication and state it has worked very well in this area. Program area staff also complemented ACEPD for their effectiveness at keeping complaints down in this area.
25. Compliance assistance, pollution... FDEP program staff agree; once again this is identified as a coordinated effort with both agencies participating together to provide workshops and training.
26. Local oversight of hazardous... FDEP program staff agree, however the State also provides oversight of hazardous materials site clean-ups.
27. Hazardous materials environmental... FDEP program staff agree except that FDEP Division of Law Enforcement also plays a role in Emergency Management.
28. Manages clean-up of over... FDEP program staff agrees that the County does all of the Petroleum clean-up activity with the exception of County-owned sites that are the responsibility of the State.
29. Annual compliance and enforcement... FDEP program staff agrees with the exception being the County-owned sites which falls under the State's purview.
30. Local technical assistance... FDEP program staff agree
31. Local engineering and geo-hydrology... FDEP program staff agree
32. Local environmental response to... FDEP program staff agree
33. Provides county-wide hazardous... FDEP program staff agree
34. Operates Hazardous Waste Collection... FDEP program staff agree
35. Operates Reuse Center for... FDEP program staff agree
36. Manages collection of recyclable... FDEP program staff agree
37. Provides recycled and used... FDEP program staff agree
38. Conducts neighborhood and... FDEP program staff agree

Randall H. Reid
July 21, 2003
Page 4

As this survey of program staff reveals, the assessment of your ACEPD staff is consistent with FDEP staff's observations and activities with some minor exceptions. Most of the variances are likely due to the local services that county staff offers above and beyond those mandated by state rule or statute. Some of the variance can also be attributed to perspective or semantics in how the specific function is described and interpreted. In conclusion, it was the observation of FDEP program staff that ACEPD works well in coordination with as well as independent of FDEP field staff and are meeting agency expectations while serving the local public well. If you have questions in this regard, feel free to call Major Roy Dickey, Director of Investigations at (850)245-8013.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pinky G. Hall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Pinky G. Hall, CIG
Inspector General

cc: Alachua County Board of County Commissioners



Department of Environmental Protection

Jeb Bush
Governor

Twin Towers Office Building
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2400

David B. Struhs
Secretary

Chris Bird, Director
Alachua County Environmental Protection Dept.
201 S. 2nd Avenue, Suite 201
Gainesville FL 32601

Feb. 13, 2003

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FEB 18 2003

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DEPARTMENT

Dear Mr. Bird:

I am writing this letter in support of your Department and staff and the excellent assistance they have provided to statewide monitoring efforts for over ten years. We certainly hope you will be able to continue this contracted assistance. Next year we need your intensified assistance as we partner to sample all the water resources of the Ocklawaha River Basin. This is done to fulfill the charge of the Florida Water Quality Assurance Act - to know the quality of our State waters - and provide that information to elected leaders who have the responsibility to plan for and protect future best uses of our natural resources. Since our Status Network is random and probabilistic there is no duplication of effort. For our Trend Network you just collect extra field analytes and occasional samples as you perform your potentiometric ground water monitoring.

Because your staff are extremely knowledgeable about local conditions, facilities, and activities we prefer to contract with you rather than send our crews to sample in your area. This is efficient for us and gives you knowledge of and a claim on the data. Since there are three Water Management Districts in your County we also appreciate your ability to cross those political boundaries. Your hosting of our recent Watershed Monitoring Meeting in High Springs was helpful in being able to use Alachua County terrain to show and to teach samplers from all over the State about ground water and surface water interactions and biological quality in karst streams. This knowledge has been transferred successfully into the sampling work now underway with the Governor's Springs Initiative.

The Alachua County citizens I have met when doing sampling audits with your staff have all been so positive about continuing to be part of gathering knowledge of statewide water quality conditions. I also believe they are more cooperative because the County staff are making the contacts and doing the work. I do hope your Commissioners will find the will to continue your valuable program. I will be glad to contact them directly in support of your activities.

Sincerely, *Cindy Cospo*
Cindy B. Cospo, Watershed Monitoring
Division of Water Resource Management

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St. Johns River Water Management District

Kirby B. Green III, Executive Director • John R. Wehle, Assistant Executive Director

Post Office Box 1429 • Palatka, FL 32178-1429 • (386) 329-4500

Chris Bird, Director
Alachua County Environmental Protection Department
201 SE 2 Avenue – Suite 201
Gainesville, FL 32601

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FEB 25 2003
PROTECTION
DEPARTMENT

February 14, 2003

Re: Interagency partnership with St. Johns River Water Management District

Dear Mr. ^{Chris} Bird:


I am writing to confirm the St. Johns River Water Management District's support for continuation of our successful partnership to monitor and protect water quality in Alachua County's lakes and creeks. This effective interagency working relationship was formalized in 1997 with a five-year cost-share contract that allowed substantially more work to get done cooperatively than either agency could have done alone.

Over the five years of this cost-share agreement, we were able to obtain the first continuous set of water quality data for many of the major creeks and lakes in the Gainesville area, and to distribute a comprehensive summary report of this data. Alachua County Environmental Protection Department collected the water samples while the District analyzed them and produced the summary reports. This water quality data was essential in FDEP's determination that most of the major lakes and creeks in Alachua County are impaired and do not meet state water quality standards.

The partnership contract also provided funding for a volunteer coordinator through the District's Watershed Action Volunteers program housed within ACEPD to conduct environmental education about water quality and to do biological assessments of creeks. ACEPD produced the first comprehensive report on water and habitat quality in the Gainesville-area creeks. Instead of duplicating efforts, our partnership effectively did more work for less.

We hope that this spirit of cooperation can continue to enhance protection of lakes and creeks in Alachua County.

Sincerely,


Kirby B. Green, Executive Director

cc: Carol Lippincott

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Department of Environmental Protection

Northeast District
7825 Baymeadows Way, Suite B200
Jacksonville, Florida 32256-7590

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MAR 11 2003

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DEPARTMENT

David B. Struhs
Secretary

March 7, 2003

Mr. Chris Bird
Alachua County Environmental Protection Department
201 SE 2nd Ave., Suite 201
Gainesville, Florida 32601-6813

Dear Mr. Bird:

The Department is pleased to support Alachua County's Environmental Protection Department. The EPD's Hazardous Materials Program enhances the state regulations and does not simply duplicate the effort of the state program. The most significant difference between the two programs is that the county regulations apply to all hazardous materials, while the state regulations apply specifically to the management of hazardous waste.

The Department is currently implementing the Compliance Assistance Pilot Project (CAPP) for auto repair shops in the Northeast and Northwest Districts. The program will require approximately 200 auto repair shops in Alachua County to certify to the DEP that they are in compliance with environmental requirements. On March 5, 2003 Agustin Olmos participated in a County SQG Program/DEP CAPP Program Interaction Workgroup to plan how the Department's CAPP program staff and the County SQG Program staff can best work together to accomplish our various goals, as we implement the CAPP program. We appreciate your Department's interest in the success of this program and willingness to participate.

The Northeast District appreciates the efforts of the Alachua Environmental Protection Department in the regulation of hazardous materials and the collection of household hazardous waste. We appreciate the cooperative relationship our inspectors enjoy with your staff and look forward to continued success in working together to protect human health and the environment in Alachua County.

Sincerely,

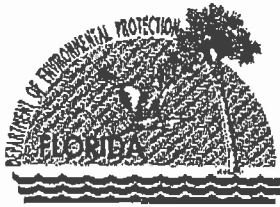
for

Michael J. Fitzsimmons
Environmental Administrator

MJF:vv

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Department of Environmental Protection

Twin Towers Office Building
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2400

David B. Struhs
Secretary

March 3, 2003

Mr. Kurt Seaburg
Hazardous Waste Coordinator
Alachua County EPD
5125 NE 63rd Avenue
Gainesville, FL 32609

Dear Mr. Seaburg:

As we both know, the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program began in 1986 as a result of an ever-increasing concern over Florida's water quality and the proper disposal of hazardous materials. At the same time, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (the Department) helped develop HHW collection programs throughout the state. Alachua County was one of the first counties in the state to become involved in these collection programs.

The Department appreciates Alachua County's efforts in raising environmental awareness and ensuring that HHW generated in the county is being managed and disposed of properly. The HHW program does not duplicate any efforts or programs currently conducted by the state. The Department's role is to offer technical assistance to counties and municipalities. Additionally, the Department provides unique and innovative grants and Cooperative (Coop) HHW collection grants. The Coop grants are given to counties with existing, on-going programs (i.e. Alachua) to assist neighboring counties without the capability or resources to sustain permanent HHW operations (i.e. Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Lafayette).

I am aware that Alachua County's HHW program has received various regional and national awards. These numerous awards reflect the outstanding program that you work hard to maintain and the high level of excellence and dedication that exists. The Department has maintained a close working relationship with you and your staff and looks forward to assisting Alachua County's HHW program with its future goals and objectives.

Sincerely,

Irene Gleason
Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator

Cc: Raoul Clarke, Department Environmental Administrator

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Department of Environmental Protection

Twin Towers Office Building
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2400

March 3, 2003

David B. Struhs
Secretary

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MAR 05 2003

PROTECTION
DEPARTMENT

Mr. Chris Byrd, Director
Alachua County
Environmental Protection Department
201 SE 2nd Ave. No.201
Gainesville, FL 32601-6813

Subject: Small Quantity Generator of Hazardous Waste
Assessment, Notification, and Verification Program

Dear Mr. ^{Chris}Byrd:

I would like to thank the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department for their continued efforts in meeting the statutory requirements and procedures for the Small Quantity Generator of Hazardous Waste Assessment, Notification, and Verification "SQG" Program under Sections 403.7225, 403.7234, and 403.7236, Florida Statutes (F.S.). Additionally, I would like to thank Agustin Olmos, SQG Program Coordinator, for the extra efforts in making Alachua County's SQG Program a success.

The goals of the SQG Program are to inform small businesses of their legal responsibilities in properly managing their hazardous waste to protect public health and the environment, and to update the original information submitted to the Department in each county's hazardous waste assessment as required in 403.7225, F.S. Considerable progress has been made in understanding the amounts, types, and management of hazardous waste generated by small businesses in Alachua County and in the State.

The SQG Program benefits the local community in many ways:

- The improved management of hazardous waste.
- The protection of public health and safety.
- The protection of the county's drinking water resources.
- The development of local compliance assistance programs that complement state and federal efforts.

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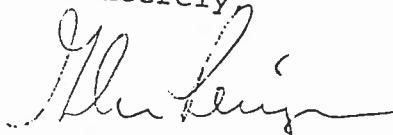
- The dissemination of pollution prevention information technologies to help local businesses further reduce their generation of hazardous waste, hazardous air emissions, and excessive water and energy use.

The Department needs your continued support. The Department estimates that there are 120,000 tons of potential and known hazardous waste generated statewide by small businesses yearly. There must be a shared responsibility between federal, state and local government to protect the public's health and safety and the environment. The job of educating and assisting small businesses to comply with federal and state environmental regulations can only be effectively accomplished with the help of local governments.

Unlike large businesses, many small businesses cannot afford the expense of an in-house environmental compliance staff. Access to regulatory guidelines and best management practices are often limited. As a result, many businesses that generate small amounts of hazardous waste find themselves unnecessarily caught in the federal Hazardous Waste Regulatory Program authorized by Congress under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). It is important that these small businesses be better informed of proper hazardous waste management practices and the serious consequences of mismanagement of these wastes.

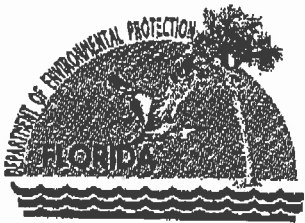
The Department of Environmental Protection looks forward to a continued working partnership with the Alachua County government to improve the implementation of this important program. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance. For additional information on the SQG Assessment, Notification and Verification Program, please contact me at the letterhead address (mail station 4555) or by phone at (850) 245-8707.

Sincerely,



Glen Perrigan

cc. Agustin Olmos, SQG Program Coordinator
Raoul Clarke, FDEP



Department of Environmental Protection

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Governor

Northeast District
7825 Baymeadows Way, Suite B200
Jacksonville, Florida 32256-7590

David B. Struhs
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March 7, 2003

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MAR 07 2003

PROTECTION
DEPARTMENT

Mr. Chris Bird
Alachua County Environmental Protection Department
201 SE 2nd Ave., Suite 201
Gainesville, Florida 32601-6813

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Sincerely,

for
Michael J. Fitzsimmons
Environmental Administrator

MJF:vv

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St. Johns River Water Management District

Kirby B. Green III, Executive Director • John R. Wehle, Assistant Executive Director

Cd. (Bird)

4049 Reid Street • Palatka, FL 32177 • (386) 329-4500

July 10, 2003

RECEIVED
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Randall H. Reid, County Manager
Alachua County Board of County Commissioners
P.O. Box 2877
Gainesville, FL 32602-2877

JUL 11 2003

PROTECTION
DEPARTMENT

Subject: Duplication of services

Dear Mr. Reid:

Thank you for your letter of June 13 concerning the potential duplication of services provided by Alachua County's Environmental Protection Department and the St. Johns River Water Management District (District). We have reviewed the matrix provided by your staff and have the following comments.

The first item listed concerns environmental planning services, local government comprehensive plans, and land development regulations. This is a local government responsibility, but the water management districts are mandated by s. 373.195, *Florida Statutes*, to provide technical assistance to local governments. In accordance with that statute, the District has provided technical information to your staff and continues to provide comments regarding comprehensive plan amendments to your staff and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The District, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and DCA are currently working together to link water supply planning and land use at the local level. This task is also aimed at helping local governments, state agencies, and others better coordinate their efforts.

The second item on the matrix relates to natural resource identification. The District also does resource investigations, such as wetland mapping and groundwater assessments, and coordinates these investigations with county staff in order to avoid duplication of effort.

The third item involves response to public requests for information. Here, too, the District provides a similar service, but I would not consider this duplication, since the public is not required to go to both the county and the District for information. This is the sort of service that every government entity is expected to provide to the public we all serve. A significant difference between the county and the District in this item is that the District will generally limit responses to public inquiries to information on water resources, including related environmental resources. The county has broader authority over its jurisdiction and thus must address a wider array of questions from the public.

The last item on which we have comments refers to environmental review of land development activities. The county staff reviews development for compliance with its comprehensive plan and land development regulations, and the District reviews those same activities for compliance with

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COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE

its environmental resource permitting regulations. The county staff commented that "Other agencies, through their environmental permitting authorities, only make the determination of how, not if, when and where." We clearly recognize the distinction between planning and permitting, and it is important to differentiate between the land use approval and permitting processes. While these are separate actions under separate authorities, to the extent that there are related or overlapping issues, there may be some duplication of effort within these separate processes. You may wish to further explore this issue in your analysis of duplication of services.

In general, county and District staff coordinate on both resource investigations and regulatory actions in order to avoid duplication of effort. The District's mission is to ensure the sustainable use and protection of water resources for the benefit of the people of the District and the state of Florida. As part of its statutory responsibilities and authority, the District is responsible for managing ground and surface water supplies in all or part of 18 counties that make up our region in northeast and east-central Florida. Major duties of the District include issuing consumptive use permits for various activities that have the potential to adversely impact ground or surface water resources and adjacent lands, buying land to preserve or restore vital wetlands and water resources, conducting research about the quality and quantity of ground and surface water resources, mapping ground and surface water resources, and conducting outreach and public education programs.

For many years, the District has partnered with local governments to acquire lands needed for restoration projects and has cost-shared millions of dollars on water quality, alternative water supply, and conservation projects and programs. The District also collaborates with many federal, state, and local government agencies on water quality improvement projects throughout our region. In summary, our perspective is that many of the activities in which the District is involved are carried out successfully because of the strong partnerships we have built with local governments, state and federal officials, other agencies, citizen groups and individuals throughout the District's 18-county service area.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. If you would like to explore any of these issues in greater detail, please let me know. We look forward to working with Alachua County in the future on water resource issues.

Sincerely,



Kirby B. Green III, Executive Director

cc: Linda Burnette, SJRWMD
Jeff Elledge, SJRWMD
Hal Wilkening, SJRWMD
Gene Caputo, SJRWMD