



2024 DEP AGENCY BILL

To continue ensuring a comprehensive range of environmental protections in the state, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) proposed House Bill 1557/ Senate Bill 1386, which became law on May 10, 2024. This legislation advances the protection of our environmental resources by:

Enhancing Protections for Florida's Coral Reef and Aquatic Preserves.

Establishes a new aquatic preserve over the Kristin Jacobs Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation Area to enhance protections for the northern portion Florida's Coral Reef, including improving coordination of restoration projects and streamlining water quality monitoring efforts.

Improving the Treatment of Reclaimed Water.

Ensures that reclaimed water is treated to meet Advanced Wastewater Treatment or a more stringent treatment standard in certain Basin Management Action Plan areas, while still promoting its use to eliminate surface water discharges and meet water supply challenges.

Strengthening Florida's Resilience Planning.

Clarifies elements eligible for the Resilient Florida Grant Program and defines the role of the Flood Hub and Chief Resilience Officer in developing the statewide dataset and assessment.

Investing in Innovative Technologies.

Creates a program to expeditiously review new and innovative enhanced nutrient-reducing Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems to reduce the nutrients entering Florida's waterways.

Expanding Wastewater Facility Plans.

Supports the development of domestic wastewater treatment plans and Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems remediation plans within Basin Management Action Plan areas or other restoration areas by requiring facilities to provide information to the local entities developing these plans.

Furthering the Onsite Septic Program Transfer.

Ensures that DEP has the appropriate authority to transfer the septic program from Department of Health so DEP can enter into contracts and delegation agreements, allows DEP to integrate enforcement and statutory compliance requirements for the onsite program into its existing regulatory structure, and provides DEP rulemaking authority for implementation.