General Permits for Distributed Wastewater Treatment Systems: Florida Legislation



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The Florida Legislature enacted Senate Bill 796 which grants a General Permit for the replacement of existing onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems with distributed wastewater treatment systems ("DWTS").

The General Permit requires that the permittee conduct monthly reporting, annual inspections, recordkeeping, and biosolids management in accordance with applicable rules.

Installation of a distributed wastewater treatment unit ("DWTU") may proceed without any further action by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection ("FDEP") if a permittee notifies the agency at least 30 days before the installation. Further, the notification must certify that a Florida registered professional designed the DWTU in accordance with applicable rules and that the proposed DWTU meets specific design and operational requirements.

The DWTU and DWTS must be commonly owned and operated by the permittee.

A stated objective of such systems is to provide municipal wastewater treatment services to areas that are out of reach of conventional underground sewer systems. Another objective is to provide a cost-effective option to replace septic tanks in such areas.

DWTS's are stated to consists of separate DWTU's that are in different geographical locations that are linked to a central system either physically or by management.

A copy of SB 796 can be downloaded here.