

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

WETLANDS PROGRAM



OVERVIEW

The Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County is pleased to announce an enhanced Wetlands program designed to improve customer service while maintaining natural resource protection for the citizens of Hillsborough County.

THE NEW PROGRAM:

- Consolidates multiple agency approvals.
- Reduces applicant's time seeking project approvals.
- Provides exemptions for certain minor activities in wetlands.
- Features a new applicant's handbook and *Basis of Review*, providing clarity to the process through which wetland impacts are approved or denied.
- Provides customer service improvements through agreements with other regulatory agencies to consolidate permit reviews at EPC and through the use of on-line technology to streamline the application process.
- Maintains local government oversight and natural resource protection.

These changes were designed to provide a more efficient and streamlined Wetlands program without sacrificing the strict standards and superior wetland protection expected by the citizens of Hillsborough County.

For additional information:

Please visit <http://www.epchc.org/wetlands.htm>

Or contact EPC's wetland's ombudsman at

813.627.2600

HOW HAS CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVED?

- EPC staff has produced an applicant's handbook to assist applicants in navigating through all aspects of the EPC review process.
- An ombudsman has been assigned to help applicants through the wetlands permitting process.
- Application forms have been updated and are on-line at www.epchc.org. Two application forms that do not require an application fee can be completed and submitted on-line.
- Elimination of the requirement for full size aerials from the Frederick B. Karl County Center when applying for a wetland delineation. Applicants may now print aerials from home computers or use a public access computer available at the EPC office to produce aerials on 8.5" x 11" paper.
- A delegation agreement with Tampa Port Authority for Minor Works permits and a pending delegation agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection consolidate permit reviews at the EPC.
- A blanket authorization with the Hillsborough County Public Works Department allows the maintenance of certain stormwater systems without application to the EPC.

WHAT ARE THE CHANGES TO THE REGULATIONS?

- An exemption from justification and mitigation requirements for bona fide agricultural activities allows impacts to non-forested isolated wetlands less than ¼ acre in size or up to ½ acre in size under certain circumstances.
- Standard and Noticed Exemptions from justification and mitigation requirements allow for wetland impacts to certain stormwater ponds, roadside ditches, upland cut ditches which were excavated in predominantly upland soils, upland excavated ponds less than 1 acre and commercial fish ponds.
- The new *Basis of Review* clarifies the criteria used by staff for reviewing and approving or denying impacts to wetlands.

The Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County
3629 Queen Palm Drive · Tampa, FL 33619
813.627.2600 · www.epchc.org

