

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1318

An act relating to onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; amending ss. 381.0065 and 381.0068, F.S.; providing that a member of local government who is knowledgeable about domestic wastewater treatment be added to the research review and advisory committee and the technical review and advisory panel established by the Department of Health for purposes of onsite sewage treatment and disposal system regulation; amending s. 318.0101, F.S.; exempting certain persons who are performing site evaluations relating to wastewater treatment and disposal systems from having to be certified as an environmental health professional by the Department of Health; providing that such persons must have completed a soils morphology course approved by the department and be working under the direct responsible charge of a licensed engineer; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraph (o) of subsection (4) of section 381.0065, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

381.0065 Onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; regulation.—

(4) PERMITS; INSTALLATION; AND CONDITIONS.—A person may not construct, repair, modify, abandon, or operate an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system without first obtaining a permit approved by the department. The department may issue permits to carry out this section, but shall not make the issuance of such permits contingent upon prior approval by the Department of Environmental Protection, except that the issuance of a permit for work seaward of the coastal construction control line established under s. 161.053 shall be contingent upon receipt of any required coastal construction control line permit from the Department of Environmental Protection. A construction permit is valid for 18 months from the issuance date and may be extended by the department for one 90-day period under rules adopted by the department. A repair permit is valid for 90 days from the date of issuance. An operating permit must be obtained prior to the use of any aerobic treatment unit or if the establishment generates commercial waste. Buildings or establishments that use an aerobic treatment unit or generate commercial waste shall be inspected by the department at least annually to assure compliance with the terms of the operating permit. The operating permit for a commercial wastewater system is valid for 1 year from the date of issuance and must be renewed annually. The operating permit for an aerobic treatment unit is valid for 2 years from the date of issuance and must be renewed every 2 years. If all information pertaining to the siting, location, and installation conditions or repair of an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system remains the same, a construction or repair permit for the onsite sewage treatment and disposal system may be transferred to another person, if the transferee files, within 60 days after the

transfer of ownership, an amended application providing all corrected information and proof of ownership of the property. There is no fee associated with the processing of this supplemental information. A person may not contract to construct, modify, alter, repair, service, abandon, or maintain any portion of an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system without being registered under part III of chapter 489. A property owner who personally performs construction, maintenance, or repairs to a system serving his or her own owner-occupied single-family residence is exempt from registration requirements for performing such construction, maintenance, or repairs on that residence, but is subject to all permitting requirements. A municipality or political subdivision of the state may not issue a building or plumbing permit for any building that requires the use of an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system unless the owner or builder has received a construction permit for such system from the department. A building or structure may not be occupied and a municipality, political subdivision, or any state or federal agency may not authorize occupancy until the department approves the final installation of the onsite sewage treatment and disposal system. A municipality or political subdivision of the state may not approve any change in occupancy or tenancy of a building that uses an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system until the department has reviewed the use of the system with the proposed change, approved the change, and amended the operating permit.

(o) The department shall appoint a research review and advisory committee, which shall meet at least semiannually. The committee shall advise the department on directions for new research, review and rank proposals for research contracts, and review draft research reports and make comments. The committee is comprised of:

1. A representative of the Division of Environmental Health of the Department of Health.
2. A representative from the septic tank industry.
3. A representative from the home building industry.
4. A representative from an environmental interest group.
5. A representative from the State University System, from a department knowledgeable about onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems.
6. A professional engineer registered in this state who has work experience in onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems.
7. A representative from local government who is knowledgeable about domestic wastewater treatment.
- ~~8.7.~~ A representative from the real estate profession.
- ~~9.8.~~ A representative from the restaurant industry.
- ~~10.9.~~ A consumer.

Members shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, with the appointments being staggered so that the terms of no more than four members expire in any one year. Members shall serve without remuneration, but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061.

Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 381.0068, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

381.0068 Technical review and advisory panel.—

(2) The primary purpose of the panel is to assist the department in rulemaking and decisionmaking by drawing on the expertise of representatives from several groups that are affected by onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems. The panel may also review and comment on any legislation or any existing or proposed state policy or issue related to onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems. If requested by the panel, the chair will advise any affected person or member of the Legislature of the panel's position on the legislation or any existing or proposed state policy or issue. The chair may also take such other action as is appropriate to allow the panel to function. At a minimum, the panel shall consist of a soil scientist; a professional engineer registered in this state who is recommended by the Florida Engineering Society and who has work experience in onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; two representatives from the home-building industry recommended by the Florida Home Builders Association, including one who is a developer in this state who develops lots using onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; a representative from the county health departments who has experience permitting and inspecting the installation of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems in this state; a representative from the real estate industry who is recommended by the Florida Association of Realtors; a consumer representative with a science background; two representatives of the septic tank industry recommended by the Florida Onsite Wastewater Association, including one who is a manufacturer of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems; a representative from local government who is knowledgeable about domestic wastewater treatment and who is recommended by the Florida Association of Counties and the Florida League of Cities; and a representative from the environmental health profession who is recommended by the Florida Environmental Health Association and who is not employed by a county health department. Members are to be appointed for a term of 2 years. The panel may also, as needed, be expanded to include ad hoc, nonvoting representatives who have topic-specific expertise. All rules proposed by the department which relate to onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems must be presented to the panel for review and comment prior to adoption. The panel's position on proposed rules shall be made a part of the rulemaking record that is maintained by the agency. The panel shall select a chair, who shall serve for a period of 1 year and who shall direct, coordinate, and execute the duties of the panel. The panel shall also solicit input from the department's variance review and advisory committee before submitting any comments to the department concerning proposed rules. The panel's comments must include any dissenting points of view concerning proposed rules. The panel shall hold meetings as it determines necessary to conduct its business, except that the chair, a quorum of the voting members of the panel, or the department

may call meetings. The department shall keep minutes of all meetings of the panel. Panel members shall serve without remuneration, but, if requested, shall be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061.

Section 3. Subsection (3) of section 381.0101, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

381.0101 Environmental health professionals.—

(3) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—No person shall perform environmental health or sanitary evaluations in any primary program area of environmental health without being certified by the department as competent to perform such evaluations. ~~The requirements of~~ This section does not apply to: ~~shall not be mandatory for~~

(a) Persons performing inspections of public food service establishments licensed under chapter 509; ~~or-~~

(b) ~~Persons performing site evaluations in order to determine proper placement and installation of onsite wastewater treatment and disposal systems who have successfully completed a department-approved soils morphology course and who are working under the direct responsible charge of an engineer licensed under chapter 471.~~

Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.

Approved by the Governor June 23, 2008.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 23, 2008.