

Florida Water Facts

- ◆ Florida's total water area covers 4,308 square miles and ranks third in the nation.
- ◆ Florida's coastline stretches 1,350 miles with 825 miles of beaches.
- ◆ The state has more than 11,000 miles of rivers, streams, and waterways.
- ◆ Florida has about 7,700 lakes that are larger than 10 acres.
- ◆ Florida has more than 700 springs with water that comes primarily from the aquifer.
- ◆ The state has 33 first magnitude springs (flow greater than 100 cubic feet per second), more than any other state.
- ◆ The Everglades is really a river that flows at the slow rate of a quarter mile per day.
- ◆ Florida receives 50-54 inches of rain annually.
- ◆ The average Floridian uses about 124 gallons of water daily.
- ◆ Depending on the region, between 65 and 85 percent of the water used is groundwater pumped from Florida's underground aquifer system.

Water Management in Florida

Water is one of Florida's most important natural resources, essential for maintaining public health and continuing economic community development. Florida faces complicated issues surrounding water's allocation, use, and conservation, and many governmental agencies work together to balance competing needs so that people all have necessary water supplies, now and in the future. For example, questions about water utility rates, drinking water quality, storm runoff, well drilling, beach erosion, agricultural irrigation, and restoration projects are best answered by the agency responsible for that aspect of water management.

Florida Public Service Commission

The Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC or Commission) regulates water and wastewater utility companies in 38 of Florida's 67 counties. The Jurisdictional Counties map shows the counties that have officially transferred jurisdiction to the Commission. In non-jurisdictional counties, the Board of County Commissioners usually has the responsibility for regulating the water utilities.

Regulated water and wastewater companies must apply to the Commission for a certificate of authorization before they can supply services to consumers. The FPSC establishes the service territories, regulates the rates the companies can charge, and requires the utilities to provide reliable service to all who request it. The Commission must also approve each utility's tariff sheet, which contains the company's rate schedules, charges, and rules.

Florida Statutes (Chapter 367) further explain the Commission's authority in the economic regulation of water and wastewater companies.

The Commission's main water conservation focus is economic regulation that affects the demand for water. Through consumer education, the FPSC promotes cooperation and policy coordination with other state water and environmental regulators.

Other agencies and organizations that handle water issues:

Florida Department of Health, www.doh.state.fl.us

American Water Works Association, www.awwa.org

Florida Rural Water Association, www.frwa.net

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, www.epa.gov

Florida Water and Pollution Control Operators Association, www.fwpcoa.org

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, www.myfwc.com

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, www.freshfromflorida.com

United States Army Corp of Engineers, www.usace.army.mil



FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

For further information, contact the

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Visit our Internet home page at

www.FloridaPSC.com

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You can't conserve what you haven't got."

Marjorie Stoneman Douglas



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