

ST. JOHNS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT POLICY

Establishing an Environmental and Agricultural Protection Area with Associated Controls within the St. Johns Improvement District

SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND INTENT

This St. Johns Improvement District (SJID) Policy is adopted to establish an environmentally focused regulatory and permitting framework within the SJID boundaries (approximately 28,600 acres) located within Indian River County, Florida. The policy is designed to:

- Promote public health and potable water protection,
 - Safeguard environmentally sensitive lands and water recharge areas,
 - Require appropriate wastewater treatment standards and nutrient management,
 - Ensure equitable participation and transparency for all affected landowners,
 - Support the development of agricultural and low-density land uses that are hydrologically and environmentally sustainable.
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SECTION 2. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

This policy is adopted under the authority of the following Florida laws:

- **Chapter 189, Florida Statutes** (Uniform Special District Accountability Act),
- **Chapter 190, Florida Statutes** (Community Development Districts),
- **Section 197.3632, Florida Statutes** (Uniform method for levy, collection, and enforcement of non-ad valorem assessments),
- **Section 403.086, Florida Statutes** (Advanced wastewater treatment),
- **Section 403.064, Florida Statutes** (Reclaimed water reuse),
- **Section 403.067, Florida Statutes** (Basin Management Action Plans),
- **Section 403.061(43), Florida Statutes** (Biosolid land application restrictions),
- **Sections 381.0065 and 381.00651, Florida Statutes** (On-site sewage treatment systems),
- **Section 187.201, Florida Statutes** (State Comprehensive Plan – Environmental Protection),
- **Section 163.3162(3)(e)** (Agricultural lands and practices),

- **Chapter 286, Florida Statutes** (Florida Sunshine Law – Public meetings and notice),
 - **Chapter 120, Florida Statutes** (Florida Administrative Procedure Act – Rulemaking and public participation).
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SECTION 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICT

3.1 District Boundaries

The SJID is a legislatively created special improvement district identified by its legal description identified in its legislative empowering documents and recorded in the official records of Indian River County, consisting of approximately 28,600 acres designated for environmental and agricultural protection.

3.2 District Name

The district is the **St. Johns Improvement District (SJID)**.

SECTION 4. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Wastewater and Septic Standards

Properties within the SJID are subject to elevated environmental protection standards, and this policy will identify and enforce pursuant to SJID policy and Indian River County Land Development codes adopted by the SJID:

- Setbacks from water bodies for septic and wastewater systems (minimum 250 feet),
- Use of advanced onsite sewage systems with filtration and disinfection,
- Prohibition of septic or leach field systems in low-lying or hydrologically sensitive areas.

4.2 Development Density and Sewer Requirements

Land development within the district is limited as follows:

- Parcels less than 10 acres must connect to a public or community sewage system, if available; basic drainfields will only be permitted if all setbacks, disinfection, and filtration standards are met.
- Parcels 10 acres or larger may have Indian River County zoning compliant residential use only if compliant with wastewater standards,
- Higher-density or multi-lot developments must submit site-specific wastewater, stormwater, and hydrologic engineering reports and will be required to connect to a centralized public sewer or approved community advanced secondary sewage facility.

4.3 Reuse Feasibility and Storm Elevation Compliance

Applicants for land development permits must provide:

- A reuse feasibility study for reclaimed water use (per Section 403.064, Fla. Stat.),
 - System design elevations at or above the 100-year, 24-hour storm event level (NOAA Atlas 14), or mean annual flood level, whichever is greater.
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SECTION 5. PERMITTING, MONITORING, AND INSPECTION

5.1 Application Requirements

All applications for development, redevelopment, or system modification must include:

- Site-specific hydrogeologic and storm elevation data,
- Either, Advanced Onsite Sewage System or Advanced Secondary Sewage Facility, both with Filtration and Disinfection
- Long-term maintenance and compliance plans,
- Proof of conformance with current Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and Department of Health (DOH) standards.

5.2 Water Quality Monitoring

Permit holders must perform water quality testing from approved locations:

- Monthly testing for fecal coliform, chlorine, salinity, and total suspended solids, as well as total nitrogen and total phosphorus for AWT systems.
- Sampling by a FDEP-certified laboratory, or a FDEP licensed domestic wastewater operator.
- Results submitted monthly or upon request to the governing agency.

5.3 System Inspections and Retrofits

Existing systems shall be:

- Brought into compliance within 36 months if determined to pose a contamination risk,
- Retrofitted prior to any future expansion or redevelopment activity.

5.4 Permittee Responsibility

All costs and coordination of testing, inspections, and system compliance are the responsibility of the landowner or permittee.

SECTION 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND NOTICE

6.1 Public Notice Requirement

Before the SJID policy is finalized or amended:

- Public notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation at least 10 days prior to the public hearing in compliance with Sections 286.011 and 189.015, Florida Statutes.

6.2 Public Hearing

At least two public meetings shall be held with affected stakeholders prior to the effective date of the policy. The hearing shall:

- Be held in accordance with Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law (Chapter 119, Florida Statutes),
- Be open to the public and publicly noticed,
- Include a designated time for public comment under Sections 286.0114 and 120.54, Florida Statutes.

SECTION 7. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

7.1 Administration

The SJID shall be administered by a designated office or agency of Indian River County. Oversight may include:

- An environmental compliance officer or board,
- Coordination with FDEP, DOH, and other regulatory entities.

7.2 Stakeholder Working Group

A voluntary working group of property owners, agricultural producers, and environmental professionals may be established to:

- Provide advisory feedback,
- Assist in refining implementation methods,
- Ensure technical feasibility and equity in enforcement.

7.3 Review and Updates

This policy shall be reviewed every five (5) years, or more frequently as directed by SJID or the Board of County Commissioners, to reflect:

- Statutory updates,
- New scientific data or technologies,
- Stakeholder input.

SECTION 8. SEVERABILITY AND EFFECTIVE DATE

8.1 Severability

If any provision of this policy is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder shall remain in effect.

8.2 Effective Date

This policy shall become effective upon:

- Completion of required public notice and public meetings,
- Approval by the SJID Board of Supervisors
- Approval by resolution of the Board of County Commissioners,
- Filing with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and other appropriate state agencies.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2025, by the Board of Supervisors of the St. Johns Improvement District

ATTEST:

Paul R. Amos, Secretary

ST. JOHNS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT:

Cody Estes, Chairman