[DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION](https://flrules.org/gateway/department.asp?id=62" \t "department)

RULE NO.: RULE TITLE:

[62-41.400](https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=62-41.300): Outstanding Florida Springs, Scope of Rules

62-41.401: Outstanding Florida Springs, Uniform Definition of Harmful to the Water Resources

62-41.402: Outstanding Florida Springs, Uniform Conditions for Issuance of Permits

62-41.403: Outstanding Florida Springs, Additional Protections Consistent with Local or Regional Conditions and Objectives

**62-41.400** **Outstanding Florida Springs, Scope of Rules**

(1) Rules 62-41.400 through 62-41.403, F.A.C., implement section 373.219(3), F.S., for Outstanding Florida Springs which requires the department to adopt uniform rules, consistent with the overall policy of the state, for issuing permits which prevent groundwater withdrawals that are harmful to the water resources and adopt by rule a uniform definition of the term “harmful to the water resources.” These supplemental rules provide the basis for the evaluation of consumptive uses of water to ensure they are not harmful to an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run as defined in section 373.802(4) and 373.802(7), F.S.

(2) The phrases “Consumptive Use Permit,” “Consumptive Use Permitting,” and “Consumptive Use Applicants” are synonymous with “Water Use Permit,” “Water Use Permitting,” and “Water Use Applicants,” respectively, as used by agencies implementing Part II of Chapter 373, F.S.

(3) "Agency" or “agencies” means the Department of Environmental Protection and the water management districts as entities with the authority to implement Part II of Chapter 373, F.S.

(4) These supplemental rules shall be utilized as minimum standards in the evaluation of consumptive use permits to ensure they are not harmful to an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run. The agencies shall implement these supplemental rules in conjunction with their consumptive use permitting or water use permitting rules. These supplemental rules do not prohibit an agency from adopting a definition of the term “harmful to the water resources” that is more protective of the water resources consistent with local or regional conditions and objectives.

*Rulemaking Authority: 373.026, 373.219, 373.813, FS. Law Implemented: 373.219, 373.802, FS.*

**62-41.401 Outstanding Florida Springs, Uniform Definition of Harmful to the Water Resources**

(1) Harmful to the Water Resources for Outstanding Florida Springs means a consumptive use that adversely impacts an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run in one or more of the following ways:

(a) Causing harmful water quality impacts to the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run resulting from the withdrawal or diversion;

(b) Causing harmful water quality impacts from dewatering discharge to the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run;

(c) Causing harmful saline water intrusion or harmful upconing to the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run;

(d) Causing harmful hydrologic alterations to natural systems associated with an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run, including wetlands or other surface waters; and

(e) Otherwise causing harmful hydrologic alterations to the water resources of the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run.

(2) Consistent with paragraph (1), the applicant shall provide reasonable assurance, using the best available information, that there are no adverse impacts caused by the withdrawal or diversion, on an individual or cumulative basis, to the extent that:

(a) The withdrawal or diversion does not induce movement of a contamination plume or alter the rate or direction of the movement of a contamination plume towards an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run.

(b) Dewatering discharges do not cause harmful water quality impacts to the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run. Dewatering water must be retained onsite unless the applicant demonstrates it is not technically or environmentally feasible to retain the dewatering water onsite. Applicants who have obtained and are in compliance with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) or Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) for dewatering shall be considered to not cause harmful water quality impacts from dewatering discharge to receiving waters.

(c) Withdrawals do not cause an increase in total dissolved solids (TDS) or chloride concentrations that adversely affects the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run. The agencies will not consider saline water intrusion as harmful if it is the result of seasonal fluctuations; climatic conditions; or operation of the Central and Southern Flood Control Project, secondary canals, or stormwater systems. As part of the consideration of whether the use will cause harmful saline water intrusion or upconing, the following factors must be considered, as applicable:

1. Whether there is a sustained amount and rate of increase of TDS or chloride concentrations in the Outstanding Florida Spring;

2. Whether there would be adverse impacts to values or functions of wetlands or other surface waters associated with an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run.

(d) Hydrologic alterations to the spring resulting from withdrawals do not cause adverse impacts to the aquatic or wetland dependent flora or fauna in the spring or its spring run.

 (3) To provide reasonable assurance that harm to the water resources will not occur due to the proposed water withdrawal or diversion, the following information shall be submitted as applicable:

(a) A comparison of the existing pre withdrawal conditions of the system to the predicted post withdrawal conditions of the system inclusive of any predicted hydrologic alterations to an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run caused by the withdrawal or diversion. The comparison will include any predicted changes in aquatic or wetland flora or fauna at an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run. An applicant shall only be required to address its relative contribution of harm to the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run associated with its water withdrawal.

(b) A summary of any monitoring or modeling analysis performed and electronic copies of any modeling files.

(c) Any additional materials utilized in the analysis to provide reasonable assurance that harm, as defined above, will not occur due to the withdrawal or diversion, including aerial photographs, topographic maps, hydrologic data, environmental assessments, or other relevant information.

*Rulemaking Authority: 373.026, 373.219, 373.813, FS. Law Implemented: 373.219, FS.*

**62-41.402 Outstanding Florida Springs, Uniform Conditions for Issuance of Permits**

(1) No permit issued by the agencies for the consumptive use of water shall authorize groundwater withdrawals that are harmful to the water resources as provided in paragraph (3)(g), and each permittee shall meet the criteria established in section 62-41.401, F.A.C.

(2) To obtain a consumptive use permit, renewal, or modification, an applicant whose withdrawal is potentially harmful to an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run must provide reasonable assurance that the proposed consumptive use of water, on an individual and cumulative basis:

(a) Is a reasonable-beneficial use;

(b) Will not interfere with any presently existing legal use of water; and

(c) Is consistent with the public interest.

(3) In order to provide reasonable assurances that the consumptive use is reasonable-beneficial, an applicant shall demonstrate that the consumptive use:

(a) Is a quantity that is necessary for economic and efficient use;

(b) Is for a purpose and occurs in a manner that is both reasonable and consistent with the public interest;

(c) Will utilize a water source that is suitable for the consumptive use;

(d) Will utilize a water source that is capable of producing the requested amount;

(e) Will utilize the lowest quality water source that is suitable for the purpose and is technically, environmentally, and economically feasible, except for the following agricultural water uses;

1. Water used for washing hands during and after harvest activities;

2. Water that is applied in any manner that directly contacts produce during or after harvest activities (for example, water applied for washing or cooling); and

3. Water used to make ice that directly contacts produce during or after harvest activities.

(f) Will not cause harm to existing offsite land uses resulting from hydrologic alterations;

(g) Will not cause harm to the water resources of the area in any of the following ways:

1. Will not cause harmful water quality impacts to the water source resulting from the withdrawal or diversion;

2. Will not cause harmful water quality impacts from dewatering discharge to receiving waters;

3. Will not cause harmful saline water intrusion or harmful upconing;

4. Will not cause harmful hydrologic alterations to natural systems, including wetlands or other surface waters; and

5. Will not otherwise cause harmful hydrologic alterations to the water resources of the area;

(h) Is in accordance with any minimum flow or level and implementation strategy established pursuant to sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S.; and

(i) Will not use water reserved pursuant to section 373.223(4), F.S.

*Rulemaking Authority: 373.026, 373.219, 373.813, FS. Law Implemented: 373.219, 373.223, FS.*

**62-41. 403 Outstanding Florida Springs, Additional Protections Consistent with Local or Regional Conditions and Objectives**

(1) Nothing in Rules 62-41.401 or 62-41.402, F.A.C., shall prevent agencies from adopting a definition of “harmful to the water resources” that is more protective of the water resources consistent with local or regional conditions and objectives including, as necessary, the adoption of a Restricted Allocation Area for an Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run.

(2) Restricted Allocation Areas for Outstanding Florida Springs are water allocation restrictions within a defined geographic area within a water management district where:

(a) Existing sources of water are not adequate to supply water for all existing and future, reasonable-beneficial uses and to sustain the water resources and related natural systems for the 20-year planning period as required in 373.709 F.S., and

(b) Regional action is necessary to address cumulative water withdrawals which are causing or are reasonably anticipated within the next 20 years to cause adverse impacts to the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run.

(3) To evaluate whether regional action is necessary in accordance with subparagraph (2)(b), the water management district shall consider the following factors:

(a) Adverse trends in discharge from the Outstanding Florida Spring vent(s) or applicable gage(s) associated with the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run due to groundwater withdrawals.

(b) Reductions in potentiometric surface throughout the planning region, or subset thereof, due to groundwater withdrawals and corresponding adverse impacts on the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run.

(c) Projected reductions in potentiometric surface throughout the planning region due to projected growth in the next 20 years and predicted and corresponding adverse impacts on the Outstanding Florida Spring or its spring run within the next 20 years.

(d) Whether the Outstanding Florida Spring is below, or expected within 20 years to fall below, its adopted Minimum Flow or Minimum Water Level.

(4) When implementing a Restricted Allocation Area for an Outstanding Florida Spring, the water management district shall:

(a) Consider whether a limit is needed on Upper Floridan Aquifer groundwater withdrawals based on groundwater use or projected groundwater demands.

(b) Identify alternative water supply options to meet existing and reasonably anticipated future water demands for the 20-year planning period.

(c) Consider whether additional water conservation criteria and reporting are necessary to reduce overall water demands.

*Rulemaking Authority: 373.026, 373.219, 373.813, FS. Law Implemented: 373.219, FS.*