

**WATER
TOPICS**



Policy for Water Quality Protection

UF/IFAS Extension
Marion County

WET is a monthly newsletter that brings you latest water and energy information.

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The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program is among the major programs implemented by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to address water quality issues in the state. The establishment of the TMDL program is grounded in the federal Clean Water Act, which requires states to submit a list of impaired surface waters that do not meet water quality standards, and to establish TMDL limits for these waters. A TMDL is the total amount of pollution that a water body can receive over a certain period of time (usually, a year) and still meet water quality standards. In Florida, the TMDL process includes the identification, verification, and listing of impaired waters; development of the TMDL plan with the initial allocation of allowable loads among polluting sources; and completion of the TMDL implementation plan, referred to as the Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP), with detailed allocations of allowable loads and evaluation of strategies to achieve these allocations. These steps are followed by BMAP implementation, progress monitoring and



evaluation, and BMAP modifications if water quality targets are not achieved.

The FDEP conducts TMDL assessments of water bodies, and is also the lead agency in coordinating the implementation of the TMDL program and developing basin plans and suitable measures to reduce pollution from nonagricultural nonpoint (diffused) pollution sources. The FDEP also regulates point source discharges (i.e., discharges through a confined discharge point, such as a pipe) of industrial and domestic wastewater facilities by issuing and enforcing surface water discharge permits. The regulation of point sources of water pollution, as required by the federal Clean Water Act, is called the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) is responsible for developing and adopting best management practices (BMPs) manuals, and assisting agricultural producers in implementing BMPs to improve water quality. The FDACS, Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP) works to establish best management practices (BMPs) with input from the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS). To know more about public policy and water in Florida, please click here: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FE/FE79900.pdf>