

**Rules of the
South Florida Water Management District**

**EXCEPTIONS TO THE UNIFORM
RULES OF PROCEDURE
CHAPTER 40E-0, F.A.C.**



Effective: October 1, 2013

Section 373.4131, F.S. (2012), required DEP, in coordination with the five WMDs, to develop Statewide Environmental Resource Permitting rules (SWERP)

CHAPTER 40E-0
EXCEPTIONS TO THE UNIFORM RULES OF PROCEDURE

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40E-0.101 Scope.

This chapter contains rules for which the South Florida Water Management District has been granted specific exceptions to Title 28, F.A.C., Uniform Rules of Procedure, by the Administration Commission pursuant to Section 120.54(5), F.S. Each rule listed in this chapter is also listed within its corresponding, substantive rule chapter within Title 40E, F.A.C.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5) FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5) FS. History—New 7-2-98.

40E-0.102 Time for Consideration of Emergency Petition for Variance or Waiver.

Notwithstanding Rule 28-104.005, F.A.C., when a petition for an emergency variance or waiver requires action by the District, the District shall grant or deny a petition for emergency variance or waiver within 30 days of its receipt or at the next regularly scheduled meeting for which notice may be properly given.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5) FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5), 373.079, 373.083 FS. History—New 7-2-98, Amended 10-23-12.

40E-0.103 Procedures for Processing Permit Applications.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5), 120.60 FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5), 120.60 FS. History—New 7-2-98, Amended 6-12-00, Repealed by Section 3, Chapter 2012-31, Laws of Florida, 5-27-12.

40E-0.105 Consideration of Intended Agency Decision on Permit Applications.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5), 120.60, 668.003, 668.004, 668.50 FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5), 120.60, 668.003, 668.004, 668.50 FS. History—New 7-2-98, Amended 3-22-09, Repealed by Section 3, Chapter 2012-31, Laws of Florida, 5-27-12.

40E-0.107 Emergency Action.

(1) An emergency exists when immediate action is necessary to protect public health, safety or welfare; the health of animals, fish or aquatic life; the works of the District; a public water supply, or recreational, commercial, industrial, agricultural or other reasonable uses of land and water resources.

(2) The Executive Director may employ the resources of the District to take whatever remedial action necessary to alleviate the emergency condition without the issuance of an emergency order, or in the event an emergency order has been issued, after the expiration of the requisite time for compliance with that order.

(3) The procedures under this rule are provided in addition to the procedures set forth in Rule 28-106.501, F.A.C.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5), 120.60, 373.439 FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5), 120.60, 373.439 FS. History—New 7-2-98.

40E-0.108 Emergency Authorization.

(1) Permission to initiate activities regulated under Chapter 373, F.S., prior to the issuance of a permit or authorization of use may be applied for, in writing, when emergency conditions justify. However, no such permission shall be granted unless the proposed use is already under consideration for a permit under District rules. Mere carelessness or lack of planning on the part of the applicant shall not be sufficient grounds to warrant the granting of an emergency authorization.

(2) The Executive Director may grant an emergency authorization pursuant to Section 373.119(2), F.S. The emergency authorization shall be presented to the Governing Board for concurrence at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Failure to receive the Governing Board's concurrence shall automatically invalidate the emergency authorization.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5), 120.60, 373.439 FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5), 120.60, 373.439 FS. History—New 7-2-98, 6-12-00.

40E-0.109 Point of Entry Into Proceedings and Mediation.

Point of entry into proceedings determining substantial interests are governed by Rule 28-106.111, F.A.C., and this section.

(1)(a) "Receipt of written notice of agency decision" as set forth in Rule 28-106.111, F.A.C., means receipt of either written notice through regular United States mail, or electronic mail, or posting that the District has or intends to take final agency action, or publication of notice that the District has or intends to take final agency action.

(b) If notice is published pursuant to this chapter, publication shall constitute constructive notice to all persons. Until notice is published, the point of entry to request a formal or informal administrative proceeding shall remain open unless actual notice is received.

(2) If the District takes action which substantially differs from the notice of intended agency decision, the applicant or persons who may be substantially affected shall have an additional point of entry pursuant to Rule 28-106.111, F.A.C., unless otherwise provided by law. The District action is considered to substantially differ from the notice of intended agency decision when the potential impact on water resources has changed.

(3) Notwithstanding Rule 28-106.111, F.A.C., intended agency decisions or agency decisions regarding consolidated applications for Environmental Resource Permits and Use of Sovereign Submerged Lands pursuant to Section 373.427, F.S., shall provide a 14 day point of entry to file

petitions for administrative hearing under Rule 28-106.111, F.A.C.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5), 373.044, 373.113 FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5), 120.569, 120.57, 120.60, 373.079, 373.083, 373.146, 373.413, 373.427, 668.003, 668.004, 668.50 FS. History—New 7-2-98, Amended 6-12-00, 3-22-09, 10-23-12.

40E-0.111 Exemptions and Variances for Well Construction Permits.

(1) The board finds that compliance with all the requirements of Part I of Chapter 40E-3, F.A.C., may result in an undue hardship for the construction, repair or abandonment of certain wells.

(2) Any affected person may request an exemption from any or all of these rules for an individual well by making written request which must include those specific requirements for which an exemption is requested, any alternate or substitute methods or conditions considered appropriate, and reasons why the exemption is considered necessary.

(3) The District shall grant the exemption by way of a variance if the proposal is in accordance with accepted public health and sanitary engineering principles and practices and will not adversely affect the water resource. The variance shall be the minimum necessary to ameliorate the hardship.

(4) If the request is for a variance from the requirement of obtaining a water use permit, the applicant must demonstrate that an application has been filed and a compelling necessity exists to commence the construction, repair or modification of a well while an application for a water use permit is pending. Issuance of the variance will not be evidence of any entitlement to the water use permit.

(5) Upon issuance of a variance the District shall impose such special conditions as may be necessary to protect the intent and purpose of Part III, Chapter 373, F.S., and this chapter.

(6) The variance under this rule is provided in addition to the variance and waiver procedures set forth in Rule 28-104, F.A.C., which implements Section 120.542, F.S.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5), 373.044, 373.113, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5), 373.303, 373.308, 373.313, 373.316, 373.326 FS. History—New 9-2-98, Amended 6-12-00.

40E-0.113 Variances from Specified Review Criteria for Environmental Resource Permits.

Rulemaking Authority 373.044, 373.113, 373.171, 373.414(17) FS. Law Implemented 403.201 FS. History—New 9-2-98, Amended 6-12-00, 6-26-02, 10-23-12, Repealed 10-1-13.

40E-0.115 Variances from Water Use Restrictions.

(1) All users requesting relief from the provisions of Chapter 40E-21, F.A.C., shall file an application for variance but must conform to water use restrictions until the Executive Director grants a temporary variance or the Board grants the variance.

(2) Criteria for Issuance – No application for variance shall be granted unless the applicant provides reasonable assurances that the variance will not otherwise be harmful to the water resources of the District and affirmatively demonstrates that one or more of the following circumstances exists:

- (a) The variance is essential to protect health or safety, or
- (b) Compliance with the particular rule or order from which a variance is sought will require measures which, because of their extent or cost, cannot be accomplished within the anticipated duration of the shortage, or
- (c) Alternative restrictions which achieve the same level of demand reduction as the

restrictions from which a variance is sought are available and are binding and enforceable, or

(d) The applicant is a public or private utility that demonstrates that special circumstances exist which necessitate the issuance of a variance, or

(e) The applicant's source of water includes an approved aquifer storage and recovery installation or a water reclamation project.

(3) Limiting Conditions – Variances granted shall be subject to the following conditions:

(a) The variance granted shall be the minimum necessary to alleviate the circumstance for which the variance was requested under subsection (2).

(b) All variances shall expire upon a declaration by the Board that a water shortage no longer exists or when a more restrictive water shortage declaration is made, unless the Board specifies that the variance shall be in effect for a longer period of time, provided however that variance conditions which require the applicant to modify water use facilities shall remain in full force and effect until such modifications have been completed. However, when a new application for variance is filed within seven working days of the effective date of a more restrictive water shortage declaration, the existing variance shall remain in effect until final agency action on the application.

(c) Variances granted under paragraph (2)(b) may prescribe a timetable for compliance with the restrictions from which a variance was sought.

(4) Applications for Variance – The application shall contain the following:

(a) The applicant's name, address, telephone number and location of the property for which relief is requested.

(b) The specific rule, order, water shortage phase or restriction from which the applicant is requesting relief.

(c) A detailed statement of the facts which the applicant believes demonstrate that the request qualifies for a variance under subsection (2), including reports by qualified technical experts.

(d) A description of the relief desired.

(e) The period of time for which the variance is sought, including the reasons and facts in support thereof.

(f) The damage or harm resulting or which may result to the applicant from compliance with the rule or order.

(g) If the variance is sought under paragraph (2)(b), information identifying the restrictions which currently can be met, a description of the measures which would be necessary to meet all restrictions and the date when these measures could be completed.

(h) If the applicant is the owner or operator of a golf course whose need for a variance arises from the operational inability of its irrigation system or works to meet the front nine-back nine requirement in Chapter 40E-21, Part V, F.A.C., the applicant shall submit a map showing the proposed alternative division of the course in-half and an explanation of the applicant's proposed irrigation scheme.

(i) For applications for variance from restrictions on irrigation, a general description of the irrigation system, including pump or water system output and irrigated area, and

(j) Any other information, the applicant believes is material.

(5) Procedures.

(a) Within ten working days after receipt of a complete application for variance, which contains the information listed in subsection 40E-21.275(4), F.A.C., the staff shall recommend to the Executive Director whether the application complies with the provisions of subsections (2) through (4). The recommendation shall be in writing and shall constitute proposed agency action.

The District shall set forth in writing the grounds or basis for denial of the variance and inform the applicant of the right to a hearing on the denial of the application by filing a petition. A copy of the recommendation shall be forwarded to the applicant. Any petition for hearing on an application for variance shall be considered a petition for informal proceedings in accordance with subsection 40E-1.571(2), F.A.C.

(b) The Executive Director or his designee shall review the application and the staff recommendation. Applications which do not require immediate action or which do not comply with the provisions of subsections (2) through (4) may be deferred for Board action. Applications which require immediate action and which comply with the provisions of subsections (2) through (4) may be temporarily granted by the Executive Director or his designee. Temporary variances granted by the Executive Director or his designee shall be presented to the Board for concurrence, rejection or modification.

(c) The Board shall consider all deferred applications as well as those temporarily granted by the Executive Director or his designee, at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board may grant, or deny the deferred applications and may concur in, reject or modify those variances temporarily granted by the Executive Director or his designee. All Board action denying applications for variances shall be by written order and copies shall be furnished to the applicant and the appropriate law enforcement officials. An applicant whose variance has been granted shall be furnished an appropriate notice of water shortage variance and any attachments which shall be prominently displayed at the applicant's place of use.

(d) The Board may revoke or modify a variance when it determines that the continued utilization of the variance is inconsistent with the objectives of the District.

(6) The variance under this rule is provided in addition to the variance and waiver procedures set forth in Rule 28-104, F.A.C., which implements Section 120.542, F.S.

Rulemaking Authority 120.54(5), 373.044, 373.113 FS. Law Implemented 120.54(5), 373.175, 373.246 FS. History—New 9-2-98, Amended 6-12-00.