



## **WES-PP-06: CONVERSION OF PRIVATE WELLS AND SEPTIC TANKS**

### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: ADOPT**

**PROPOSED POLICY:** SUPPORT recurring funding for conversion programs designed to move private wells to potable drinking water and private septic tanks to public wastewater collection systems. SUPPORT greater flexibility for programs that address the costs incurred by residents connecting to sewer and the proper abandonment of septic systems.

**BACKGROUND:** Modern permitting and environmental practices do not support the installation of septic systems in areas of dense populations, low-lying, tidally influenced areas, and other areas with high water tables. Densely populated areas on private wells and septic tanks are particularly vulnerable to these risks. However, many of these legacy systems remain thorough out the state which pose a public health challenge to homeowners on private wells and septic systems.

**ANALYSIS:** Utility programs are critical to the health of our current population and the success of future growth. These utility programs are also critical to the health of our ecosystem. Many counties need additional financial support to implement their utility plans. These utility programs directly support public and environmental health.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Establish new or expand existing programs to provide a recurring funding source in the State's budget.

### **FAC STAFF NOTES:**

- 2022 FAC Policy Conference
  - WES-PP-06 was recommended for adoption by the WES committee
  - This proposal was previously numbered WES-PP-07
- FY 2022-23 Budget Appropriations:
  - \$368 million was provided for Water Projects in specific appropriation of 1665A of the 2022 General Appropriations Act (GAA), a portion of which is dedicated to septic-to-sewer programs
  - \$10 million is appropriated in specific appropriation 1670B of the 2022 GAA toward the Department of Environmental Protection's Septic Upgrade Incentive program
  - Currently, the Septic Upgrade Incentive program is only operational in designated areas of Citrus, Hernando, Leon, Marion, Orange, Pasco, Seminole, Volusia, and Wakulla counties, identified as Priority Focus Areas due to their high density of natural springs
  - \$20 million is appropriated in specific appropriation 1779 of the 2022 GAA for water quality improvements in the Biscayne Bay area, a portion of which is designated for septic-to-sewer programs
- FAC Guiding Principles:



- WES 2: The Florida Association of Counties supports state funding for water quality improvement projects designed to reduce nutrient pollution in Florida's impaired waterbodies, recognizing that multiple sources contribute to nutrient loading, including, but not limited to, wastewater and septic systems, industrial, agricultural, and residential water use.

**SUBMITTING COUNTIES:** Lake—Sean Parks

**ASSIGNED COMMITTEE:** WES

**BOARD SUPPORT:** Yes, Miami-Dade

**UNFUNDED MANDATE:** No

**PROTECTIVE OF HOME RULE:** N/A