

2013 Florida Statutes

[Title XXIX PUBLIC HEALTH](#)

[Chapter 403 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL](#) [Entire Chapter](#)

SECTION 706

Local government solid waste responsibilities.

403.706 Local government solid waste responsibilities.—

(1) The governing body of a county has the responsibility and power to provide for the operation of solid waste disposal facilities to meet the needs of all incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county. Unless otherwise approved by an interlocal agreement or special act, municipalities may not operate solid waste disposal facilities unless a municipality demonstrates by a preponderance of the evidence that the use of a county designated facility, when compared to alternatives proposed by the municipality, places a significantly higher and disproportionate financial burden on the citizens of the municipality when compared to the financial burden placed on persons residing within the county but outside of the municipality. However, a municipality may construct and operate a resource recovery facility and related onsite solid waste disposal facilities without an interlocal agreement with the county if the municipality can demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence that the operation of such facility will not significantly impair financial commitments made by the county with respect to solid waste management services and facilities or result in significantly increased solid waste management costs to the remaining persons residing within the county but not served by the municipality's facility. This section shall not prevent a municipality from continuing to operate or use an existing disposal facility permitted on or prior to October 1, 1988. Any municipality which establishes a solid waste disposal facility under this subsection and subsequently abandons such facility shall be responsible for the payment of any capital expansion necessary to accommodate the municipality's solid waste for the remaining projected useful life of the county disposal facility. Pursuant to this section and notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, counties shall have the power and authority to adopt ordinances governing the disposal of solid waste generated outside of the county at the county's solid waste disposal facility. In accordance with this section, municipalities are responsible for collecting and transporting solid waste from their jurisdictions to a solid waste disposal facility operated by a county or operated under a contract with a county. Counties may charge reasonable fees for the handling and disposal of solid waste at their facilities. The fees charged to municipalities at a solid waste management facility specified by the county shall not be greater than the fees charged to other users of the facility except as provided in s. [403.7049](#)(5). Solid waste management fees collected on a countywide basis shall be used to fund solid waste management services provided countywide.

(2)(a) Each county shall implement a recyclable materials recycling program that shall have a goal of recycling recyclable solid waste by 40 percent by December 31, 2012; 50 percent by December 31, 2014; 60 percent by December 31, 2016; 70 percent by December 31, 2018; and 75 percent by December 31, 2020. Counties and municipalities are encouraged to form cooperative arrangements for implementing recycling programs.

(b) In order to assist counties in attaining the goals set forth in paragraph (a), the Legislature finds that the recycling of construction and demolition debris fulfills an important state interest. Therefore, each county must implement a program for recycling construction and demolition debris.

(c) In accordance with applicable local government ordinances, newly developed property receiving a certificate of occupancy, or its equivalent, on or after July 1, 2012, that is used for multifamily residential or commercial purposes, must provide adequate space and an adequate receptacle for recycling by tenants and owners of the property. This provision is limited to counties and municipalities that have an established residential, including multifamily, or commercial recycling program that provides recycling receptacles to residences and businesses and regular pickup services for those receptacles.

(d) If, by January 1 of 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, or 2021, the county, as determined by the department in accordance with applicable rules, has not reached the recycling goals as set forth in paragraph (a), the department may direct the county to develop a plan to expand recycling programs to existing commercial and multifamily dwellings, including, but not limited to, apartment complexes.

(e) If the state's recycling rate for the 2013 calendar year is below 40 percent; below 50 percent by January 1, 2015; below 60 percent by January 1, 2017; below 70 percent by January 1, 2019; or below 75 percent by January 1, 2021, the department shall provide a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The report shall identify those additional programs or statutory changes needed to achieve the goals set forth in paragraph (a). The report shall be provided no later than 30 days prior to the beginning of the regular session of the Legislature. The department is not required to provide a report to the Legislature if the state reaches its recycling goals as described in this paragraph.

(f) Such programs shall be designed to recover a significant portion of at least four of the following materials from the solid waste stream prior to final disposal at a solid waste disposal facility and to offer these materials for recycling: newspaper, aluminum cans, steel cans, glass, plastic bottles, cardboard, office paper, and yard trash. Local governments which operate permitted waste-to-energy facilities may retrieve ferrous and nonferrous metal as a byproduct of combustion.

(g) Local governments are encouraged to separate all plastics, metal, and all grades of paper for recycling prior to final disposal and are further encouraged to recycle yard trash and other mechanically treated solid waste into compost available for agricultural and other acceptable uses.

(h) The department shall adopt rules establishing the method and criteria to be used by a county in calculating the recycling rates pursuant to this subsection.

(i) Each county is encouraged to consider plans for composting or mulching organic materials that would otherwise be disposed of in a landfill. The composting or mulching plans are encouraged to address partnership with the private sector.

(3) Each county shall ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that municipalities within its boundaries participate in the preparation and implementation of recycling and solid waste management programs through interlocal agreements pursuant to s. [163.01](#) or other means provided by law. Nothing in a county's solid waste management or recycling program shall affect the authority of a municipality to franchise or otherwise provide for the collection of solid waste generated within the boundaries of the municipality.

(4)(a) In order to promote the production of renewable energy from solid waste, each megawatt-hour produced by a renewable energy facility using solid waste as a fuel shall count as 1 ton of recycled material and shall be applied toward meeting the recycling goals set forth in this section. If a county creating renewable energy from solid waste implements and maintains a program to recycle at least 50 percent of municipal solid waste by a means other than creating renewable energy, that county shall count 1.25 tons of recycled material for each megawatt-hour produced. If waste originates from a county other than the county in which the renewable energy facility resides, the originating county shall receive such recycling credit. Any byproduct resulting from the creation of renewable energy that is recycled shall count towards the county recycling goals in accordance with the methods and criteria developed pursuant to paragraph (2)(h).

(b) A county may receive credit for one-half of the recycling goal set forth in subsection (2) from the use of yard trash, or other clean wood waste or paper waste, in innovative programs including, but not limited to, programs that produce alternative clean-burning fuels such as ethanol or that provide for the conversion of yard trash or other clean wood waste or paper waste to clean-burning fuel for the production of energy for use at facilities other than a waste-to-energy facility as defined in s. [403.7061](#). The provisions of this paragraph apply only if a county can demonstrate that:

1. The county has implemented a yard trash mulching or composting program, and
2. As part of the program, compost and mulch made from yard trash is available to the general public and in use at county-owned or maintained and municipally owned or maintained facilities in the county and state agencies operating in the county as required by this section.

(c) A county with a population of 100,000 or less may provide its residents with the opportunity to recycle in lieu of achieving the goal set forth in this section. For the purposes of this section, the “opportunity to recycle” means that the county:

1.a. Provides a system for separating and collecting recyclable materials prior to disposal that is located at a solid waste management facility or solid waste disposal area; or

b. Provides a system of places within the county for collection of source-separated recyclable materials.

2. Provides a public education and promotion program that is conducted to inform its residents of the opportunity to recycle, encourages source separation of recyclable materials, and promotes the benefits of reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting materials.

(5) As used in this section, “municipal solid waste” includes any solid waste, except for sludge, resulting from the operation of residential, commercial, governmental, or institutional establishments that would normally be collected, processed, and disposed of through a public or private solid waste management service. The term includes yard trash but does not include solid waste from industrial, mining, or agricultural operations.

(6) The department may reduce or modify the municipal solid waste recycling goal that a county is required to achieve pursuant to subsection (2) if the county demonstrates to the department that:

(a) The achievement of the goal set forth in subsection (2) would have an adverse effect on the financial obligations of a county that are directly related to a waste-to-energy facility owned or operated by or on behalf of the county; and

(b) The county cannot remove normally combustible materials from solid waste that is to be processed at a waste-to-energy facility because of the need to maintain a sufficient amount of solid waste to ensure the financial viability of the facility.

The goal shall not be waived entirely and may only be reduced or modified to the extent necessary to alleviate the adverse effects of achieving the goal on the financial viability of a county’s waste-to-energy facility. Nothing in this subsection shall exempt a county from developing and implementing a recycling program pursuant to this act.

(7) In order to assess the progress in meeting the goal set forth in subsection (2), each county shall, by April 1 each year, provide information to the department regarding its annual solid waste management program and recycling activities.

(a) The information submitted to the department by the county must, at a minimum, include:

1. The amount of municipal solid waste disposed of at solid waste disposal facilities, by type of waste such as yard trash, white goods, clean debris, tires, and unseparated solid waste;

2. The amount and type of materials from the municipal solid waste stream that were recycled; and

3. The percentage of the population participating in various types of recycling activities instituted.

(b) Beginning with the data for the 2012 calendar year, the department shall by July 1 each year post on its website the recycling rates of each county for the prior calendar year.

(8) A county or municipality may enter into a written agreement with other persons, including persons transporting solid waste on October 1, 1988, to undertake to fulfill some or all of the county's or municipality's responsibilities under this section.

(9) In the development and implementation of a curbside recyclable materials collection program, a county or municipality shall enter into negotiations with a franchisee who is operating to exclusively collect solid waste within a service area of a county or municipality to undertake curbside recyclable materials collection responsibilities for a county or municipality. If the county or municipality and such franchisee fail to reach an agreement within 60 days from the initiation of such negotiations, the county or municipality may solicit proposals from other persons to undertake curbside recyclable materials collection responsibilities for the county or municipality as it may require. Upon the determination of the lowest responsible proposal, the county or municipality may undertake, or enter into a written agreement with the person who submitted the lowest responsible proposal to undertake, the curbside recyclable materials collection responsibilities for the county or municipality, notwithstanding the exclusivity of such franchise agreement.

(10) In developing and implementing recycling programs, counties and municipalities shall give consideration to the collection, marketing, and disposition of recyclable materials by persons engaged in the business of recycling, whether or not the persons are operating for profit. Counties and municipalities are encouraged to use for-profit and nonprofit organizations in fulfilling their responsibilities under this act.

(11) A county and the municipalities within the county's boundaries may jointly develop a recycling program, provided that the county and each such municipality must enter into a written agreement to jointly develop a recycling program. If a municipality does not participate in jointly developing a recycling program with the county within which it is located, the county may require the municipality to provide information on recycling efforts undertaken within the boundaries of the municipality in order to determine whether the goal for municipal solid waste reduction is being achieved.

(12) It is the policy of the state that a county and its municipalities may jointly determine, through an interlocal agreement pursuant to s. [163.01](#) or by requesting the passage of special legislation, which local governmental agency shall administer a solid waste management or recycling program.

(13) The county shall provide written notice to all municipalities within the county when recycling program development begins and shall provide periodic written progress reports to the municipalities concerning the preparation of the recycling program.

(14) Nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent the governing body of any county or municipality from providing by ordinance or regulation for solid waste management requirements which are stricter or more extensive than those imposed by the state solid waste management program and rules, regulations, and orders issued thereunder.

(15) Nothing in this act or in any rule adopted by any agency shall be construed to require any county or municipality to participate in any regional solid waste management or regional resource recovery program until the governing body of such county or municipality has determined that participation in such a program is economically feasible for that county or municipality. Nothing in this act or in any special or local act or in any rule adopted by any agency shall be construed to limit the authority of a municipality to regulate the disposal of solid waste within its boundaries or generated within its boundaries so long as a facility for any such disposal has been approved by the department, unless the municipality is included within a solid waste management program created by interlocal agreement or special or local act. If bonds had been issued to finance a resource recovery or management program or a solid waste management program in reliance on state law granting to a county the responsibility for the resource recovery or management program or a solid waste management program, nothing herein shall permit any governmental agency to withdraw from said program if said agency's participation is necessary for the financial feasibility of the project, so long as said bonds are outstanding.

(16) Nothing in this chapter or in any rule adopted by any state agency hereunder shall require any person to subscribe to any private solid waste collection service.

(17) To effect the purposes of this part, counties and municipalities are authorized, in addition to other powers granted pursuant to this part:

(a) To contract with persons to provide resource recovery services or operate resource recovery facilities on behalf of the county or municipality.

(b) To indemnify persons providing resource recovery services or operating resource recovery facilities for liabilities or claims arising out of the provision or operation of such services or facilities that are not the result of the sole negligence of the persons providing such services or operating such facilities.

(c) To waive sovereign immunity and immunity from suit in federal court by vote of the governing body of the county or municipality to the extent necessary to carry out the authority granted in paragraphs (a) and (b), notwithstanding the limitations prescribed in s. [768.28](#).

(d) To grant a solid waste fee waiver to nonprofit organizations that are engaged in the collection of donated goods for charitable purposes and that have a recycling or reuse rate of 50 percent or better.

(18) Each operator of a solid waste management facility owned or operated by or on behalf of a county or municipality shall weigh all solid waste when it is received. The scale used to measure the solid waste shall conform to the requirements of chapter 531 and any rules promulgated thereunder.

(19) In the event the power to manage solid waste has been granted to a special district or other entity by special act or interlocal agreement, any duty or responsibility or penalty imposed under this part on a county or municipality shall apply to such special district or other entity to the extent of the grant of such duty or responsibility or imposition of such penalty. To the same extent, such special district or other entity shall be eligible for grants or other benefits provided pursuant to this part.

(20) In addition to any other penalties provided by law, a local government that does not comply with the requirements of subsections (2) and (4) shall not be eligible for grants from the Solid Waste Management Trust Fund, and the department may notify the Chief Financial Officer to withhold payment of all or a portion of funds payable to the local government by the department from the General Revenue Fund or by the department from any other state fund, to the extent not pledged to retire bonded indebtedness, unless the local government demonstrates that good faith efforts to meet the requirements of subsections (2) and (4) have been made or that the funds are being or will be used to finance the correction of a pollution control problem that spans jurisdictional boundaries.

(21) Local governments are authorized to enact ordinances that require and direct all residential properties, multifamily dwellings, and apartment complexes and industrial, commercial, and institutional establishments as defined by the local government to establish programs for the separation of recyclable materials designated by the local government, which recyclable materials are specifically intended for purposes of recycling and for which a market exists, and to provide for their collection. Such ordinances may include, but are not limited to, provisions that prohibit any person from knowingly disposing of recyclable materials designated by the local government and that ensure the collection of recovered materials as necessary to protect public health and safety.

(22) Nothing in this act shall limit the authority of the state or any local government to regulate the collection, transportation, processing, or handling of recovered materials or solid waste in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

History.—s. 1, ch. 74-342; s. 142, ch. 77-104; s. 1, ch. 77-466; s. 3, ch. 78-329; s. 1, ch. 79-118; s. 7, ch. 80-302; s. 2, ch. 87-107; s. 11, ch. 88-130; s. 15, ch. 93-207; s. 15, ch. 98-258; s. 32, ch. 2000-153; s. 20, ch. 2000-211; s. 6, ch. 2000-304; s. 4, ch. 2002-291; s. 42, ch. 2003-1; s. 429, ch. 2003-261; s. 97, ch. 2008-227; s. 112, ch. 2010-102; s. 7, ch. 2010-143; s. 16, ch. 2012