

## **REPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLAINTS**

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### **SUMMARY**

The Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources–Environmental Resources Management (DERM) responds to environmental complaints and emergencies 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The following situations should be reported to DERM immediately:

- A. Any spill, discharge, dumping incident, or release of known or suspected hazardous materials, wastewater (sewage), or fuel, into street drains, parking lot drains, manholes, or to open ground.
- B. Any spill/discharge/dumping incident/release of known or suspected hazardous materials, wastewater (sewage), or fuel, into any waterway or body of water (Biscayne Bay, canals, lakes, etc.).
- C. Abandoned drums containing substances (e.g. used oil, hazardous waste) that may cause an environmental impact.
- D. Sewage overflows from any source.
- E. Potable water main breaks.
- F. Smoke/dust/fume concerns from any facility/property/construction site/activity.
- G. Objectionable odors (Any severe odor or vapor that affects the eyes and/or breathing, or results in skin irritation; call 911 and then call DERM Complaint Desk).
- H. Turbid water in any waterway, canal, or Biscayne Bay. Turbid water is often caused by dewatering or construction activities.
- I. Open burning (not fires used for cooking). Call the Fire Department at 911 first. DERM generally responds to improper or illegal burning in relatively uninhabited areas and investigates these jointly with the local fire department.
- J. Unauthorized removal, cutting, bulldozing, or destruction of trees.
- K. Coastal concerns such as mangrove cutting, unauthorized construction activities, illegal discharges to coastal areas, or dumping to surface waters (canals, Biscayne Bay, the ocean).
- L. Large scale fish or bird kills.
- M. Any dredging or filling in Biscayne Bay.
- N. Water use restriction violations.
- O. Illegal dumping of solid waste to surface waters (e.g., canals, lakes, etc.) and to the right of way. Suspected unpermitted activities involving solid waste processing, concrete crushing, and demolition debris.
- P. Facilities (e.g., industrial, restaurants discharging to sewers) suspected of operating without proper DERM permits. Suspected or known damage to wetlands or protected areas.
- Q. Any sanitary nuisance (e.g., release of garbage fluid, grease trap overflows, septic tank drain field overflows, etc.).
- R. Any suspected threat or danger to our drinking water well fields.

### **PROCEDURE**

If any of the above situations are observed, contact the DERM Complaint Desk at 305-372-6955 or email as much information as can be obtained to [ENVTLCOMPLAINTS@miamidade.gov](mailto:ENVTLCOMPLAINTS@miamidade.gov).

Additionally, pursuant to Section 403.077, F.S., the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has established a method for regulated entities to submit Public Notices of

Pollution for reportable releases. Additionally, the FDEP is making available to the public all Notices received to date. The specific details of such notifications are as follows:

1. In the event of a reportable pollution release, an owner or operator of the installation at which the release occurred must provide to the FDEP information reported through the State Watch Office within 24 hours after the discovery of such pollution.
2. If, after providing notice pursuant to the above, the owner or the operator discovers that a reportable pollution release has migrated outside the property boundaries of the installation, notification must be submitted to the FDEP through the State Watch Office within 24 hours of the discovery of the migration.
3. If, after providing notice pursuant to the above, the owner or operator determines that a reportable pollution release did not occur or that an amendment to the notice is warranted, a letter must be submitted to the FDEP documenting such a determination.

Such notification to the FDEP shall be accomplished by submitting (or updating) a Notice through the following website: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/pollutionnotice/>

**CONTACT(S):**

Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources – Environmental Resources Management (DERM) Complaint Desk (Supervisor & Chief, Pollution Regulation Division)  
305-372-6955

State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection: [www.dep.state.fl.us/pollutionnotice](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/pollutionnotice/) and  
Robert A. Williams, Chief Deputy General Counsel, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS-35, Tallahassee, FL 32399.