

The Florida Agricultural Handbook of Solid and Hazardous Waste Regulation: Introduction¹

Michael T. Olexa and Ian Goldfarb²

Introduction

Current solid and hazardous waste law is a maze of statutes, regulations, and potential liabilities. This handbook is designed to act as your guide and as a first step in helping you recognize which agricultural and household activities may involve solid and hazardous wastes. It also provides an introduction to the agencies and statutes that govern solid and hazardous waste disposal.

Solid and hazardous waste law is evolving rapidly as concern for the environment increases. Because the specific goals of current environmental statutes vary, the law as a whole can be very confusing. Legal definitions are provided where needed. Check [FE785](#) (Glossary) for the definition of terms because statutes and regulations may define many words more broadly or narrowly than you might expect. For example, the statutory definition of solid waste includes solid materials as well as semi-solids, liquids, and even gases. Any word that is not defined or explained should be understood as everyday language.

Because of overlapping, unclear, and occasionally even contradictory waste management rules, this area of law is often difficult for both lawyers and laypersons to determine their exact rights and responsibilities. Persistence in attempting to understand the system is important as penalties or liabilities for failure to comply, in some instances, may be quite substantial.

This work should not be considered the final word on any topic. Fees and fines for all EPA administered programs, for instance, are set to change in 2008 to reflect inflation. While these fees and fines may be accurate during the writing of this work, they will not be come 2009. Instead, use this handbook to determine when you might need to seek more information, and as contact information of agencies that can answer specific questions. State and federal agencies are the best sources for information. These agencies can provide more information on a topic, answer specific questions, and often supply free literature. Therefore we have included contact information of the relevant state and federal agencies and divisions in [FE786](#) (Contact Agencies).

-
1. This is EDIS document FE759, a publication of the Food and Resource Economics Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. Published November 2008. Please visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
 2. Michael T. Olexa, professor, Food and Resource Economics Department; director, Center for Agricultural and Natural Resource Law, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL; and member, Florida Bar and Agricultural Law Committee of the Florida Bar. Ian Goldfarb, graduate student, Levin College of Law and Hough Graduate School of Business, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A. & M. University Cooperative Extension Program, and Boards of County Commissioners Cooperating. Larry Arrington, Dean

This handbook can be improved by your ideas and suggestions. Comments you have regarding any areas which may have been omitted but deserve inclusion would be particularly valued. Reader feedback is a necessary ingredient to complete any future editions. Please send your comments to:

Michael T. Olexa
Center for Agricultural & Natural Resource Law
Food and Resource Economics Department
2126 McCarty Hall B
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-0240