PALM BEACH COUNTY (PBC)
WATER UTILITIES DEPARTMENT (WUD)
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Customer Service Center
9045 Jog Rd, Boynton Beach, FL 33472

October 31, 2025
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Approval of:

- Minutes from the meeting of September 26, 2025

V. Agenda Approval

VI. Presentation:

- GIS Presentation

VII. County/Staff Updates

- County Updates – Todd Bonlarron, Interim County Administrator
- WUD Updates – Ali Bayat, WUD Director, Krystin Berntsen, WUD Deputy Director, Ebony Foreman, Director Finance & Administration

VIII. Appointment of new Chair and Vice Chair for 2026

IX. Items from the Board

X. Old Business (Responses to Items from the Board)

XI. Matters by the Public

XII. Adjournment

NEXT MEETING:

December 5, 2025, Water Utilities Department, Customer Service Center, 9045 Jog Road, Boynton Beach

PALM BEACH COUNTY (PBC)
WATER UTILITIES DEPARTMENT (WUD)
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Customer Service Center
9045 Jog Road, Boynton Beach, FL 33472

September 26, 2025
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Rob Hawkins called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

Members Present:
Carolyn Pomeranz, Rob Hawkins, Lori Vinikoor, Reg Miller, Carlos Cedeño, Bernard Castleman

Members not in Attendance:
William Nuss

PBC Water Utilities Staff Present:
Ali Bayat, Director, Krystin Berntsen, Deputy Director, Stephanie Marsh-Corinthian, Assistant Director, Ebony Foreman, Director, Finance & Administration, Beth Motschenbacher, Manager Public Information Services, Greg Goebel, Education Specialist

Guests present:
None

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Lori Vinikoor / Bernard Castleman moved to approve the 7/25/25 meeting minutes

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Carolyn Pomeranz / Lori Vinikoor moved to approve the agenda

IV. PRESENTATIONS

- Septic to Sewer – Krystin Berntsen

V. COUNTY/STAFF UPDATES:

- **Ali Bayat:**
  - The Board of County Commissioners asked us to create a master plan for septic to sewer conversions. A consultant will assist with this.
- **Stephanie Marsh-Corinthian:**
  - The Board of County Commissioners approved a 6% salary increase for County employees as part of the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. The increase for next year is still uncertain — it may be performance-based, with employees receiving a 3% base increase and up to an additional 3% based on performance.
  - We are working with Human Resources on the reclassification process for our vacant positions.
- **Beth Motschenbacher:**
  - Introduced Greg Goebel, our new Education Specialist for our Reclamation Education & Center for Advanced Purification (RECAP).
- **Ebony Forman:**
  - A 3.687% rate increase will take effect on October 1, 2025. Customers are being notified through a bill insert.
  - Our external auditors have started the annual audit of our financial records.
  - We completed our warehouse audit.

VI. ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

- **Bernard Castleman**:
  - Mentioned that this was his last Board meeting, as he has completed all his terms, and expressed that it has been a pleasure serving on the Board.
    - Ali Bayat thanked Mr. Castleman for his 11 years of service and presented him with a plaque.
- **Rob Hawkins:**
  - Welcomed new Advisory Board member, Mr. Tom Moyer appointed by District 6.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- None

VIII. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

- There being no further business to discuss, Lori Vinikoor / Bernard Castleman moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 a.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Attachments from 9/26/2025 Meeting:

- Septic to Sewer Presentation – Krystin Berntsen

Septic Systems in Palm Beach County

Current Inventory, Key Challenges and Strategy for Conversion

September 26, 2025



Award-Winning Utility



55 Awards in 5 years

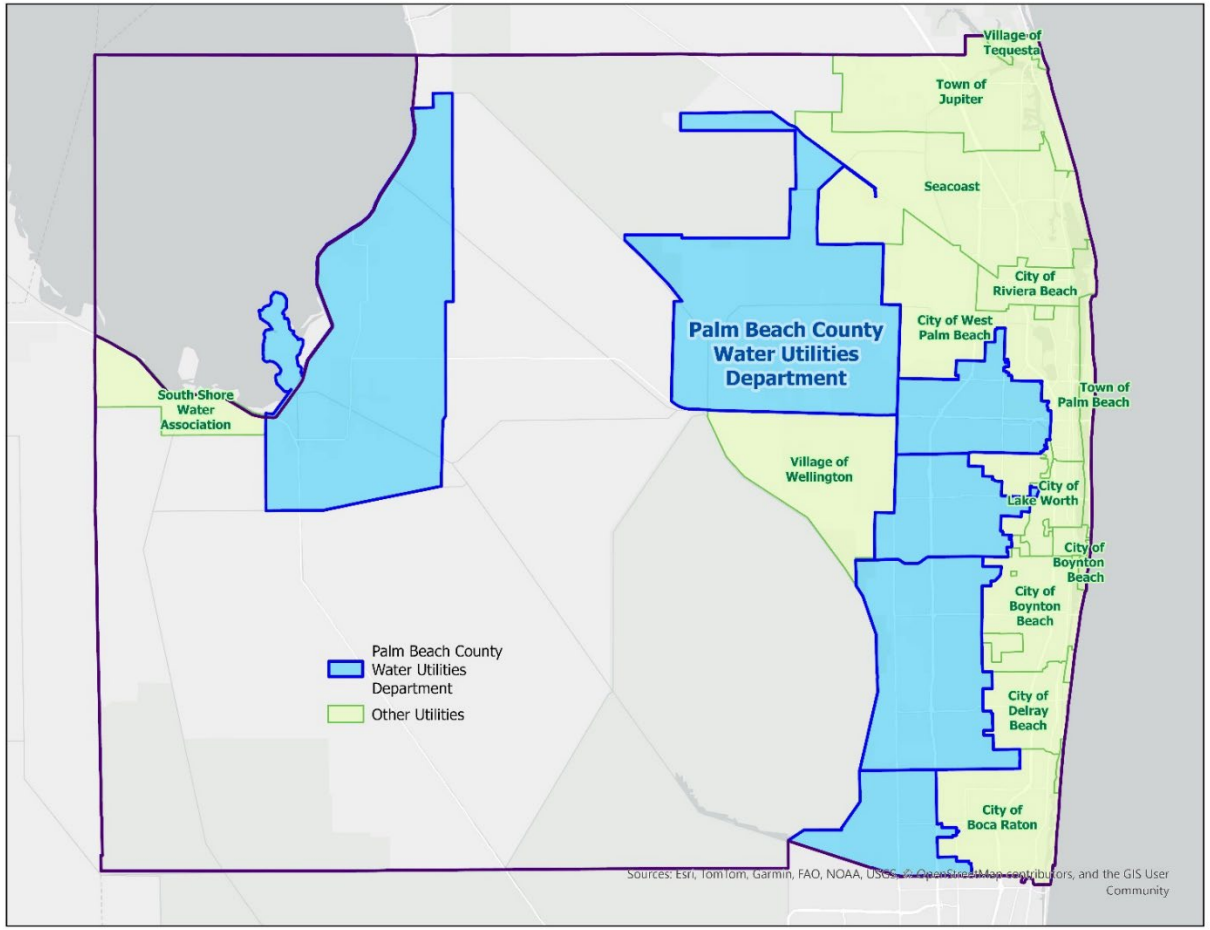
local, state, national and International levels

- Water quality with ***zero violations***
- Residential customers' cost is about ***25% below*** state average*
- Enterprise fund
- AAA bond rating from Moody's, S & P & Fitch

**Source: Florida Water and Wastewater Rate Survey, RAFTELIS*

PBCWUD Service Area

- PBCWUD is the 3rd largest full-service utility in Florida
- Serves 635,000+ residents across 1,300 square miles of Palm Beach County
- Employs 630+ employees





South Florida Utility Challenges

- Population Growth
- Competing Demands
- Periodic Droughts
- Saltwater Intrusion
- Sea Level Rise
- Low Quality Alternative Water Source (Floridan Aquifer)
- Harmful Chemicals (e.g. PFAS)
- Septic Systems

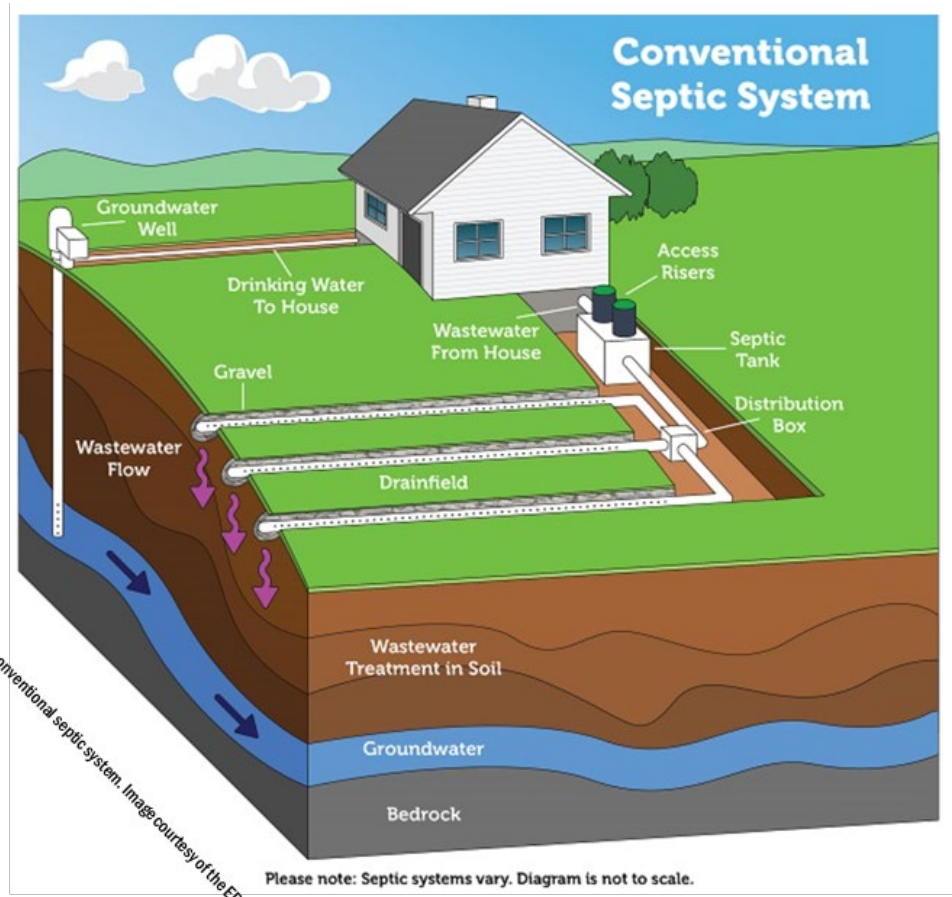


Diagram of a conventional septic system. Image courtesy of the EPA.



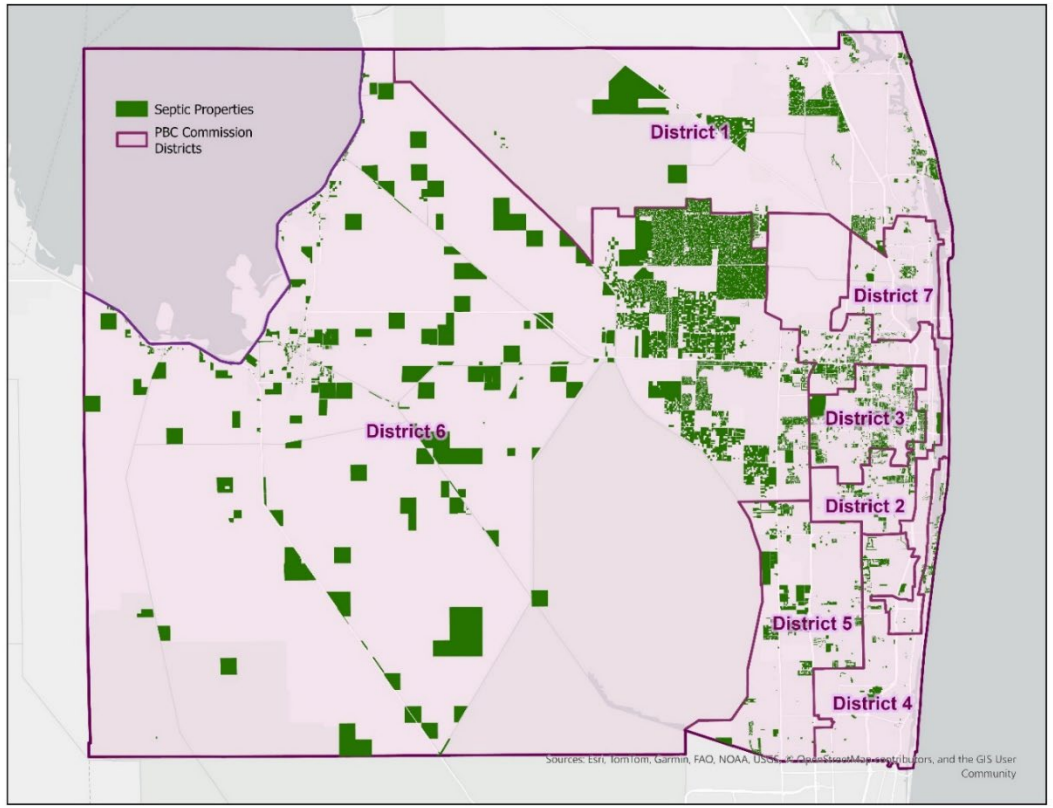
Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems (Septic Systems) Inventory

Florida: 2.6M (approximately 30% of State)

Palm Beach County: 56K

PBCWUD: 33K (approximately 12% of service area)

Data from Florida Department of Environmental Protection



As of June 2025, 246K dwelling units are connected to WUD's sewer system

All Septic Systems Are not the Same

- Maintenance
- Density
- Location, is the property located within a designated BMAP area?
- Property size, is the property larger than 1 acre?
- Proximity to waterbodies
- Proximity to central sewer system



Septic System Use by Property Value (PBCWUD Service Area)	
>$400K	20%
$200K-$400K	41%
<$200K	39%

How a Septic System Works

A septic system uses natural processes to treat and dispose of sewage.

Most systems have a septic tank and drainfield. This is called a conventional system. The diagram below shows the parts of a conventional septic system.

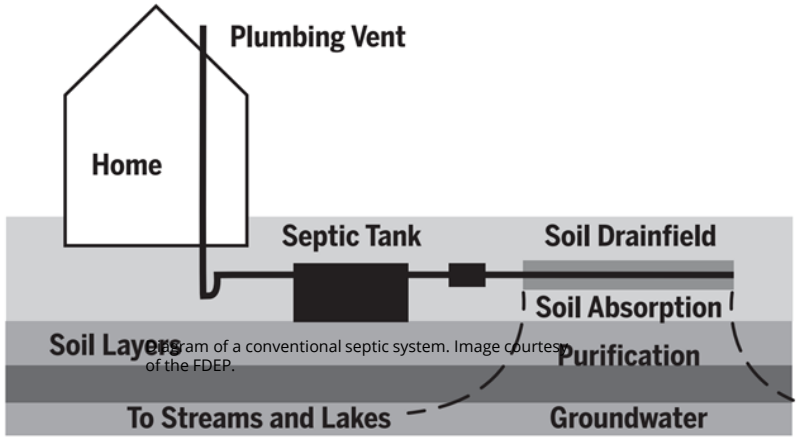
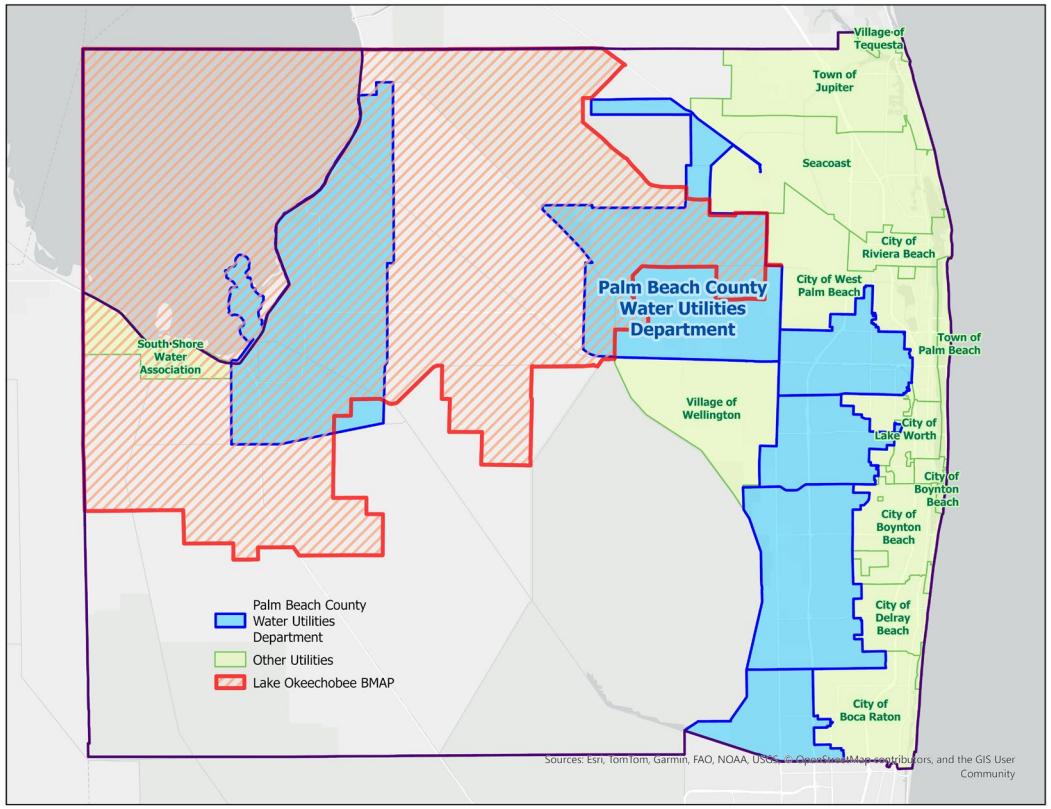


Diagram of a conventional septic system. Image courtesy of the FDEP.

Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP)

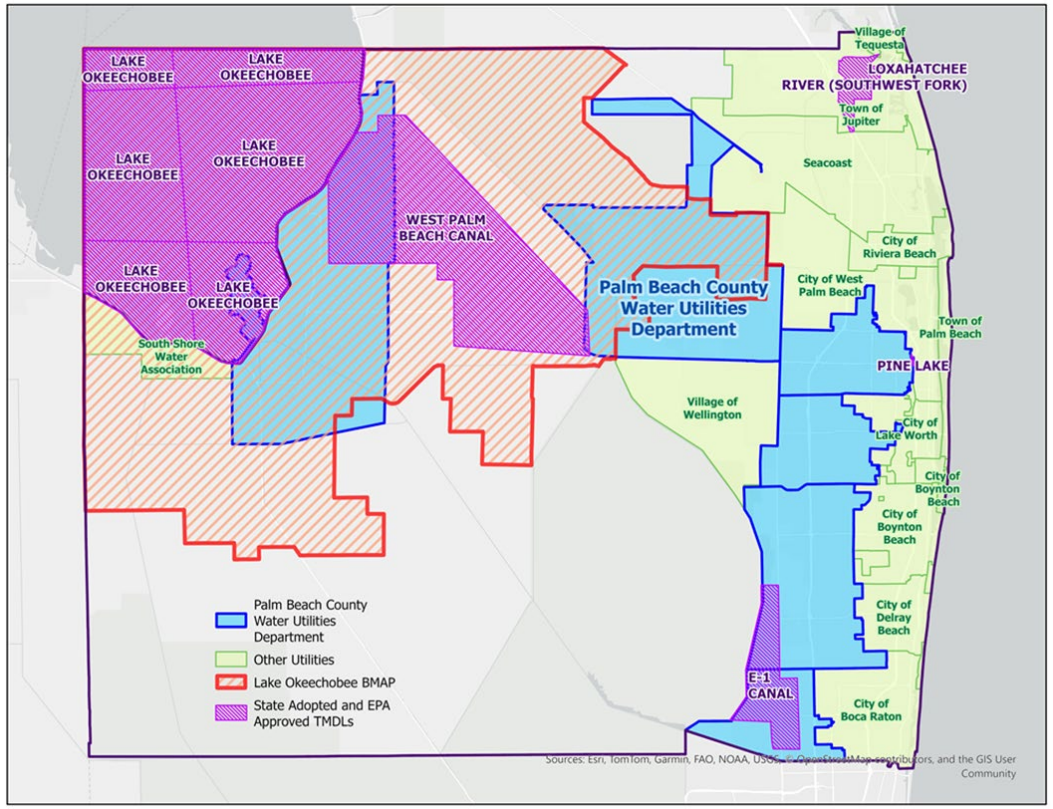
Basin management action plan, or BMAP, is a comprehensive set of site-specific strategies to reduce or eliminate pollutant loadings and restore particular waterbodies to health.





Other Basins with Adopted Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

A TMDL is a scientific determination of the maximum amount of a given pollutant that a surface water can absorb and still meet the water quality standards that protect human health and aquatic life. Waterbodies that do not meet water quality standards are identified as "impaired" for the pollutants of concern - nutrients, bacteria, dissolved oxygen, mercury (in fish tissue), etc. - and TMDLs must be developed, adopted and implemented for those pollutants to reduce pollutants and clean up the waterbody.



Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems (Septic Systems) Inventory

District	Septic Systems in PBC	Septic Systems in WUD Service Area Only	Inside BMAP WUD Service Area Only	Properties Larger than 1 Acre Inside BMAP WUD Service Area Only
1	6,431	303	300	200
2	9,525	4,200	0	
3	13,765	7,655	0	
4	2,231	378	0	
5	2,304	2,283	0	
6	20,412	17,747	12,454	11,589
7	1,278	428	0	
Total	55,946	32,994	12,754	11,789

Regulatory Review

F.A.C. 62-6, Administrative Rule established by Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), regulating permitting requirements, construction, and design standards of septic systems. FDEP is the designated authority for septic systems, but until January 2027 Florida Department of Health (FDOH) is in charge of ONSITE SEWAGE PROGRAMS in Palm Beach County

House Bill 1379 (2023) Requirements:

- Requires Septic to Sewer Conversion for lots 1 acre and below in vulnerable areas (BMAP Areas) where sewer connection is available
- Requires Installation of Nitrogen Reducing OSTDS (septic) system (ENR-OSTDS) for all new septic systems and septic replacements in BMAP areas where sewer connection is not feasible
- Local government must consider the feasibility of providing sanitary sewer services for any existing development of more than 50 residential lots, whether built or unbuilt, with more than one onsite sewage treatment and disposal system per 1 acre, within a 10-year planning horizon

Conversion Strategies

- PBCWUD Assessment Program
- State and Federal Grants
- Other County Initiatives

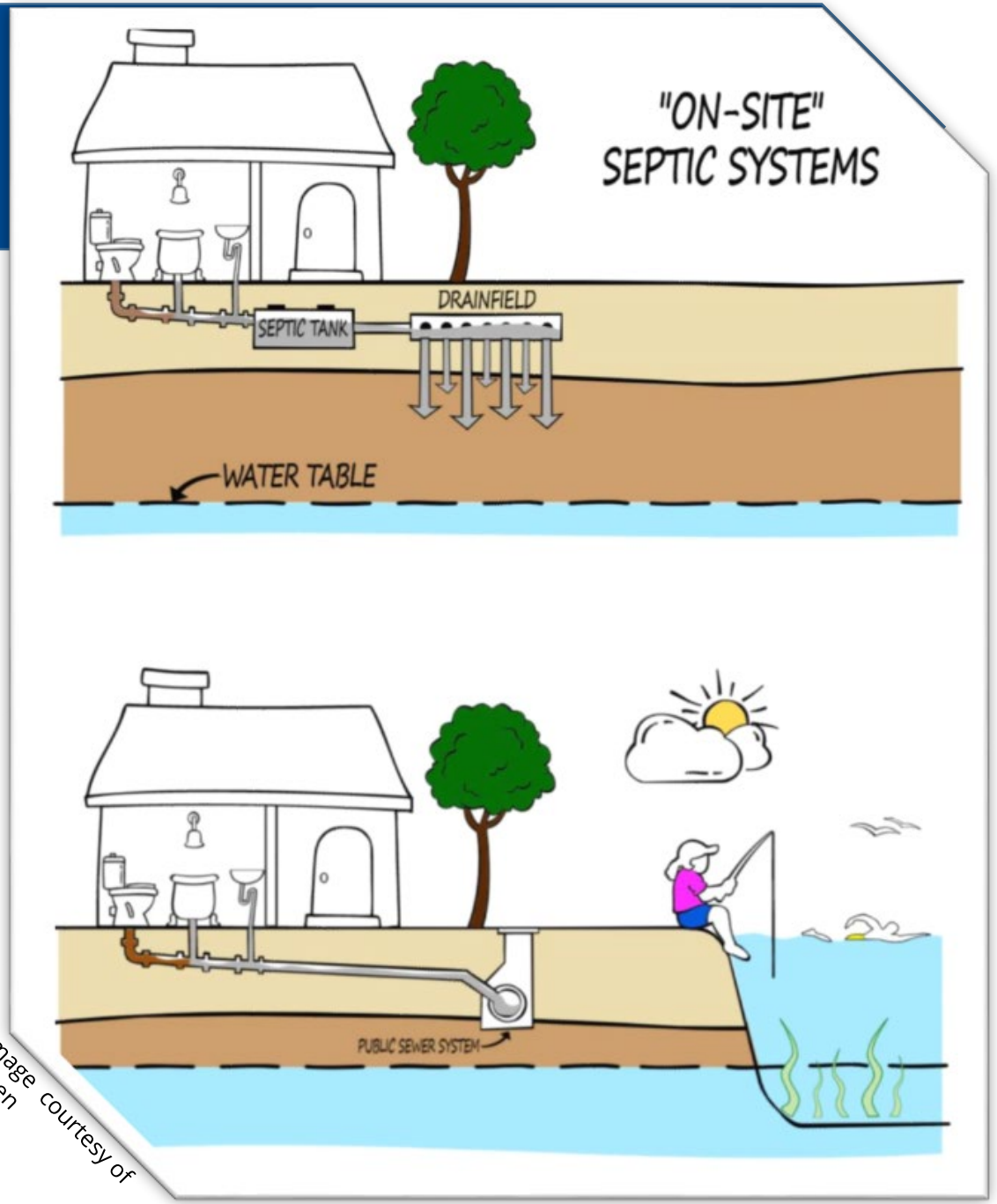


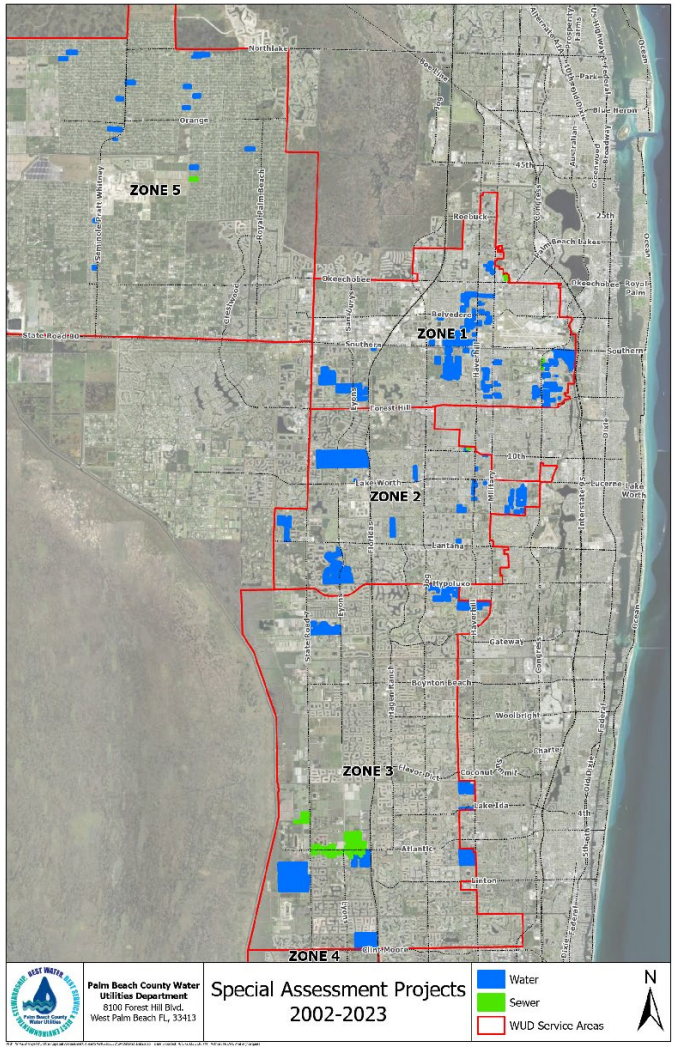
Image courtesy of Hazen

Conversion Strategies-Assessment Program

- All in one
- Initiated by the Community
- County provides:

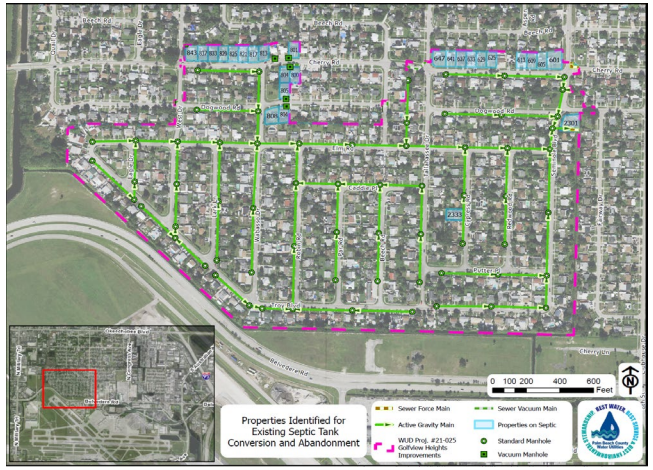
  Planning, Project Management, Design, Construction, and Finance (5.5% interest rate)
- Project cost is paid back to the County in a 20 year period

Total projects completed under the program ~ 80
(78 water and 2 sewer)
Water/Sewer Connections – 4,218 (4,193 water and 25 sewer)



Conversion Strategies-Grants $2,021,400

- Grant 1: *NonPoint Source Grant 319H Federal; $449,700*
- Grant 2: *Water Quality Improvement; $263,300*
- Grant 3: *State Appropriation- Central Palm Beach County Infrastructure Improvements $1,000,000*
- Grant 4: *NonPoint Source Grant 319H Federal $308,400.00 .(Status –Application Submitted on 3/31/2025, Awaiting Response)*



Project includes the installation of 19 sanitary sewer services. It also includes replacement of 22,000 LF of aged, undersized, and undesirable pipe material potable water main, water services, and improvement of the fire protection within the Golfview Heights residential area, a subdivision within the Westgate/Belvedere Homes Community Redevelopment Agency (CCRT area) located in District 2.

Conversion of 15 septic systems to a centralized wastewater collection system owned and maintained by PBCWUD. The project is located in District 6, approximately 1000 feet from Lake Okeechobee.



Conversion Strategies-ARPA Funds $10,500,000

The County owns 110 parks and facilities, and once the ongoing septic-to-sewer project is complete, we will have reduced the number of County parks on septic to just two—marking a significant step toward modernizing our facilities and protecting our environment. The project is managed by WUD.

- Okeeheelee Park
- Lake Ida Park
- Caloosa Park
- Gulfstream Park
- John Prince Park
- Duncan Padget Park
- Triangle Park



Caloosa Park



Gulfstream Park



Lake Ida Park

Moving Forward

In addition to State required feasibility study, a data driven ranking of septic systems based on factors such as location within BMAP or TMDL areas, availability of existing infrastructure, property size and other relevant criteria is in progress and will be completed by 2026

The department will continue collaborating with private property owners, local municipalities and State and federal agencies to identify grant funding opportunities and implement projects

We will work with communities requiring septic-to-sewer conversion to explain the WUD Assessment Program, guide them through the process, and provide the support needed for successful project implementation

New Hires

Work Location: Green Cay Ph 2/RECAP

Starting Date: Nov 2026



Allison “Allie” Gator



Edgar Egret



Oliver “Ollie” Owl

THANK YOU



RECAP coming late 2026!