



Frequently Asked Questions for Permitting



What is a National Pretreatment Program? The National Pretreatment Program is a cooperative effort of federal, state, and local regulatory environmental agencies established to protect water quality. The program is designed to reduce the level of pollutants discharged by industry and other non-domestic wastewater sources into municipal sewer systems, and thereby, reduce the amount of pollutants released into the environment through wastewater. The objectives of the program are to protect the Publicly Owned Treatment Works from pollutants that may interfere with plant operation, to prevent pollutants that may pass through untreated from being introduced into the Publicly Owned Treatment Works, and to improve opportunities for the Publicly Owned Treatment Works to reuse wastewater and sludges that are generated.

The term “pretreatment” refers to the requirement that nondomestic sources discharging wastewater to Publicly Owned Treatment Works control their discharges, and meet limits established by EPA, the state or local authority on the amount of pollutants allowed to be discharged. The control of the pollutants may necessitate treatment prior to discharge to the Publicly Owned Treatment Works (therefore the term “pretreatment”). Limits may be met by the nondomestic source through pollution prevention techniques (product substitution recycle and reuse of materials) or treatment of the wastewater.

- Prevent the introduction of pollutants into the Publicly Owned Treatment Works that will interface with its operation;
- Prevent the introduction of pollutants into the Publicly Owned Treatment Works, inadequately treated, into receiving waters, or otherwise be incompatible with the Publicly Owned Treatment Works;
- Protect both Publicly Owned Treatment Works personnel who may be affected by wastewater and sludge in the course of their employment and the general public;
- Promote reuse recycling of industrial wastewater, and sludges from the Publicly Owned Treatment Works.

What is pretreatment? Pretreatment refers to the treatment of non-domestic wastewater before it is discharged to the wastewater treatment plant, also known as a Publicly Owned Treatment Works. Through pretreatment, the wastewater customer is able to reduce, eliminate, or alter a pollutant in wastewater before it is introduced into the Publicly Owned Treatment Works. Under Title III of the Federal Clean Water Act, the EPA is required to establish pretreatment standards that must be met by industrial facilities before they discharge wastewater to Publicly Owned Treatment Works. Pretreatment standards target pollutants that would interfere with a Publicly Owned Treatment Works operation, would not be susceptible to treatment by a Publicly Owned Treatment Works, or would adversely affect Publicly Owned Treatment Works equipment and personnel.

What is a permit? A permit is a document issued by the Hillsborough County Industrial Pretreatment Program to regulate the types and concentrations of pollutants a facility may discharge into the County’s wastewater collection system. A permit is only required for facilities that have a “process” wastewater discharge or a categorical process listed in the Hillsborough County Industrial Pretreatments short questionnaire.

What happens when a permit is issued? Each permit is different, based on the type of operations performed at the particular facility. Once a permit is issued by Hillsborough County Industrial Pretreatment staff will perform a minimum of one compliance inspection per calendar year. Facilities that have a discharge will be required to implement self-monitoring, sampling, and monthly reporting.

What are Prohibited Discharge Standards? Prohibited Discharge Standards are absolute prohibitions against the discharge of certain substances; these prohibitions are listed in Chapter 120.

What are Categorical Pretreatment Standards? These are technology-based limitations on pollutant discharges to Publicly Owned Treatment Works promulgated by EPA in accordance with Section 307 of the Clean Water Act that apply to specific process wastewaters discharges of particular industrial categories [see 40 CFR 403.6 and 40 CFR Parts 405- 471].

How much does a permit cost? Our current fees (Rate Resolution No. R05-106) are as follows:

- Annual Audit fee - \$100.00
- Pretreatment Application review fee - \$100.00
- Sampling/Laboratory Services – Actual Cost.

What are Best Management Practices? Schedules of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, and other management practices to prevent or reduce the pollution of waters of the state. Best Management Practices also include treatment requirements, operational procedures and practices to control plant site runoff, spillage or leaks, sludge or waste disposal, or drainage from raw material storage.

How can I prevent wastewater overflows? Easy! Don't flush kitchen paper towels, feminine products, hygiene towels (like those used in hospice care), baby wipes, moist towelettes, small toys, plastic bags, or clothing.

To flush or not to flush, that is the question! Your Hillsborough County wastewater system safely and effectively preserves the quality of life and health that we enjoy in this county. The County's wastewater system protects public health and the environment, including wetlands, rivers, and streams from dangerous and harmful viruses and bacteria. When you flush paper or plastic wastes that are not easily shredded or dissolvable, the wastewater system can experience problems moving the wastewater to the wastewater treatment plant for processing.

Where does the sewage/wastewater go? The wastewater travels by gravity until it reaches a wastewater pumping station. Most pumping stations cannot handle a lot of foreign plastics or heavy paper products. The result is that the pumps get clogged and are unable to move the wastewater to its proper destination, the wastewater treatment plant, where it's cleaned and disinfected to protect public health. If the wastewater doesn't get to the treatment plant for processing, it may overflow from the wastewater collection system via manholes into homes, businesses, lakes, rivers, and ponds, creating puddles of raw wastewater.



Permit Information



The Hillsborough County Public Utilities Department's Industrial Pretreatment Program is mandated by the Federal Clean Water Act. This program regulates local businesses and industries and provides information to them concerning their wastewater discharges. This section also inspects and monitors these discharges in order to protect the wastewater treatment plants, workers, sewer system and the receiving stream. Some customers will require a permit, some will not, and others may be required to adhere to Best Management Practices depending on the characteristics of their process wastewater.

All new and existing commercial and/or industrial businesses wishing to discharge non-domestic waste (i.e. manufacturing process wastewaters) need to complete an Industrial Pretreatment short questionnaire. After reviewing the short questionnaire, Industrial Pretreatment staff will make a decision as to what level permitting is required. All perspective users that meet any of the categories listed below shall be subject to permitting.

Industrial Classification Information

Significant Industrial User (SIU) is based on one or more of the following criteria:

- Discharges 25,000 gallons per day or more of wastewater;
- Contributes a waste stream which makes up five percent or more of the average dry weather hydraulic or organic capacity of the treatment plant;
- Contains in its waste a priority pollutant in amounts as defined in standards issued under Section 307 (a) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act;
- Impacts, either singly or in combination with other contributing industries, on the wastewater treatment system, the quality of sludge, the system's effluent quality, or air emissions generated by the system. Is designated as such by the County on the basis that the it has a reasonable potential for adversely affecting the publicly owned treatment works operation or for violating any pretreatment standard or requirement or;
- Is subject to Categorical Pretreatment Standards

If the perspective user does not meet the criteria listed above, the application will be reviewed to determine what level of management will be required to comply with local ordinances. **Industrial User:** A source of indirect discharge. The discharge or the introduction of nondomestic pollutants from any source regulated under this Ordinance or Section 307(b), (c), or (d) of the Act, (33U.S.C. 1317), into the County's treatment works (including holding tank waste discharged into the system).



Hillsborough County's Industrial Pretreatment Program Questionnaire. (Link to the library)

First time applicants shall print, complete and mail the Industrial Pretreatment Program Questionnaire. Mail to: Hillsborough County Industrial Pretreatment, 925 E. Twiggs Street, Tampa, Florida 33602. Once submitted, further guidance will be provided by Pretreatment Program staff.



Hillsborough County's Industrial Pretreatment Program User Permit Application and instructions. (Link to the library)



Florida Department of Environmental Sampling Standard Operating Procedures (Link to general page/library)



Local Limits



The local limits are established to protect against pass through and interference. These limits apply at the User's "end of pipe" (the point where the User's wastewater is discharged to the Publicly Owned Treatment Works (includes the wastewater collection system)). All concentrations for metallic substances are for "total" metals unless indicated otherwise. The Director may impose mass limitations in addition to, or in place of, the concentration-based limitations herein. No person shall discharge wastewater containing concentrations or values in excess of the following Daily Maximum Values:

Parameter	Class III Fresh Surface Water limits (mg/l)¹	Class III Marine Surface Water limits (mg/l)²
Arsenic (As)	0.25	0.20
Cadmium (Cd)	0.09	0.15
Chromium (Cr)	4.2	2.6
Copper (Cu)	1.4	0.7
Cyanide (Total CN)	0.24	0.011
Lead (Pb)	0.18	0.15
Mercury (Hg)	0.002	0.006
Molybdenum (Mo)	0.13	0.14
Nickel (Ni)	2.2	0.1
Oil and Grease	300	300
pH	6.0 to 11.0	6.0 to 11.0
Selenium (Se)	0.16	0.42
Silver (Ag)	1.5	5.0
Sulfate	500	500
Total Phenolic Compound	5.28	0.55
Zinc (Zn)	3.2	2.0
Conventional pollutants (BOD₅, TSS, TKN, TP)³	% of influent loading	% of influent loading

¹ Class III Fresh Surface Water local limits apply to facilities that discharge to the following advanced wastewater treatment plants; the Dale Mabry Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant, Northwest Regional Water Reclamation Facility, River Oaks Dale Mabry Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant, Valrico Dale Mabry Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant. Industrial discharges to the Van Dyke Wastewater Treatment Plant (none currently) would be evaluated using the Fresh Surface Water local limits.

² Class III Marine Surface Water local limits apply to facilities that discharge to the following advanced wastewater treatment plants; the Falkenburg Road Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant and South County Regional Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant.

³ For major industrial users (those permitted for daily discharges over 25,000 gallons), Hillsborough County has established a local limit for the conventional pollutants (Biochemical Oxygen Demand, BOD₅; Total Suspended Solids, TSS; Total Kieldahl Nitrogen, TKN; and Total Phosphorus, TP) based on the design loading of their discharge facility. Hillsborough County will allow each major industrial user to discharge no more than 10 percent of the total plant influent (design) loading for conventional pollutants.

Industrial Pretreatment Program

The Hillsborough County Public Utilities Department's Pretreatment Services Program was initially approved on August 27, 1986. The main goals of the Pretreatment Program are to protect the County's **Wastewater Treatment Plants** and **Collection System** from interference and pass-through, protect the Employees and the general public from adverse industrial impacts and to ensure that effluent water quality standards and sludge regulations are maintained.

Federal and State Law mandate that all cities, counties and other municipal bodies that process more than 5 million gallons of wastewater every day are generally required to have an Industrial Pretreatment Program. The Hillsborough County Public Utilities Department owns and operates seven wastewater treatment plants that presently treat wastewater received from residential, commercial and industrial sources.



Dale Mabry AWWTF



Falkenburg AWWTF



Northwest AWWTF



River Oaks AWWTF



South County AWWTF



Valrico AWWTF



Vandyke WWTF