

Pursuant to Florida Statutes 189.0694 the Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District (LRD) has identified the following programs, activities, goals, objectives, and performance measures, which are all derived from LRD’s enabled powers as provided in our enabling act ([Chapter 2021-249, Laws of Florida](#) as amended). Our mission statement, which is intended to summarize the legislative intent behind the creation of our agency, states “*We are dedicated to protecting public health and preserving the Loxahatchee River watershed and its natural habitats through innovative wastewater solutions, research, and environmental stewardship.*”

LRD staff are continuously focused on how our day-to-day efforts are directly related to protecting public health and preserving the Loxahatchee River. The programs, activities, goals, and objectives listed below were selected to reflect the complex and critical role of effective wastewater management in protecting public health and the Loxahatchee River watershed.

PROGRAM: SEWER SYSTEM OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT

ACTIVITY: Construct, acquire, and operate systems to collect, transmit, treat, dispose of, and beneficially reuse wastewater and associated products and byproducts

Goal 1. Regulatory Compliance: Our overarching goal is to avoid any warning letter or compliance action from Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Objective: Ensure all operations meet or exceed state and federal regulations, including those set by the FDEP and the EPA.

Performance Measure: Regulatory Compliance – percent of days LRD was fully compliant with all applicable regulations

Standard: Green = 100% of days compliant; Yellow <100% of days compliant; Red <99% of days compliant (*red signifies failure to meet our objective, which is true for all metrics*)

Rationale: The LRECD expects to operate our sewer system in full compliance with our permitted operating conditions. As such, our nominal condition should be fully compliant with our existing DEP and EPA permit conditions.

Performance Measure: Unauthorized discharge of sewage (aka Sanitary Sewer Overflow)

Standard: Green <3.4 gallons of sewage spilled per million gallons of sewage handled; Yellow \geq 3.4 gallons of sewage spilled per million gallons of sewage handled; Red \geq 6.8 gallons of sewage spilled per million gallons of sewage handled.

Rationale: Our benchmark is based on the generic six sigma failure rate of 3.4 defects per million opportunities. If we spill less than 3.4 gallons of sewage per million gallons of sewage handled, then we would be green. We treat approximately 2.5 billion gallons of wastewater per year, so if we spill less than 8,500 gallons of sewage per year (8,500 = 2,500 million gallons/month x 3.4), our benchmark would be green. This benchmark is well understood and represents 99.99966% efficiency. We have set our yellow benchmark from 3.4 to 6.8 gallons of sewage spilled per million gallons of sewage handled (i.e., up to

17,000 gallons spilled per year). If our unauthorized discharges exceed 6.8 gallons of sewage per million gallons of sewage handled (e.g., 17,000 gallons of sewage spilled per year), then the metric would be red.

With respect to this metric, an unauthorized discharge of sewage, aka sanitary sewer overflow, refers to a non-permitted discharge of sewage (aka a sewage spill or overflow) when that discharge is related to the function or operation of the sewer system under control of the Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District. Overflows caused by customer-controlled systems or operations (e.g., homeowner turning off their power to a low-pressure pump station) as well as negligent impacts to the LRECD's sewer system by others (e.g., directional drill contractor negligently breaking a LRECD wastewater force main) are specifically excluded from this definition. These are excluded because they are outside of LRD's control.

Performance Measure: Max 3-month mean daily influent flow

Standard: Green $\leq 75\%$ of permitted capacity; Yellow $> 75\%$ of permitted capacity; Red $> 90\%$ of permitted capacity.

Rationale: This metric relates to our permit requirements to conduct a capacity analysis report and reflects our ability to serve new customers or additional flow from our current customers with our existing, permitted wastewater treatment and disposal facilities.

Performance Measure: Industrial Pretreatment Inspections

Standard: Green $\geq 95\%$ of scheduled inspections completed on time; Yellow $< 95\%$ of scheduled inspections completed on time; Red $< 90\%$ of scheduled inspections completed on time.

Rationale: We conduct industrial pretreatment inspections to determine if non-residential sewer customers should be classified as an industrial user, if they should be using any pretreatment technologies (e.g., grease interceptor for commercial food establishment), and if required pretreatment technologies are in place and functioning as intended. The timely execution of this inspection program is a key element in our proactive efforts to ensure continued, effective functionality of our wastewater collection and treatment system.

Goal 2. Water Reuse

Objective: Maximize the beneficial use of reclaimed water to preserve native surface and groundwater for the National Wild & Scenic Loxahatchee River.

Performance Measure: Number of days treated effluent was not available to be recycled, i.e., the number of days we disposed of treated effluent down our deep injection well because of ineffective or insufficient wastewater treatment. This metric does not count treated effluent that is not recycled because our reclaimed water storage lakes were full, i.e., due storage capacity limitations.

Standard: Green ≤ 9 days; Yellow > 9 days; Red > 18 days.

Rationale: If ineffective wastewater treatment requires our treated effluent to be disposed of (rather than recycled) for 9 or fewer days per year ($< 2.5\%$ of days), then we would be

green. If ineffective wastewater treatment requires our treated effluent to be disposed of (rather than recycled) for more than 9 days per year ($\geq 2.5\%$ of days), then we would be yellow. If ineffective wastewater treatment requires our treated effluent to be disposed of (rather than recycled) for more than 18 days per year ($\geq 5\%$ of days), then we would be red. This metric is intended to quantify missed opportunities to beneficially reuse our reclaimed water due to poor performance or process upsets within our wastewater treatment facility.

Goal 3. Customer Service

Objective: Provide exceptional customer service to our rate payers.

Performance Measure: The number of wastewater blockages caused by LRD assets that cause damage within a customer's home or business.

Standard: Green = ≤ 1 property damaged per 10,000 customers; Yellow > 1 property damaged per 10,000 customers; Red > 2.1 properties damaged per 10,000 customers.

Rationale: The LRD has 33,403 wastewater customers. We have selected one failure per 10,000 customers as our target benchmark. So, if we have three or fewer customers with damage inside their home or business resulting from failed or ineffective LRD assets, then we would be green. We have doubled that amount to determine a yellow condition ($3.34 \times 2 = 6.68$ which rounds to seven). More than 2.1 properties damaged per 10,000 customers (e.g., 7 such failures) will result in a red condition.

Performance Measure: The average response time, in business days, to review submitted engineering plans.

Standard: Green = ≤ 5 business days; Yellow > 5 business days; Red > 7 business days.

Rationale: Engineering plan review and approval is an important aspect of the LRD, because it ensures compliance with LRD's engineering standards. To respect and accommodate the schedules of our customers and their consultants (engineers), it is important that engineering plan review occurs in a timely manner. One business week, or 5 business days, has been determined to be a reasonable amount of time to conduct engineering review of submitted plans.

Goal 4. Asset Management

Objective: Regularly inspect, maintain, and upgrade wastewater infrastructure to prevent failures, reduce inflow and infiltration, and accommodate future growth and development.

Performance Measure: Planned maintenance as a percentage of total maintenance, where maintenance is measured in numbers of work orders completed per year.

Standard: Green $\geq 60\%$; Yellow $< 60\%$; Red $< 50\%$

Rationale: Maintaining assets is a critical exercise for wastewater utilities. Both planned and unplanned maintenance are essential, but generally planned maintenance is preferred because it proactively avoids breakdowns and allows work to be scheduled in a systematic manner whereas unplanned maintenance addresses issues after they occur and typically

have higher repair and labor costs. LRD's intent is to have a robust and fully implemented preventative maintenance program, so we minimize the need for unplanned maintenance and the associated unplanned downtime. These thresholds are based on general industry standards.

Performance Measure: Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Rehabilitation Rate

Standard: Green $\geq 1.7\%$; Yellow $< 1.7\%$; Red $< 0.7\%$

Rationale: This metric is derived from AWWA Wastewater Utility Benchmarking Report and conceptually represents the fraction of our assets that are budgeted for renewal or replacement in a given fiscal year. The metric is calculated by dividing the renewal and replacement funds by the total asset value. Because there can be significant variability year to year in these major capital investments, we report the 5-year moving average. These thresholds are based on the 50th and 75% percentile values published in the 2023 AWWA Wastewater Utility Benchmarking Report.

Performance Measure: Wastewater Pump Stations Rehabilitation Rate

Standard: Green $\geq 2.0\%$; Yellow $< 2.0\%$; Red $< 1.9\%$

Rationale: This metric is derived from AWWA Wastewater Utility Benchmarking Report and conceptually represents the fraction of our assets that are budgeted for renewal or replacement in a given fiscal year. The metric is calculated by dividing the renewal and replacement funds by the total asset value. Because there can be significant variability year to year in these major capital investments, we report the 5-year moving average. These thresholds are based on the 50th and 75% percentile values published in the 2023 AWWA Wastewater Utility Benchmarking Report.

Performance Measure: The percentage of gravity lines and manholes inspected and determined to be in good condition (i.e., SL-RAT score ≥ 7).

Standard: Green $\geq 90\%$; Yellow $< 90\%$; Red $< 80\%$

Rationale: The LRD is working to systematically assess all gravity lines and manholes every 5 years, i.e., 20% of gravity lines and manholes assessed per year. We use an acoustic sewer inspection tool (SL-RAT) to assess the condition of our gravity sewer lines and we visually assess manhole conditions while conducting the acoustic assessment. Manholes and gravity lines with a score ≥ 7 are deemed to be in good, fully-functional condition and improvements are not required. Manholes and gravity lines with a score from 4 to 6 are deemed to be in fair condition and require additional non-emergency work to restore full functionality. Manholes and gravity lines with a score from 0 to 3 are deemed to be blocked or in poor condition and require emergency work to restore functionality. By assessing 5-years of data, we will provide insight into the most recent condition assessment of these important assets.

PROGRAM: ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE

ACTIVITY: Implementation of established policies and procedures to control and operate the LRD.

Goal 5. Financial Sustainability

Objective: Maintain a balanced financial condition that ensures monies are available for necessary operating and capital expenditures, while striving to maintain an affordable rate structure.

Performance Measure: Affordability of wastewater rates

Standard: Green <50th percentile of surveyed wastewater utilities; Yellow \geq 50th percentile of surveyed wastewater utilities; Red \geq 75th percentile of surveyed wastewater utility rates.

Rationale: The LRD actively works to balance the competing demands of delivering reliable, high-quality services while keeping rates affordable for our consumers. This requires optimizing operational efficiency, investing in infrastructure, ensuring regulatory compliance, managing resources sustainably, and addressing long-term challenges like technology and capacity upgrades. To assess our cost-effectiveness, LRD benchmarks our wastewater rates against a minimum of fifteen (15) comparable wastewater utilities throughout Florida. In our comparison, we assume a 2-toilet home generates 5,000 gallons of wastewater per month and a 3-toilet home generates 7,000 gallons of wastewater per month.

Performance Measure: Earned Revenue

Standard: Green: earned revenue is \geq 95% of budgeted revenue estimates; Yellow: earned revenue is <95% of budgeted revenue estimates; Red: earned revenue is <90% of budgeted revenue estimates.

Rationale: This metric assesses the actual revenues collected as compared to the revenues anticipated in the budget. These revenues, both actual and budgeted, exclude revenues from assessments and capital contributions.

Performance Measure: Operating Expenses

Standard: Green: actual operating expenses were \geq 90% to 100% of budgeted operating expenses; Yellow: actual operating expenses were <90% of budgeted operating expenses; Red: actual operating expenses were <80% or >100% of budgeted operating expenses.

Rationale: This metric assesses the actual operating expenses incurred as compared to the operating expenses anticipated in the budget.

Goal 6. Public Engagement

Objective: Conduct LRD business openly and transparently so that the public can be as informed and engaged as they want to be with the governance of the LRD. Also, we engage the public through environmental education opportunities provided to our community within the watershed.

Performance Measure: Annual audit conducted by a qualified CPA firm and published to the LRD website within the required timeframe.

Standard: Green: if the annual comprehensive financial report is completed and posted in a timely manner; Red: if the annual comprehensive financial report is not completed and posted in a timely manner.

Rationale: The LRECD enabling act and the Florida Constitution requires special districts have their financial statements audited annually by an independent certified public accountant (CPA). The audit report must be submitted to the Florida Auditor General and the governing board of the district. These requirements were developed to ensure transparency, accountability, and proper management of public funds. Because audits can only be conducted following the closure of the fiscal year, this metric will be reported annually for the fiscal year preceding the immediately closed fiscal year, i.e., the 2024 annual dashboard will be published on or before December 31, 2024 and will provide an assessment of the FY2023 audit because the FY2024 audit will be in process.

Performance Measure: Provide environmental education to community members to foster a sense of environmental stewardship for the Loxahatchee River's diverse watershed as authorized in the LRD's enabling act.

Standard: Green $\geq 17,000$ people educated; Yellow $< 17,000$ people educated; Red $< 15,000$ people educated

Rationale: The LRECD enabling act empowers LRD to conduct environmental education as necessary and appropriate to minimize damage to the area's resources and environment, to prevent additional environmental problems from being created, and to provide education regarding solutions to existing problems. The stated thresholds are based on expected performance.

Goal 7. Workforce

Objective: Maintain and develop an educated, effective, and safe workforce, because knowledgeable, effective, and safe workers are critical to meet the demands of operating and maintaining our wastewater treatment systems and assets.

Performance Measure: Effective staffing

Standard: Green $< 10\%$ employee turnover; Yellow $\geq 10\%$ employee turnover; Red $\geq 20\%$ employee turnover.

Rationale: Some employee turnover is healthy for any organization, but excessive employee turnover strains existing staff, decreases productivity, exacerbates employee errors, and increases costs (hiring and training costs).

Performance Measure: Total Recordable Injury Rate (TRIR)

Standard: Green ≤ 1.8 ; Yellow > 1.8 ; Red > 3.5

Rationale: We want our workforce to work safely, because avoiding injury is good for our individual team members and our rate payers. The 2023 AWWA Wastewater Utility Benchmarking Report listed 1.8 and 3.5 as the 50th and 75th percentiles, respectively.

PROGRAM: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ACTIVITY: Assess water quality, critical habitats, and environmental health within the Loxahatchee River watershed.

Goal 8. Accessible Environmental Data

Objective: Contribute to the understanding of the health of the Loxahatchee River through systematic monitoring, assessment, and reporting of relevant environmental parameters within the Loxahatchee River watershed.

Performance Measure: Maintain LRD WildPine Ecological Lab's continued certification of compliance with the NELAC Institute Standards for non-potable water: general chemistry and microbiology

Standard: Green = NELAC certification continued for non-potable water: general chemistry and microbiology; Yellow = NELAC certification continued for non-potable water: general chemistry or microbiology; Red = NELAC certification discontinued for non-potable water: general chemistry and microbiology.

Rationale: The LRD WildPine Ecological Laboratory is certified through the Florida Department of Health as National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) compliant in the examination of non-potable water (e.g., surface water, stormwater, groundwater, reclaimed water) for microbiology and general chemistry analyses. The Laboratory certification number is E56026. Maintaining this certification demonstrates the Lab's technical ability to perform water quality analyses.

Performance Measure: Conduct, analyze, and report on environmental sampling (i.e., water quality, seagrass, oyster spat) conducted within the Loxahatchee River watershed. Reports will predominantly be comprehensive data visualizations and interactive reports (e.g., Power BI) published to the LRD website.

Standard: Green: $\geq 95\%$ of all relevant data accessible online through data visualizations and interactive reports; Yellow: $\geq 80\%$ of all relevant data accessible online through data visualizations and interactive reports; Red: $< 80\%$ of all relevant data accessible online through data visualizations and interactive reports.

Rationale: The long-term environmental monitoring conducted by LRD provides key information used by federal (US Army Corps of Engineers, EPA), state (DEP, SFWMD), and local (Palm Beach County, Martin County, Health Departments) agencies when working to understand spatial and temporal trends and current conditions of various environmental factors within the Loxahatchee River watershed. As the LRD collects relevant environmental samples, they are processed, analyzed, reviewed for quality assurance and quality control, and published to our Power BI interactive dashboards, which are all publicly assessable through our public website (i.e., <https://loxahatcheeriver.org/river/>).

Florida Statutes 189.0694 Special districts; performance measures and standards.

- (1) Beginning October 1, 2024, or by the end of the first full fiscal year after its creation, whichever is later; each special district must establish goals and objectives for each program and activity undertaken by the district, as well as performance measures and standards to determine if the district's goals and objectives are being achieved.*
- (2) By December 1 of each year thereafter; each special district must publish an annual report on the district's website describing:
 - a. The goals and objectives achieved by the district, as well as the performance measures and standards used by the district to make this determination.*
 - b. Any goals or objectives the district failed to achieve.**

History.—s. 7, ch. 2024-136.

By October 1, 2024 LRECD must identify the programs and activities that are undertaken by the District, and for each program and activity we must establish goals and objectives, and for each objective we must establish performance measures and standards.

- I. Program
 - a. Activity
 - i. Goal
 - ii. Objective
 - 1. Performance Measure(s)
 - 2. Standards (benchmarks) – any metric scored green signifies we have positively achieved our objective; any metric scored yellow indicates we have minimally achieved our objective; any metric scored red signifies we have failed to meet our objective

LRECD Legislative Intent: It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Legislature that the best interests of public health, safety, and welfare of the area within the boundaries of the Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District necessitates the formation of a separate local agency of government with powers designed to meet the particular needs of said area. It is further the intent of the Legislature that such needs be met in such a way as to cause minimum damage to the area's resources and environment and prevent additional environmental problems from being created, as well as providing solutions to existing problems.