



Inland Protection Trust Fund Cleanup Program Funding Issues

The Inland Protection Trust Fund was created in 1986 (Chapter 376, F.S.) as a dedicated trust fund for the cleanup of petroleum contamination.

1. Under the covenants of the Act, all site owners with petroleum leaks were to report them to the state in exchange for the state cleaning up the sites from the Trust Fund.
2. Progress has been slow as the state had no experience in operating such a program.
3. Further, the Trust Fund has been invaded for other government uses, which has resulted in delays in cleanup of sites and greater cleanup expenses due to these delays.
4. As a result:
 - Private real estate transactions, critical to the economy, have been severely curtailed due to fears of lack of funding;
 - Imminent threat sites (site posing substantial threats to drinking water supplies) are increasing as cleanup funding is decreasing.
5. FDEP is alerting off-site property owners where contamination plumes are leaving program-eligible sites. These plumes are spreading due to no fault of property owners, but rather, due to lack of funding, and an increasing number of property owners are now facing potential third-party liability claims.
6. There is a current backlog of unfunded high priority work orders and this backlog has been growing throughout this fiscal year.
7. Failure to timely address cleanups costs millions of dollars since plumes spread over short periods of time.
8. According to University of Florida economist Steve Labarbara, every \$1.00 spent in cleanup of contaminated properties returns \$3.00 to the Florida economy. Based on his studies, a reduction of \$1 million from the cleanup program results in a \$3 million loss to the economy. Therefore, the last thing Florida needs to do at this time is reduce the appropriation for the cleanup program.

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