

Venomous Reptiles



Consent Agenda
September 26, 2018



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Version 1

This presentation will describe the proposed rule amendment to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Rule 68A-6.007, "Possession, Transportation, Exhibition and Caging Venomous Reptiles and Reptiles of Concern."

The proposed revision will allow for the option of adding a safety/security film to satisfy the requirement for secondary containment for facilities with internal viewing panels.

Division: Law Enforcement

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Report date: September 26, 2018

Photo: image from google

Background

- Staff worked with stakeholders to amend Rule 68A-6.007 in 2016
- Revised language created rules which required:
 - Safety entrances
 - Secondary enclosures
- Unintended consequence of language created an impractical threshold for facilities with indoor viewing panels

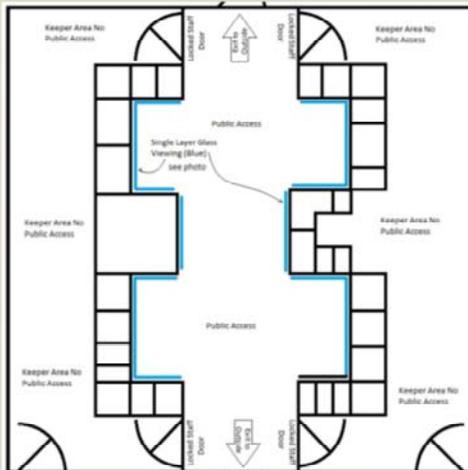


Currently, regulations require that primary containment for venomous reptiles be kept inside of secondary containment, which must be locked at all times to prevent unauthorized intrusion. An unintended consequence of the regulations require facilities exhibiting venomous reptiles indoors to either keep their public doors locked or double pane their viewing panels to be in compliance.

Secondary containment – a secondary means of containing wildlife which surrounds or encompasses the primary cage or enclosure and is designed to contain wildlife that has escaped the primary cage or enclosure including, but not limited to, rooms, outbuildings or perimeter fences.

Photo: Investigator took at a licensed facility with interior viewing panels showing cobra enclosure

Example of Affected Enclosures



Traditional zoological exhibits display venomous reptiles in what is known throughout the industry as a “herp house.” This design allows patrons to enter a building through a set of doors and walk freely throughout the room to view reptiles inside of primary containment through interior glass viewing panels. For esthetics, many of these viewing panels have ornate concrete or stone work surrounding the glass.

Photo: Bushmaster exhibit in the herp house at Central Florida Zoo

Photo: Herp house at Central Florida Zoo



Proposed Solution

Add rule language to allow interior viewing panels to be constructed of safety / security film to be in compliance with rule.

a. Interior viewing panels may be constructed of two ply laminated glass or coated with a safety/security window film no less than eight millimeters (8 Mil) thick.

b. Any safety/security film used shall be installed pursuant to the manufacturers detailed specifications. Documentation of film specifications shall be available for inspection by Commission personnel.



Members of the venomous reptile industry contacted FWC staff to discuss possible solutions for venomous reptile facilities utilizing internal viewing panels to meet the requirements for secondary containment without undertaking major renovations.

Staff has worked with members from the zoological industry and both have researched the feasibility of using a safety / security film as well as the strength integrity of the film. Both agree that including an option of the film will be a significant cost savings to facilities and at the same time ensure the safety of the public and prevent the escape of venomous reptiles into the wild.

Photos: images from Google

Staff Recommendation

Approve and adopt proposed rule language.

*If approved, rules will be effective
January 1, 2019.*



Approve and adopt proposed rule language without further hearing unless requested.

Photo: cobra image from google