

# The South Florida Water Management District REGIONAL NEWS



April 2011



**Charles Dauray**  
Governing Board  
Vice-Chair



**Joe Collins**  
Governing Board Chair



**Phil Flood**  
Lower West Coast  
Regional Service Center  
Director



[sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov)  
South Florida Water  
Management District  
[www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov)

Lower West Coast Regional  
Service Center  
2301 McGregor Boulevard  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
Phone: (239) 338-2929  
Toll Free: (800) 248-1201  
Fax: (239) 338-2936

## In Your Region

### District Declares a Water Shortage

When groundwater and surface water supplies are low and fall below a given threshold, and when long-range climate predictions forecast no drought relief, the South Florida Water Management District has statutory authority and responsibility to declare a water shortage. The declaration triggers certain activities as set forth in Rule depending on the severity of the drought.

On March 26, 2011, the District issued five water shortage Orders throughout the 16-county District. Two of these Orders affect the Lower West Coast.

- [Lake Okeechobee Service Area Order](#) imposes water restrictions on agricultural users of Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee River. Permitted agricultural, nursery and diversion and impoundment users are required to achieve a 15 percent reduction in surface water withdrawn or diverted from Lake Okeechobee or surface waters hydraulically connected to Lake Okeechobee.
- [District-Wide Order](#) restricts landscape irrigation to two-days per week and requires golf courses to cut their usage by 15 percent.

Water use for vehicle washing, public health and safety and hand watering; low volume, micro-irrigation and cisterns as well as athletic turf and playing surfaces are not affected. Landscape irrigation using reclaimed water (purple pipes) is not restricted. Local governments having more restrictive ordinances prevail and take precedent over the District's Orders.

Water shortage fact sheets containing more detailed information regarding landscape irrigations restrictions for Charlotte, Glades, Hendry, and Lee counties; the City of Cape Coral; as well as commercial and agricultural water use restrictions in the Lake Okeechobee Service Area can be found at the District's [Water Shortage Watch](#) website.

### Tell us your water conservation stories!

Many utilities and municipalities have discovered the long-term benefits of water conservation: reducing, deferring or eliminating the need to increase supply capacity and helping secure the resource for the future. We'd like to showcase those efforts in our enewsletter to help other agencies define and design their own programs.

If you have an outreach initiative, contest or education program to share, send your information to Sally McPherson at [smcphers@sfwmd.gov](mailto:smcphers@sfwmd.gov). We look forward to hearing from you!

### SFWMD ePermitting Enhances Public and Business Efficiency

Continuing its commitment to customer-friendly practices, the District offers Florida businesses an online ePermitting database as a cost-effective tool to apply for water permits and research permit-related information. ePermitting reduces applicant paperwork, eliminates printing and postage costs and reduces permit processing time. To assist customers with the ePermitting system, the District is hosting free training workshops. Sessions will focus on Environmental Resource and Consumptive Water Use Permits. To sign up for ePermitting training, please email the requested date and type of training to [epermits@sfwmd.gov](mailto:epermits@sfwmd.gov). If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Cathy Widness at (561) 682-6317.

Training is scheduled for May 25 at 1 p.m. at the Big Cypress Basin Service Center and for June 2 at 1 p.m. at the Lower West Coast Service Center.

### Wildflower Coincidence

April 2, 1513—Juan Ponce de Leon and his crew, the first Europeans to land on the continent of North America, came ashore and named the land *La Florida* for the beautiful flowers that abounded there.

April 2, 2011—Celebrating southwest Florida's wildflowers, hundreds of hikers trekked the Cypress Dome trails at CREW (Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed) lead by botanists and naturalists who spotted and identified wildflowers on the trail.

Wildflowers continue at their peak through May. The CREW lands, including the Cypress Dome Trail and the Marsh Trail are owned by the SFWMD and are open to the public.

*Photo: Sally McPherson from the District's Lower West Coast Service Center staffs a display urging water conservation and Florida Friendly landscaping.*



### Estero Island Stormwater Improvements Completed

The Town of Ft. Myers Beach has completed roadway and drainage improvements to north Estero Blvd that incorporate innovative stormwater treatment that will help to improve the water quality in Estero Bay.



This \$3.5 million project utilizes advanced technologies in the form of slotted storm drain pipes, box filtration structures and underground water-holding chambers to reengineer a densely developed urban area on a barrier island where groundwater and tidal influences play a significant role. The project design also incorporated potable water distribution lines and other utility works, sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic-calming road narrowing, landscaping and trolley stop pull-offs making the corridor functional and aesthetically pleasing.

The District provided support for the water quality component of the multi-faceted project.

The completed project will serve as a template to continue the reconstruction of the remainder of Estero Boulevard throughout the Town. *Photo: Installation of Subsurface Chamber Stormwater System.*

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## Waiting for Your Invitation

The Lower West Coast Service Center staff members are available to meet with groups about water resources and environmental restoration projects in our area.

Technical experts, scientists and other specialists can tailor a presentation to meet specific needs or answer questions regarding many water-related topics.

This service is free and available by contacting Sally McPherson at (239) 338-2929, x7783, or by email at [smcphers@sfwmd.gov](mailto:smcphers@sfwmd.gov)

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## Out and About

### FWMD Governing Board Workshops and Meetings

*Governing Board meetings are typically webcast. To watch the meetings online, go to [www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov) and click on one of the webcast links.*

May 11 and 12 in West Palm Beach

June 8 and 9 in West Palm Beach

July 13 and 14 in West Palm Beach

### Water Resources Advisory Commission (WRAC) Meetings

June 2 in West Palm Beach

June 20 in West Palm Beach (Recreation Issues Workshop)

July 7 in West Palm Beach

July 28 in West Palm Beach (20-Year Water Use Permits/10-Year Compliance Issues Workshop)

### Public Meetings to Discuss Regulatory Matters

*10 a.m., at the Lower West Coast Service Center, 2301 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers*

May 18

June 15

July 20

### Other Events

#### June 2 – SFWMD ePermitting Training Workshop

1 p.m., Lower West Coast Service Center, 2301 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers