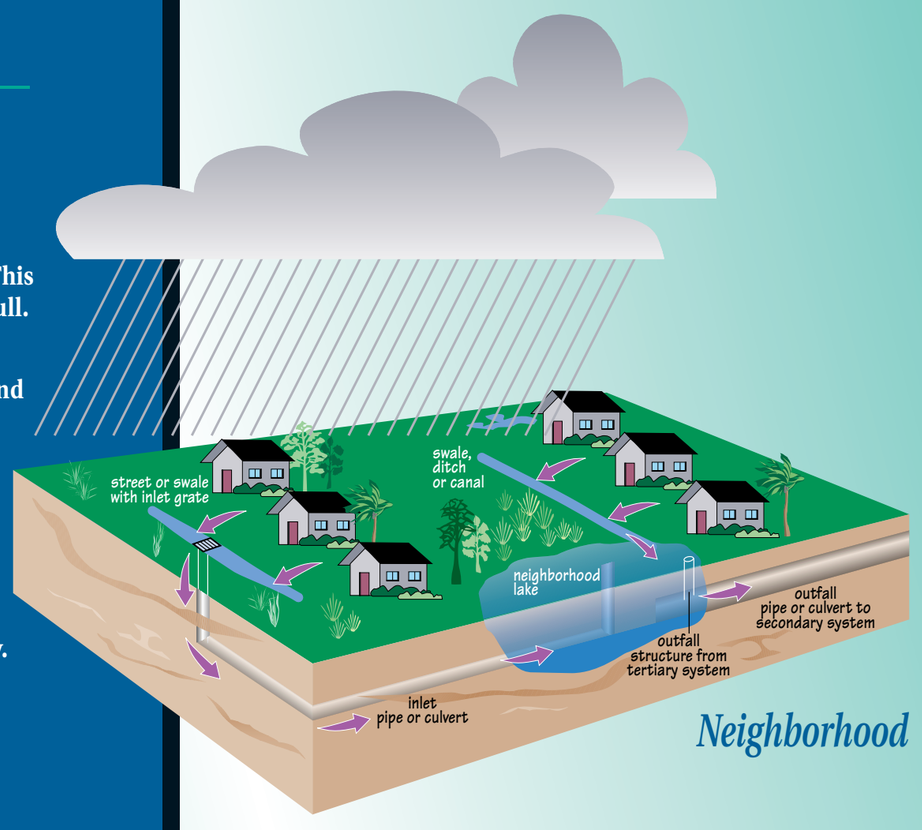
Know the Flow!

Flood protection is a shared responsibility

Neighborhood
Tertiary Drainage System

What path does storm water typically follow from your neighborhood to its final destination? Here's an example:

- Five inches of rain falls in 24 hours over an inland community. This rain follows a wet period, so ground water levels are already full.
- According to most approved drainage designs, some water is temporarily stored in public recreational areas, yard swales and streets.
- The excess "surface water" slowly drains to community lakes/on-site ponds via street and yard drainage grates or culverts and/or via swales, ditches or canals.
- Water then drains from the community or "tertiary" system through underground pipes to the "secondary" system, usually operated by a special taxing district or the county/city.
- Maintenance and upkeep of community drainage facilities is typically the responsibility of homeowner associations.

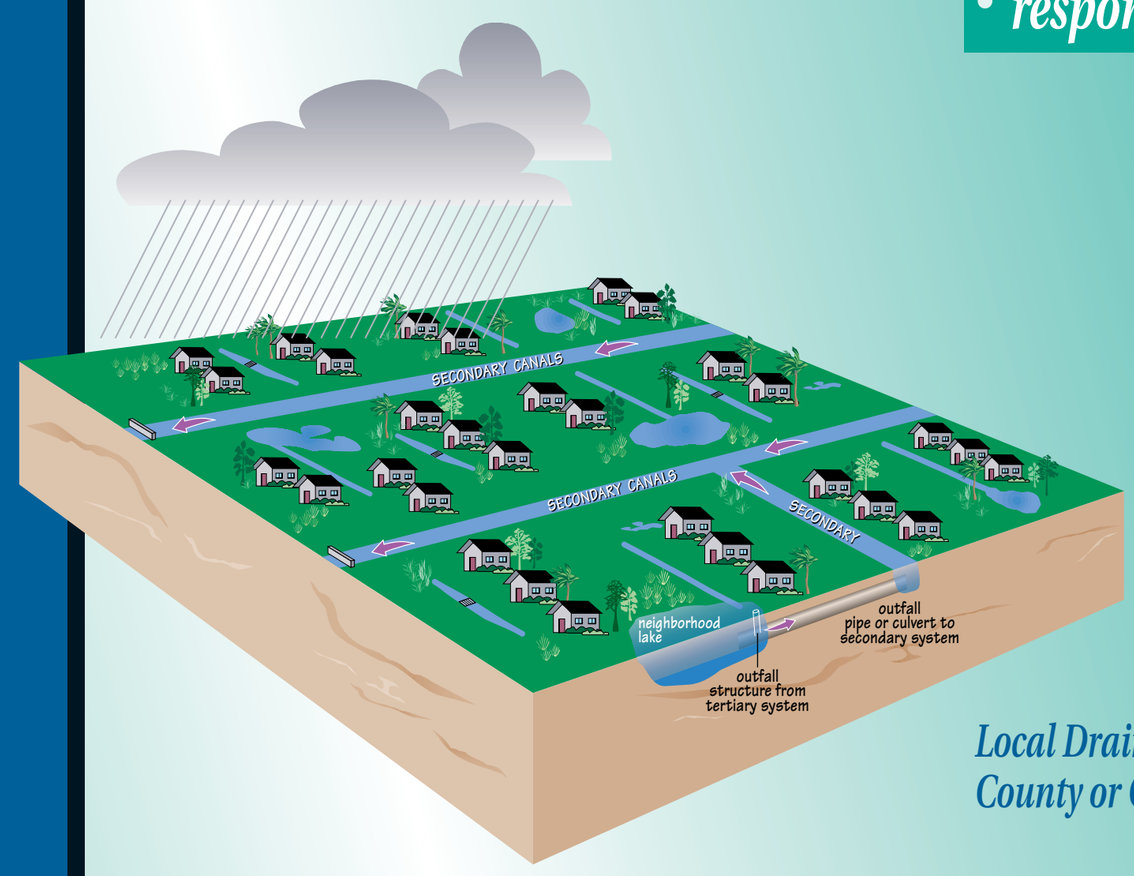


Neighborhood

Local Drainage District/County or City
Secondary Drainage System

- Usually a network of canals, structures, pumping stations and storage areas, secondary drainage systems can cover several hundred square miles and serve a number of communities.
- Responsibility typically includes the design, construction, maintenance and operation of water control facilities for controlling drainage and reclaiming lands within a given area.
- Based on available carrying capacity, these canals discharge water into the "primary" flood control system — either South Florida Water Management District canals, or natural rivers and other waterways which ultimately flow to the coast.
- Drainage problems, blockages or flow restrictions should be immediately reported to the responsible drainage district, county or city.

* *If you live in an area serviced by a local drainage or water control district, it is noted as a separate item on your county property tax bill.*

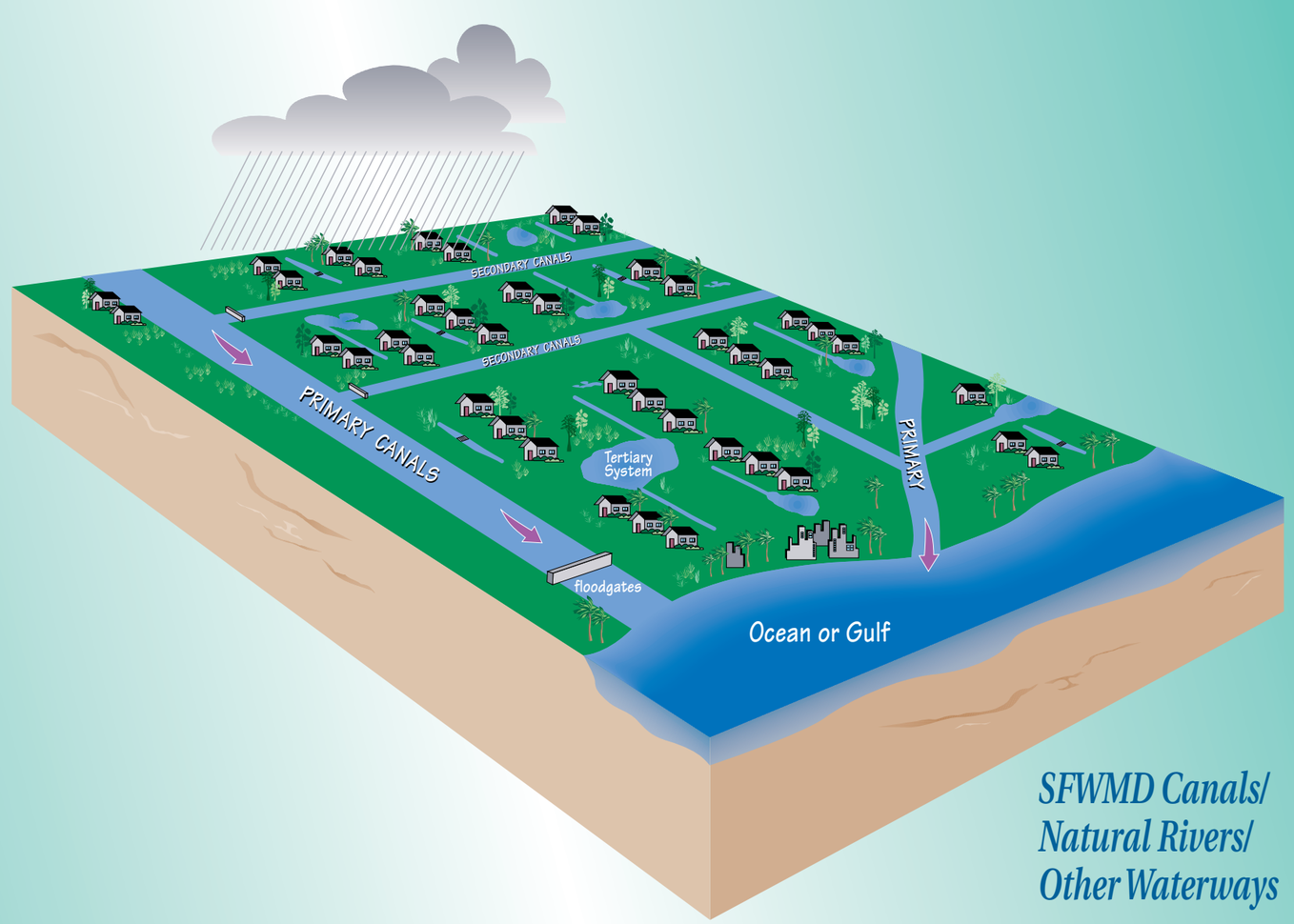


Local Drainage District/ County or City

SFWMD Canals/Natural Rivers/ Other Waterways
Primary Drainage System

- The South Florida Water Management District operates and maintains a federal public works project along with other regional flood control facilities.
- Weather conditions and water levels are monitored around the clock. Floodgates are opened and water levels are lowered in anticipation of heavy rains to accommodate direct rainfall and inflows from the secondary systems.
- During and after heavy rains, excess water is routed through all available primary waterways to regional storage areas or to coastal discharge points to relieve flooding as quickly and safely as possible.
- A year-round maintenance program assures peak performance of SFWMD facilities under emergency conditions.
- In those areas not serviced by the federal project, the primary drainage outlets are natural rivers and other waterways.

* *As a multi-purpose agency, a portion of the property taxes you pay to SFWMD is for regional flood protection. Look for "Freddy the Friendly Alligator" on SFWMD canal signs.*



SFWMD Canals/ Natural Rivers/ Other Waterways

NOTE: This graphic represents "typical" stormwater flow in central and south Florida. The path from your particular neighborhood may involve less or more drainage system connections than depicted here. It's up to YOU to "know the flow!"