



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Water Conservation Month Arrives in South Florida** *30 days of activities will highlight year-round need for saving water*



*(Click on picture for a larger version.)*

**West Palm Beach, FL** — April is once again Water Conservation Month in Florida, and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is marking the occasion with a variety of activities to highlight the importance of saving water.

“While Water Conservation Month only comes once a year, conserving water is now a full-time priority in South Florida,” said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Eric Buermann. “There is an ever-growing realization among our residents that we each must protect the state’s valuable water resources for the environment and future generations.”

For 12 consecutive years, Florida has recognized Water Conservation Month in April, which represents the height of the South Florida dry season when historically limited rainfall and peak water demand often stress regional water supplies. Water

conservation is now essential year-round for addressing regional weather extremes and growing demands on a limited water supply that South Florida's 7.5 million residents, economy and unique environment all depend on.

Throughout April, the District is sponsoring and participating in a broad range of local and regional events to raise awareness and promote wise water use:

- The District and the Florida Nursery, Growers & Landscape Association will hold the 3rd annual Landscape Challenge in West Palm Beach. The hands-on competition promotes water conservation and encourages best management practices in Florida's nursery and landscape industry.
- Big Cypress Basin is partnering with Water Symposium of Florida to implement an educational outreach and demonstration project that involves installing Florida-Friendly Landscaping in front of Marco Island City Hall and in several roadway medians in Collier County.
- As part of the latest phase in the redevelopment of its Web site, the District will unveil new Web pages that present educational information on water conservation through interactive graphics, multimedia and fact sheets.
- The SFWMD's Broward Service Center is working with the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Discovery & Science to develop a new exhibit and multimedia experience called "Water Works: Soak up the Science." Scheduled to debut May 28, the exhibit will offer a fun, interactive way to learn about the water cycle and water conservation.
- District staff will be promoting water conservation at various Earth Day events, community fairs and schools throughout the region.

### **Progress Toward Year-Round Water Conservation**

The District recently took a significant step toward curbing water use in South Florida by enacting Year-Round Water Conservation Measures that target outdoor irrigation, which accounts for up to half of the estimated 179 gallons of water used per person per day. The District estimates implementation of these measures may reduce overall potable water demand by 5 to 10 percent, based on a recent SFWMD study of regional demand reductions experienced during the 2007-2009 water shortage.

The Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Rule is just one initiative implemented over the last year under the District's Comprehensive Water Conservation Program. Among the other initiatives were:

- In August 2009, the District began piloting the Water Conservation Hotel and Motel Program (Water CHAMP) in the Florida Keys. The District has so far enrolled 17 lodging facilities with nearly 700 rooms in the public education program, which helps hotels and motels save water, improve energy efficiency and reduce operating costs.

- For the second consecutive year, the District and the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association hosted a free workshop on how to develop effective water conservation projects in the industrial, commercial and institutional water use sectors. Held last month, the event drew more than 150 people and featured a vendor exhibition that included 15 providers of innovative water conservation products and services.
- For Fiscal Year 2010, the SFWMD Governing Board approved nearly \$460,000 in matching grants for 13 water conservation projects through the Water Savings Incentive Program (WaterSIP). The projects will save an estimated 238 million gallons of water per year.

The Comprehensive Water Conservation Program was approved by the SFWMD Governing Board in September 2008 to encourage more responsible use of water resources throughout South Florida. Numerous stakeholders worked with the District to define specific regulatory, voluntary and incentive-based programs and in-depth education and marketing plans that will help foster a year-round conservation ethic.

For details on the Comprehensive Water Conservation Program and water-saving tips, please visit [www.savewaterfl.com](http://www.savewaterfl.com).

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### **About the South Florida Water Management District**

*The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.*