



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **New Analysis Tool Helps Businesses Save Water, Reduce Costs** *Commercial water conservation is essential to protecting regional water resources*



*(Click on the pictures for larger versions.)*

**West Palm Beach, FL** – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is offering managers of office buildings, schools, restaurants, hospitals and other commercial or public facilities a new hands-on tool to reduce water use, lower operating costs and protect regional water resources.

The Water Efficiency Improvement Self-Assessment Guide was developed by the District as a comprehensive, no-cost guide for facility managers to understand their building's water use and develop a plan of action to increase efficiency without sacrificing performance. The guide includes step-by-step instructions and spreadsheet calculators to assist managers and facility maintenance personnel through the process.

The innovative manual is the only one of its kind to thoroughly guide a facility manager through the process of assessing water use efficiency. As a result of creating the manual, the District was chosen for the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association Water Conservation Award for Excellence, which was presented at the SFWMD Governing Board December meeting.

“Whether at home or in business, water conservation is a critical component of safeguarding South Florida’s water supply,” said SFWMD Executive Director Melissa Meeker. “This new water use auditing guide will help businesses identify the most cost-effective ways to reduce their water use and realize the biggest return on their investment.”

One facility has already identified significant conservation opportunities. Lake Stevens Middle School in Hialeah worked with the District and Miami-Dade County Public Schools’ maintenance staff to review conservation options in areas such as landscape irrigation, restroom retrofits, the school’s commercial kitchen and recovery of condensation from the cooling tower.

In all, the assessment identified a potential water savings of 1.9 million to 2.1 million gallons annually and an operating cost reduction of \$10,785 to \$12,730. It was estimated the school would recoup its investment in the retrofits in 6 to 27 months.

### **Comprehensive Water Conservation**

The Water Efficiency Improvement Self-Assessment Guide represents another component in the District’s Comprehensive Water Conservation Program, approved by the Governing Board in September 2008 to encourage more responsible use of water resources throughout South Florida.

With 1 billion gallons of fresh water consumed each day by Florida’s commercial and industrial users, the new assessment tool can help businesses:

- Reduce operating costs
- Improve public image
- Demonstrate support for protecting Florida’s resources

Last month, South Florida residences and businesses transitioned to year-round landscape irrigation water conservation measures following an extended water shortage with restrictions in place since March. Outdoor irrigation accounts for up to half of all potable water use in the region.

Increased water efficiency in commercial facilities not only saves money but supports environmental restoration and protection by reducing demand on regional water supplies. Consistent and lasting water conservation practices continue to be a vital component to successfully meet South Florida’s water needs.

The Water Efficiency Improvement Self-Assessment Guide and its associated tools can be downloaded for free [here](#).

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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.*