

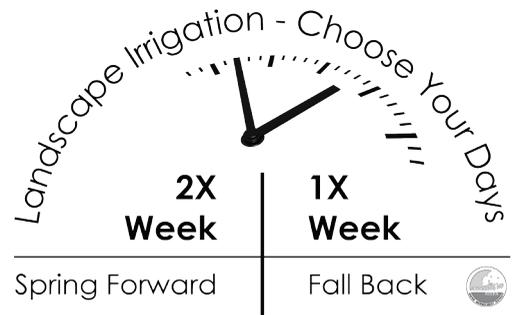
Landscape irrigation allowed twice per week

When Daylight Saving Time began on Sunday, March 13, we may have lost an hour of sleep but we gained an extra day to water our landscape.

Under the landscape irrigation rule that went into effect last year, irrigation is limited to two days per week during Daylight Saving Time and once weekly during Standard Time. Residents may choose which days to water. However,

irrigation should not occur between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

The Suwannee River Water Management District limits landscape irrigation as part of an ongoing effort to help address water needs. The rules apply to residential landscaping, public or commercial recreation areas, and public and commercial businesses that aren't regulated by a District-issued permit.



Study evaluates nutrient recycling on diversified farm



Suwannee Farms

Everywhere we turn, people are telling us to recycle. But just what does that mean to a farmer?

Suwannee Farms can tell you. The farm, located in Suwannee County, recycles animal waste to improve nutrient management and protect water quality. A treatment system and other technology allow the farm to take manure generated from its 5,000 head of cattle and use it to build soils and fertilize crops. Those crops then produce forage for cattle.

“Suwannee Farms is making good use of nutrients on its farm while reducing the concentration of nutrients lost to the environment,” said Darrell Smith, Suwannee River Partnership (SRP) coordinator.

Still the farm is willing to do more.

They agreed to allow the SRP, an organization that works with land owners to solve water quality and quantity issues, to conduct a study on the effects

of managing the nutrients, nitrogen and phosphorus, on their feeding/crop operation located near the Suwannee River.

The study, now in its second year, will determine how well nutrients are utilized on the farm and what can be done to improve nutrient efficiency. Plant sampling determines the percentage of nutrients that crops are taking up. Soil sampling evaluates nutrient concentrations in the ground and determines whether those levels need to be adjusted.

“The goal is to improve the use of nutrients on the farm so fewer will be leached into groundwater,” Smith said.

The study is being led by the University of Florida /Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) and funded by the Suwannee River Water Management District, UF/IFAS, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and Suwannee Farms.

The District's Governing Board on March 8 approved funding in the amount of \$15,000 to continue the study in Fiscal Year 2011.

Governing Board elects officers



Pictured from left, Ray Curtis, Don Quincey and Alphonas Alexander.

The District's Governing Board held an election of officers on March 8. Donald J. Quincey, Jr., will serve as chairman; Alphonas Alexander will serve as vice-chairman; and Donald R. “Ray” Curtis III, will hold the positions of secretary/treasurer.

Quincey represents the Lower Suwannee River Basin. Alexander represents the Upper Suwannee River Basin. Curtis represents the Coastal River Basin.

To learn more about the SRP, visit www.suwannee.org.

When gardening, consider weeding out invasives



Willsey

Chinese wisteria. Mimosa. Chinaberry. Chinese tallow. These are a few ornamentals commonly found in home gardens. They are also invasive, exotic plant species that can displace Florida's native plants and threaten the health

of the ecosystem.

Beau Willsey, District environmental scientist, answers questions about invasive, exotic species:

Q: What is the difference between exotic and invasive plants?

A: Exotic species are non-native plants that have been introduced into Florida for a variety of reasons, either

for their ornamental nature, as a potential forage crop or by accident. Most non-native plant species are not invasive, that is there is little threat of their proliferation in the wild.

Q: Why do invasive, exotic plants pose a problem?

A: Such plant species often out-compete native species and disrupt the natural balance among native plants and animals.

Q: Why should homeowners get involved in controlling invasive weeds?

A: Invasive plants have no respect for property boundaries. Wind, birds and other animals can carry seeds or plant spores, spreading invasive weeds to natural areas. Here, they have the potential

to rapidly reproduce and damage the ecosystem.

Q: What can I do as a homeowner?

A: Know the plants you bring into your yard or that currently exist in your landscape. The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council provides a list of invasive weeds, available at www.fleppc.org.

Control and prevent further spread of invasive species on your property. To learn how, visit www.fleppc.org.

Implement Florida Friendly Landscaping™. The website www.floridayards.org provides tips and advice on how to develop an attractive, low-maintenance landscape with native or drought tolerant plants.

You may also contact your local extension office.



Chinese wisteria -- C. Evans, River to River CWMA, Bugwood.org



Mimosa -- USDA Forest Service - Region 8, Bugwood.org



Chinaberry -- R. Billings, Texas Forest Service, Bugwood.org



Chinese tallow -- C. Evans, River to River CWMA, Bugwood.org

News briefs

Water Conservation

The Governing Board adopted a proclamation on March 8 declaring April 2011 as Water Conservation Month.

The designation will help increase public awareness about the importance of water conservation and of following the District's year-round landscape irrigation rule and temporary Phase I Water Shortage Advisory.

Financial Reporting

The Governing Board on March 8 accepted the District's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The CAFR contains a complete audit of the District's financial records for Fiscal Year 2010.

The District prepares the report in order

to provide the highest level of accountability concerning the expenditure of public funds.

The audit, conducted by an external auditor, was completed successfully and was found to be in compliance.

Prescribed Fire

Prescribed burns were conducted on 2,085 acres of District land in February. Though dry weather conditions have limited prescribed burning, burn managers are still on schedule in terms of meeting the targeted acreage for Fiscal Year 2011. A total of 9,071 acres out of the 10,500 targeted acres have been burned since Oct. 1, 2010.

The District conducts controlled burns to maintain natural resources and reduce

the risk of wildfire on District lands. A schedule of upcoming burns is available on the District's Important Notices webpage at www.mysuwanneeriver.com/recreation.

Hydrologic Conditions

The District received average rainfall in February. This helped improve the 12-month rainfall deficit and led to improvements in groundwater levels. However, the upper Suwannee, Santa Fe and Aucilla river basins are still experiencing significant rainfall deficits of 10-20 inches and flows on the Suwannee and Santa Fe rivers remain below normal.

Most of the District is still in a drought and a Phase I Water Shortage Advisory remains in effect.