

The District salutes local governments and others in promoting water conservation during the month of April

Board declares April as Water Conservation Month

The Suwannee River Water Management District Governing Board in March adopted a proclamation designating April as Water Conservation Month, which calls upon residents, businesses and visitors to protect our precious water resources by practicing and promoting conservation measures both indoors and outdoors.

The District has invited local governments within its region to follow suit, and as of the printing of this newsletter the City of Lake City, and Suwannee, Jefferson, Lafayette, Bradford, Baker, Columbia

and Levy counties have adopted similar proclamations. The District anticipates other local governments will adopt proclamations throughout the month of April.

The District offers the following tips for conserving indoors and outdoors:

- Fix leaks.
- Install water efficient plumbing fixtures.
- Limit showers to five minutes.
- If washing dishes by hand, don't leave the water running.
- Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when you have a full load.

• Follow the District's landscape irrigation rule.

• Only water your landscape when it is actually needed.

• Implement Florida Friendly Landscaping™.

• Use sprinklers with automatic timers.

• Wash your car on the grass.

For information about the District's landscape irrigation rule, visit www.mysuwanneeriver.com. Visit www.floridayards.org for information on Florida-Friendly Landscaping™.

District water conservation programs at a glance

SUWANNEE RIVER PARTNERSHIP

In 1999, the District formed the Suwannee River Partnership to bring government and the agriculture industry together to reduce water use and improve water quality. The District has provided more than \$1.5 million to 252 farmers and producers for irrigation system retrofits, other water-efficient equipment and techniques, and evaluations. Through the program, farmers save an estimated 1 billion gallons of water annually.

RECLAIMED WATER

The District is working with wastewater utilities within its 15-county region to develop the capacity to produce reuse water for irrigation, toilet flushing, clothes washing, and other non-potable uses. To date the District has provided nearly \$7.25 million for reuse projects to Lake City, Live Oak, Monticello, Alachua and Cedar Key. These projects collectively have the potential to save about 6.7 million gallons of fresh water per day.

WATER CHAMPSM

The District partnered with The

Ichetucknee Partnership to introduce a Water ChampSM pilot program in Columbia County last August. The water conservation/reuse program offered to hotels and motels encourages guests that have multiple night stays to reuse towels and linens. The Holiday Inn & Suites, Cabot Lodge, Best Western Lake City Inn, and Super 8 are currently participating in the program. The District hopes to expand the program to other counties in the future.

RETROFIT PROGRAM

The District partnered with the Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA) earlier this year to offer counties and school districts a matching grant of up to \$10,000 to upgrade old plumbing fixtures and irrigation systems with water efficient models. Gilchrist County and Suwannee, Columbia, Gilchrist, Levy, and Alachua county school districts have signed-up for a water audit to assess leaks and to determine how much water can be saved through upgrades and water conservation practices. A school in Cedar Key participated in the program a few years ago. The District hopes to continue the program next year.



Reclaimed water delivered via purple pipe to Simpson Nurseries in Monticello.

FLORIDA WATER STARSM

The District participates in the St. Johns River Water Management District's Florida Water StarSM Program. Through the program, homeowners and builders within the Suwannee River Water Management District have the opportunity to take advantage of the economic and environmental benefits of water efficiency. The program encourages water efficiency in household appliances, plumbing fixtures, irrigation systems and landscapes. Having the Florida Water StarSM designation can save money on

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District welcomes new governing board member



Johns

Johns, 57, of Alachua, has been the president of John Hipp Construction since 1978 and is certified with the Florida Department of Transportation. She is a licensed underground and excavation

Governor Rick Scott on March 1 appointed Virginia Hipp Johns to the Suwannee River Water Management District Governing Board. Johns, 57, of Alachua, has been the president of John Hipp

Construction since

contractor and a qualified storm water inspector.

Johns has received training on storm water quality and has been responsible for storm water management best management practices on multiple construction projects over the past eight years.

She serves as a member of the City of Alachua Planning and Zoning Board, a post she also held from 1993-2002. She is a member of the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Gainesville Alumni Association and the Builders Association of North Central Florida.

Johns holds an associate degree from

Santa Fe College and an interior design degree from Bauder College.

Johns understands the importance of agriculture to the region and knows how important water resources are to recreation. She helps run a commercial cow/calf operation and bales hay on her family farm, and enjoys tubing the Ichetucknee River to her parent's dock.

She succeeds James Fraleigh and will serve as an at large member for a term that began March 1, 2012 and ends March 1, 2013.

The appointment is subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate.

District receives reclaimed water for landscape irrigation

The Suwannee River Water Management District (District) is doing its part to conserve groundwater resources by using reclaimed water to irrigate landscaping at its headquarters in Live Oak. On March 28, the District became one of the City of Live Oak's first customers to receive reclaimed water to offset groundwater demands.

Reclaimed water is wastewater that is treated to a higher standard and reused for irrigation, toilet flushing, clothes washing, and other non-potable uses.

"This is just another step in helping to reduce our dependency on groundwater at our office," said District Acting Executive Director Charlie Houder.

Last year, the District redesigned its landscape with low-maintenance, drought-tolerant plants that were donated by Fraleigh Nurseries, LLC, in Madison. Additionally, a drip irrigation system was installed to enable the District to water

more efficiently.

"Irrigating our landscape with reclaimed water allows us to recycle wastewater and offset groundwater withdrawals, and drought-tolerant plants and drip irrigation helps us to use that water more efficiently," said Houder.

The District is saving an estimated 11,000 gallons of groundwater per application through the use of reclaimed water and by installing drought-tolerant plants and drip irrigation.

Other customers or potential customers of the City of Live Oak's reclaimed water system include Lowe's, Camp Weed, a golf course, a soccer field, and other users located along the current pipeline system.

City Administrator Bob Farley said that currently all available treated wastewater is being utilized, but the city hopes to expand access to reclaimed water in the future, even to residential users within the city limits.



The District's new drought-tolerant landscape.

Other cities that have implemented a reclaimed water program include Alachua, Cedar Key, Lake City, Monticello, and Perry. Reclaimed water will mostly be made available to large customers, such as golf courses, ball fields, prisons, nurseries, non-row crop agriculture uses, and industrial uses. It may also be available for residential lawn and landscape irrigation in some areas. Contact your local wastewater utility for information.

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homeowners' utility bills while protecting the state's shared water resources.

CONSERVE FLORIDA

As of Jan. 6, 2010 all permit applicants or current permit holders who get a permit renewal or modification are required to implement a water conservation plan. The District participates in the Conserve

Florida Water Clearinghouse program and encourages public water suppliers to implement their conservation plan through this program. To date, Lake City, Hampton, Lee, Ft. White, White Springs, and Chiefland are participating in Conserve Florida. The program identifies the most cost-effective conservation best management practices, such as

identifying water losses, repairing leaks, and upgrading plumbing fixtures to water-efficient models.

To learn more about these programs and the availability of them in your area, call 386.362.1001, 800.226.1066 (FL only), or visit www.mysuwanneeriver.com.