

## Water Restriction Quick Guide for Citizens

(Unincorporated Sarasota County only)

March 2009

*As of February 24, 2009, the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) declared a Phase III water emergency. Sarasota County citizens are required to comply with all water restrictions. Any witnessed violation by a county code enforcement employee will result in a minimum \$100 citation. No warning will be issued.*

### **LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION**

Irrigation restrictions apply to any system using water from the county, a well, lake, pond or canals, etc. Irrigation systems include automatic in-ground systems and sprinklers connected to a garden hose. These restrictions do not apply to reuse/reclaimed (sewer effluent) water which may have different restrictions.

- No irrigation is allowed at any time on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday.

The only allowable irrigation days for unincorporated Sarasota County are:

**Tuesdays** - Even numbered house addresses (numbers ending in 0, 2, 4, 6, 8) or addresses ending in A through M and common areas (medians, recreational areas or other areas with no address).

**Thursdays** - Odd numbered house addresses (numbers ending in 1, 3, 5, 7, 9) and addresses ending in letters N through Z.

*Note: The above irrigation restrictions may differ from the SWFWMD guidelines and those of the cities of Venice, Sarasota or North Port.*

- Irrigation is prohibited between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on any day for properties under 2 acres in size. Hand watering is also prohibited during these times.
- Property owners should ensure irrigation timers and run times do not extend past midnight on their allowable watering day and timers be adjusted for daylight saving time beginning and ending.
- Irrigation is prohibited between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. for properties greater than 2 acres in size. Hand watering is also prohibited during these times.
- Excessive water run off of property is prohibited including sprinklers spraying into street or other non-landscaped area.
- An irrigation system operating during or soon after a substantial rainfall is prohibited both by state law and county code and subject to an immediate \$100 citation.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Other water uses such as cleaning driveways with water (other than food service establishments), wasteful water use, allowing hoses to run without a shut off nozzle, leaking hoses, not repairing a leak, etc., are also prohibited.

### **NEW LAWNS/SOD**

New lawns may be irrigated the first day of installation any time of day and any day of the week. **ONLY ON THE FIRST DAY.** New lawns after the first day may be irrigated every day for the first 15 days but not between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. On days 16 through 30 new lawns may only be irrigated every other day but not between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. New plugs in an established lawn or random sod infill does not qualify as new lawn and therefore must comply with hand watering instructions shown below.

## **NEW PLANTINGS**

New plantings may be irrigated the first day of installation any time of day and any day of the week. **ONLY ON THE FIRST DAY.** New plantings after the first day may be irrigated every day for the first 30 days but not between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.. On days 31 through 60 new plantings may only be irrigated every other day but not between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. New plantings must be at least 50 percent of the area being irrigated. Areas less than 50 percent of new plantings must comply with hand watering instructions shown below.

## **HAND WATERING OF PLANTS**

Hand watering of plants, hanging baskets or gardens are allowed any day of the week but is prohibited between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Hand watering of lawns is NOT allowed unless doing so for application of fertilizer/pest control. Hand watering of new plantings is allowed when less than 50 percent of the landscaped area (added new shrub or tree) but not between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. All hand watering by a hose requires the use of a shut off nozzle.

## **SWFWMD VARIANCES**

Properties with a valid SWFWMD variance are subject to all conditions of their variance however must comply with the irrigation times shown above. Properties needing to apply for a variance can obtain an application at <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/conservation/restrictions/swfwmd.html> or call SWFWMD at (800) 423-1476. Sarasota County does not issue any variances.

## **IRRIGATION SYSTEM TESTING/MAINTENANCE**

Irrigation systems can be tested anytime of day and any day of the week, but customer/contractor must be present. System can only run long enough to test irrigation heads for proper spray and time.

## **PRESSURE WASHING**

Pressure washing is allowed using a low volume method.

## **CAR WASHING**

Car washing at home using a hose and shut off nozzle is allowed but should be done on a grassy area to prevent run off and should be limited to one time per week.

## **LARGE/COMMERCIAL USERS**

Some large users such as golf courses, landscape companies, plant nurseries or other high volume water users may have separate requirements placed on them by SWFWMD under their individual well permits and therefore may have different irrigation schedules.

## **FOUNTAINS AND WATER FEATURES**

Aesthetic fountains and other water features may only operate four hours per day. The regular hours of operation can be selected by the owner but must be posted.

## **FERTILIZER AND PEST CONTROL APPLICATIONS**

Watering of fertilizer and/or pest control applications are allowed based on the manufacturers' instructions on the same day of application however not between restricted hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.

## **FILLING OF LAKES BY A WELL (Water Body Augmentation)**

Filling of a lake or pond by a well is prohibited, unless required by a water use permit or Environmental Resource Permit or at a minimum amount to maintain and preserve fish and wildlife.

Citizens can report possible water restriction violations to the Sarasota County Call Center at (941) 861-5000.