

Getting The Treatment

It's a beautiful afternoon, warm and sunny. Water sparkles in a nearby pond. Trees sway in a light breeze.

It's a perfect day for – a trip to a wastewater treatment plant?!

For a dozen education and environmental science majors from the University of South Florida, that's exactly what it was about.

"The tour ranks as one of the students' favorites, believe it or not," said teaching assistant Mark Mueller. "They're really interested in learning what happens to things we take for granted, like where the water goes after you flush a toilet."

About 13 groups a year tour the plant, according to Luke Armstrong, a lead wastewater operator.

Located on five acres in Carrollwood Village, the plant treats an average of 5.4 million gallons of sewage a day, and has won many operations awards from regulatory agencies and professional associations. Be-



Luke Armstrong, far right, is always pleased to show off award-winning county wastewater treatment plants to visitors, like this group of students from the University of South Florida. (WWTP photo)

sides college students, regular visitors include scout troops and elementary school students.

The tour leads visitors around the expansive grounds, across catwalks and over grates for a firsthand look at every aspect of the sewage treatment process. The trip includes a stop at the department's environmental laboratory, also located at the Dale Mabry plant, followed by a question-and-answer session. By the time it ends, even those students who wrinkled their noses in the beginning, now are curious: "What happens to the sludge?"

"How much does the plant cost to run?" "What happens in a hurricane?"

"It's a very interesting process, something you don't think about," said Jennifer Finneran. "I think showing it off is a big plus for Hillsborough County."

The only exceptions are reclaimed water users and residents who have received variances issued by the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

County Commissioners placed the South-Central region on the once-a-day schedule last summer to alleviate the stress on the water treatment plant and well fields which serve this area. This spring, the Water Department and Tampa Bay Water completed various construction projects which now connect the area to the regional water supply system.

Restrictions *(From front page)*

Here's an easy way to remember your watering days: On the twice-a-week schedule, addresses ending in even numbers or the letters A-M may water on Tuesdays and Saturdays; addresses ending in odd numbers, the letters N-Z or locations with no address (such as common areas) may water on Wednesdays and Sundays. Watering is allowed before 8 a.m. or after 6 p.m. on the assigned days.

The restrictions apply even to residents and businesses who receive their water from private wells.

Lending A Helping Hand

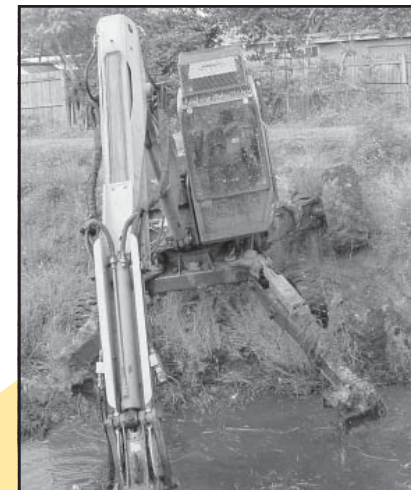
Everyone needs a helping hand once in a while – even the Hillsborough County Water Department.

In this case, the hand was extended by another county agency when an 8-inch gravity sewer main, buried beneath a creek in Clair Mel, collapsed recently.

Lacking the specialized heavy equipment necessary to work on such an unusual problem, the department put out a call to the Public Works Department's Transportation Maintenance Division. The Central Service Unit sent over a Kaiser – a strange-looking machine that can crawl steep, muddy ditches – and a hard-working crew who dug up the sewer main, laid a bed of limestone beneath it for support, then covered the pipe again after it was repaired by Water Department workers.

County workers finished the repairs on the eve of the same day the problem was discovered. Hiring a contractor, even for an emergency, would have taken longer and been far more costly, said Rich Cummings, line maintenance section manager for the Water Department.

"The help from Public Works was invaluable," Cummings said. "We couldn't have done it without them."



A steep creek and a broken sewer main are no match for this Kaiser, a machine which can "walk" down embankments.

Flatwoods Gets a Facelift

Hillsborough County Commissioner - District 2 Ken Hagan and County Administrator Pat Bean, joined officials from the City of Tampa, community leaders and elected officials recently for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the opening of new parking and restroom facilities at Flatwoods Nature Park, located at 18205 Bruce B. Downs Blvd. in New Tampa.

Flatwoods Nature Park property is owned by Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and is operated and maintained by Hillsborough County.



County Commissioner Ken Hagan (center), along with County Administrator Pat Bean (right) and Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio (left) were among those who attended the Flatwoods ribbon cutting ceremony.

Hillsborough County, in cooperation with SWFWMD, inaugurated Flatwoods Nature Park as a recreation area in 1984. Since then, Hillsborough County has continuously improved Flatwoods Park to serve the rapidly growing community of New Tampa.

Residents and visitors enjoy biking, skating, walking and running on an 11-mile paved trail with trailheads at Bruce B. Downs Boulevard and Morris Bridge Road entrances. Bicycling enthusiasts and hikers are also served with miles of off-road trails maintained and operated by the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department.

Flatwoods is part of the Wilderness Park system in northeastern Hillsborough County, which also includes Dead River, John B. Sargeant Sr., Morris Bridge, Trout Creek and Veterans Memorial.

NEWS BRIEFS...

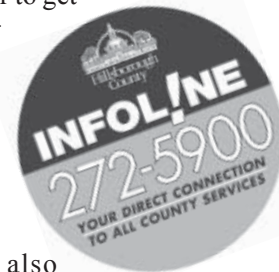
Emergency Information Available for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired

Now, the County's deaf and hearing impaired residents can obtain information about storm preparedness and emergency services by calling the Citizen Action Center's TTY number, 813-301-7173.

Other resources include the Deaf and Hearing Connection of Tampa at TTY: 272-399-9422 and the Deaf Service Bureau of West Central Florida at TTY: 813-930-7682.

Hillsborough County Emergency Management will provide local television media with the latest emergency information for its closed captioning and/or crawlers. Hearing impaired residents also are encouraged to have battery operated equipment and spare batteries in order to get information during power failures.

For general questions or concerns about services, the County's InfoLine is available from 7a.m.-11p.m. daily. Bilingual services are also available for Spanish-speaking residents.



Hillsborough County Communicator

Published every month by the Communications Department to inform residents about the programs, services and activities of their County government.

For more information, call the Hillsborough Information Line at 272-5900, or visit the county's website at: www.hillsboroughcounty.org

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Hillsborough County
COMMUNICATOR
Keeping You Informed About County Government
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KNOW YOUR TIME AND AVOID THE FINE

Twice-a-week watering restrictions now are in effect for residents in the Water Department's South-Central service area. In order to avoid a fine, know what time you're scheduled to water.

Confirming your schedule is as easy as tuning into news reports, and logging onto Hillsborough County's



website at www.hillsboroughcounty.org to check your watering days.

Click on the A to Z index, and go to "Water Restrictions." Information can also be obtained from a recorded message at 275-7094, or Customer Service at 272-6680.

(See "Restrictions," inside)

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