

Now's the Time to Water Smart

Florida winters bring cooler, more pleasant temperatures. We can turn off our air conditioners, open the windows and brag to our friends and family members up north about our mild climate.

What Florida winters fail to bring, however, is abundant rainfall. Native vegetation can survive on the few inches of rain that falls between now and June. Other plants may need some supplemental watering.

As the weather gets

cooler, plants need less water. Florida lawns only need water once every 10-14 days in the fall and winter. Just because it's no longer the lush green color we're accustomed to in the spring and summer doesn't mean the grass isn't healthy.

Some helpful hints about properly irrigating and caring for your lawn and landscaping during dry spells include:



Less rainfall this time of year requires proper irrigation and care to ensure your lawn stays healthy.



- Watering during the cool, early morning hours to discourage disease and minimize water lost through evaporation.

- Raise lawn mower blades to the highest setting to help grass roots grow deeper and grass blades hold moisture longer.

- An average of 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch of water per application is enough to replenish the grass.

- A drip irrigation system is the most efficient method for watering non-turf areas like trees and shrubs.

- Check sprinkler heads for turf or shrub interference.

- Inspect the system at least once a month for broken or misaligned heads, leaks and improper coverage.

- Check your irrigation timer regularly for proper setting. If the timer has a battery backup, make sure it's fully charged.

New Fleet Goes Into Service

In the event of an emergency, residents can take comfort in knowing that Hillsborough County will be there. That's because the County's Fire Rescue Department unveiled a fleet of 16 new ambulances last month, bringing the total number of rescue vehicles countywide to 23. In 2004, the department responded to more than 72,000 calls; 80%



An increase in the number of rescue vehicles on Hillsborough County streets will increase the response time for those who need emergency pre-hospital care.

were for medical emergencies.

A major goal of Hillsborough County Fire Rescue is reducing the response time to all emergencies. As a result, officials say the odds of survival for citizens in need will increase. Each ambulance, which costs \$150,000, is equipped with the most modern equipment to provide the highest level of safety for patients and the crew.

Watering Schedule At-A-Glance

Watering is allowed before 8 a.m. or after 6 p.m. on the assigned days. The only exceptions are reclaimed water users and residents who have received variances issued by the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

Tuesdays and Saturdays

Addresses ending in even numbers or the letters A-M

Wednesdays and Thursdays

Addresses ending in odd numbers or the letters N-Z

Wednesdays and Sundays

Locations with no address (such as common areas)

Hillsborough County's Florida Yards & Neighborhoods program can give you more information on maintaining your lawn and landscaping. Visit them at hillsboroughcounty.org, under the "A-Z" Index. Go to "Water Department" under "Restrictions & Conservation."

Break *(From front page)*

dent, delivering door-to-door notices that a boil water alert has been lifted, and the cost of taking and analyzing water samples.

To report a water or sewer line break in the Northwest, call 554-5010. In the Brandon area and south Hillsborough County, the number is 744-5600.

Safely Dispose of Household Chemicals and Electronics

Do you have household chemicals or electronic equipment that you no longer need, but want to throw out?

Hillsborough County can help. Now, residents have a place to safely and properly dispose of these products every month.

HERE'S WHEN AND WHERE YOU MAY DROP OFF PRODUCTS YOU NO LONGER NEED

1st Saturday of the month
9805 Sheldon Road
(Northwest County Area)

2nd Saturday of the month
Powell Road, approximately ¼ mile North of Big Bend Road
(South County Area)

3rd Saturday of the month
County Road 579, ¼ mile North of I-4
(East County Area)

Household Chemicals and Electronics Collections events will take place at three different locations from **8 a.m.-2 p.m.** the first through third Saturdays of each month. Only the county's residents are eligible to participate.

Other items accepted at these locations include insecticides, paint, televisions and computers.

For details about the Household Chemicals and Electronics Collections, visit www.hillsboroughcounty.org and link to: "Home Safe Home," or call 272-5680.

Collections may be suspended in the event of inclement weather.

NEWS BRIEFS...

County Officially Opens New University Area Health Center

Hillsborough County, along with the State of Florida Department of Health, officially opened new centers offering convenient access to health care and human services for low-income and economically disadvantaged residents living in the University area.

The University Area Community Social Service Center and the University Area Community Health Center are co-located at 13601 N. 22nd St., north of Fletcher Avenue in North Tampa.

The centers began operating in December 2004 and have already served hundreds of clients. The Social Services center offers access to health care for indigent residents along with financial assistance to low-income residents.

The Health Center offers women's health services; children's health services; immunizations; along with Women, Infants and Children (W.I.C) and Vital Statistics (birth and death certificates).

For more information, contact the county's Health and Social Services Department at 272-5040 or the Hillsborough County Health Department at 307-8015, ext. 5501.

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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COMMUNICATOR

Keeping You Informed About County Government
DECEMBER 2005

Break a Line, Call Us First

If you dig near a public water or sewer line, Hillsborough County's Water Department has a message for you - if it's broken, don't fix it.

Work crews and individuals who accidentally break a line should call us first and avoid trying to fix the break themselves.

People who try to fix line breaks on their own not only run the risk of having the incident snowball into a major repair and unnecessary outages, but also can inadvertently introduce bacteria and other contaminants into the drinking water supply.



In one recent case, workers who repaired an inch-long water line near Valrico ended up accidentally shutting down a foot-long water main in the process, resulting in a precautionary boil water notice that lasted four days for 151 homes.

Do-it-yourselfers won't save money on the repair because the department charges the responsible parties for the time and effort of responding to the inci-

(See "Break," inside)

In This Issue ...

- Break a Line, Call Us First
- Safely Dispose of Chemicals
- Water Smart This Season