

Know the Code? We May Not.

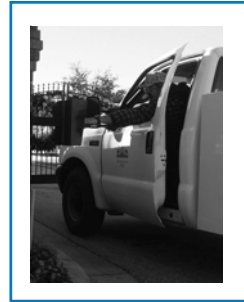
Picture this scenario: the alarm on a sewage lift station in a gated community begins ringing, indicating a pump has failed. After time, sewage begins bubbling out of a nearby manhole. A Water Resource Services crew responds immediately, but when they pull up to the gate and punch in the code - nothing happens.



With dozens of gated communities in unincorporated Hillsborough County and rapid growth adding even more, it's a scenario that happens all too often.

“Our goal is to be there within the hour, day or night,” said Richard Cummings, who oversees line maintenance for Water Resource Services. “When we can't get in to your neighborhood, you end up having to wait around.”

Losing precious time isn't just an inconvenience. The longer it takes to respond to a problem - whether it's a pump station failure, a line break, a sewage backup or even a water quality issue - the worse it gets. Emergency agencies have universal gate keys, but public works crews don't qualify for these even though the situation may be a matter of health and safety.



If you're a neighborhood leader or a property manager for a gated community, you can help by making sure Hillsborough County has your current gate code. Contact Anthony LaColla at the Office of Neighborhood Relations, 272-6680, or send a message to him at lacollaa@hillsboroughcounty.org.

Children's Services Offers Parenting Skills Classes

No one said parenting was easy, but Hillsborough County Children's Services is ready to help by offering Parenting Skills Classes. It's called *Systematic Training for Effective Parenting* (STEP) and is taught nationally to parents of children all ages.

The class emphasizes improving communication skills, understanding children's behavior, and discipline that makes sense, among other topics. Each will be held at various locations throughout the year, and a \$36 registration fee is due on the first day of class.

The book, *The Parents Handbook* by Dinkmeyer & McKay, is required for the class and costs ap-

proximately \$18. It can be purchased at local bookstores or at the County's Child & Family Counseling Office, 3105 W. Waters Ave., Suite 101.

A complete schedule of STEP classes can be found on the county's Web site at www.hillsboroughcounty.org. To attend a class, call 264-3807, Ext. 130 for registration.

And, STEP Classes Are Now Being Offered in Spanish!

Just A Friendly Watering Reminder

If you're thinking about watering your lawn and landscaping this winter, just remember that watering restrictions are in place year-round. 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 only exceptions are reclaimed water users and residents who have received variances issued by the Southwest Florida Water Management District.



Hillsborough County's Florida Yards & Neighborhoods program can give you more information on maintaining your lawn and landscaping.

Visit them on the Web at: hillsborough_fyn.ifas.ufl.edu.

Local Animal Cops Receive Top Honors

It's not exactly the Oscars, but the annual awards presentation by the Florida Animal Control Association (F.A.C.A.) does bring pride and recognition to those in the winners' circle. For animal professionals in our state, an award from F.A.C.A. is a great bone to be thrown!

During this year's convention and conference in St. Petersburg, Hillsborough County Animal Services saw two of its own line up for outstanding service in 2005.

Investigator Loretta Bradley won the award for "Florida Animal Control Officer of the Year." Bradley's been with Hillsborough County for more than 14 years and worked previously for Palm Beach Animal Control.



Loretta Bradley's been nicknamed "the little pit bull" for her petite frame and fearless nature.

Hillsborough County Animal Services Director Bill Armstrong was nominated for a second term as President of F.A.C.A. His colleagues also awarded him a special recognition for "outstanding accomplishments and leadership during the 2004 and 2005 hurricanes."

Armstrong led the charge to bring supplies and personnel from this county and state to hurricane-ravaged Mississippi, establishing F.A.C.A. as the Florida Department of Agriculture's lead agency for disaster rescue and relief of domestic animals.

NEWS BRIEFS...

Drivers Needed to Deliver Meals to Homebound Citizens

It's a rewarding experience that allows you to make a difference in your community. Hillsborough County's Aging Services Department is seeking part-time drivers to deliver meals to senior citizens in various areas of the county.

The County's Department of Aging Services delivers healthy, nutritious meals five days a week to local, homebound citizens age 60 and over, with the greatest economic need. In addition, the department offers nutrition education to encourage healthy eating habits, and invites active seniors to attend its 33 Congregate Dining sites and Senior Centers located throughout the county.

Drivers are required to work 19 hours per week at \$6.93/hour and are reimbursed 37.5 cents per mile driven. All applicants must have their own vehicle, a valid Florida driver license and current automobile insurance. Applicants will also be subject to a background screening and drug test.

*For more information contact:
Nancy Lauth, Aging Services,
272-5303.*

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

Board of County Commissioners

Jim Norman, Chair
Ken Hagan, Vice Chair
Brian Blair
Mark Sharpe
Kathy Castor
Thomas Scott
Ronda Storms
Patricia G. Bean
County Administrator



Hillsborough County
COMMUNICATOR
Keeping You Informed About County Government
February 2006

GROWING WITH YOU

Hillsborough County's Water Resource Services recently opened its third customer service branch location inside the county's new \$3.1 million SouthShore Regional Service Center, 410 30th St. S.E., in Ruskin. The 20,000-square-foot facility is located behind the Sun Point Shopping Center at Interstate 75 and State Road 674.



The new branch is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Customer service professionals can assist visitors with a wide variety of needs, including bill payments, billing inquiries, establishing new accounts, transferring and/or disconnecting services, and account credit counseling. By summer, the branch office plans to expand its services to include assistance to builders and developers applying for new connections. Other agencies housed in the building include the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Planning & Growth Management, Housing & Code Enforcement, and a community mediation group. A representative of the Citizen Action Center also is there.

In This Issue...

- Aging Services Needs Your Help
- Gate Codes - Keep Us Posted
- Watering Reminder