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CFWI Focuses on Saving Water Outdoors Outdoor Irrigation Accounts for up to 50% of Residential Use

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West Palm Beach, FL – Ensuring that central Florida has the water it needs is at the core of the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI). Three water management districts -- the St. Johns River, South Florida and Southwest Florida – are finding new sources and new ways, through the CFWI, to maintain and build the area’s water supply, while protecting the area’s natural resources. Practicing water conservation at home is also critical to helping ensure adequate water supply in the community with outdoor irrigation a great water-saving potential.

“Approximately half of all potable water is used for outdoor irrigation,” according to Dan O’Keefe, South Florida Water Management District Governing Board Chairman. “Much of this use is more than what is required to sustain a healthy residential landscape.”

“Water conservation is a critical strategy to meet our water supply needs — it’s the cornerstone of Florida’s water sustainability,” said St. Johns River Water Management District Executive Director Dr. Ann Shortelle. “While new technologies and strategies are important to meet the water needs of our state, using water efficiently year-round, both indoors and outdoors, helps protect the health of the Floridan aquifer system and ensures that fresh, drinkable groundwater is available for years to come.”

“Conservation is really about not wasting water. And it’s easy to do,” said Brian Armstrong, Southwest Florida Water Management District executive director. “We have a lot of simple tips about conservation on our website at WaterMatters.org/conservation. I encourage everyone to do their part to conserve.”

How much water is enough?

On average, established lawns and landscapes require just one inch of water each week to stay healthy. This amount varies seasonally — water needs for plants go up during the peak summer growing season and down during the

winter dormant period. The goal is to irrigate only as necessary to supplement rainfall.

Watering routines should be influenced by the weather. During the summertime rainy months, watch the weather and wait to water. Homeowners can monitor the amount of water yards receive naturally by placing a rain gauge outside.

Overwatering landscapes wastes both water and money. To see how long it takes a sprinkler system to deliver one inch of water, place empty tuna or cat food cans evenly throughout each zone. After running the sprinklers for a set amount of time, simply measure the depth of water in each can.

Landscape irrigation rules

Florida's water management districts have irrigation conservation measures in place to limit landscape watering and encourage more responsible use of water resources. Following districtwide lawn-watering rules helps ensure the efficient use of water, promotes healthier lawns and landscapes and saves thousands of gallons of water per month. Programmable "smart" irrigation controllers can make it easy to comply with local watering schedules. It is surprising to see how quickly the gallons add up and how easy it is to reduce your use.

Whether residing within South Florida, Southwest Florida or St. John's River water management districts, it's important to know the year-round landscape irrigation rules currently in place in your area.

South Florida Water Management District

Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Rule in place since 2010:

Limits landscape watering to two days a week throughout the 16-county district with a three-day-a-week provision for some counties.

NOTE: Local governments may adopt alternative landscape irrigation ordinances based on local water demands, system limitations or resource availability. Check the SFWMD website for watering days and times.

www.sfwmd.gov/mywateringdays

Southwest Florida Water Management District

Year-Round Water Conservation Measures allows lawn watering twice-per-week. Some local governments such as Pasco and Sarasota counties, and the cities of Dunedin, Longboat Key, Sarasota and Venice, have local ordinances that remain on one-day-per-week schedules. Due to lingering drought effects and water resources not recovering as quickly as other areas, some of the counties in the District's northern region will maintain once-per-week lawn watering along with other restrictions. A portion of Lake County is included in the once-per-week lawn watering schedule. The restrictions for the District's northern region will remain in effect through Oct. 1, 2017. Additional details regarding the watering of new lawns and plants, reclaimed water and other water uses can be found at WaterMatters.org/restrictions.

St. Johns River Water Management District

During daylight saving time (second Sunday in March until the first Sunday in November) irrigation is limited to no more than two days per week on scheduled days. During Eastern Standard Time (first Sunday in November until the second Sunday in March) irrigation is limited to no more than one day per week on scheduled days. Irrigation is prohibited between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Additional details outlining when to water and how much to water are online at www.sjrwm.com/wateringrestrictions.

Tips on saving water outdoors

When it comes to conserving water in a landscape, the most important factors are selection and arrangement of plants and design and usage of the

irrigation system. A good source for information is Florida's water management districts. See materials on sites below with tips on Florida-friendly landscaping for what and how to plant as well as tips on sensible sprinkling for watering wisely year-round.

www.sfwmd.gov/conserve

<http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/conservation/irrigating/watch-weather/>

<http://www.sjrwmd.com/waterwiselandscapes/>

More about CFWI

The CFWI encompasses five counties: Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk and Seminole. The state's water experts project that this region will need an additional 300 million gallons of water per day by 2035. Through the CFWI, three water management districts -- South Florida, Southwest Florida and St. Johns River -- are working collaboratively with other agencies and stakeholders to implement effective water resource planning, including water resource and supply development and management strategies to protect, conserve and restore our water resources. To learn more, please visit cfwiwater.com.

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to protect South Florida's water resources by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems.

The Southwest Florida Water Management District manages the water resources for west-central Florida as directed by state law. The District encompasses roughly 10,000 square miles in all or part of 16 counties and

serves a population of nearly 5 million people. Established in 1961, our mission is to protect water resources, minimize flood risks, and ensure the public's water needs are met.

The St. Johns River Water Management District staff are committed to ensuring the sustainable use and protection of water resources for the benefit of the people of the district and the state of Florida. The St. Johns River Water Management District is one of five districts in Florida managing groundwater and surface water supplies in the state. The district encompasses all or part of 18 northeast and east-central Florida counties. District headquarters are in Palatka, and staff also are available to serve the public at service centers in Maitland, Jacksonville and Palm Bay.

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