



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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SFWMD Observes Water Reuse Week

Reclaimed water reduces demand on freshwater supplies and helps protect natural resources



(Click on picture for larger version.)

The color purple is used to identify pumps, tanks and pipes carrying reclaimed water for reuse.

West Palm Beach, FL — The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board today joined Governor Charlie Crist in recognizing May 10-16, 2009, as Water Reuse Week in Florida.

“Water reuse is an essential part of the District’s water management tool kit,” said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Eric Buermann. “Landscape irrigation accounts for up to half of all residential water use in South Florida. Irrigating with reclaimed water instead helps conserve freshwater supplies and protect our natural resources.”

[Water reuse](#) involves taking domestic wastewater, giving it a high degree of treatment and using the resulting high-quality reclaimed water for a new, beneficial purpose. Extensive treatment and disinfection ensure that public health and environmental quality are protected. Reclaimed water can be used for many purposes, including:

- Irrigation of landscaped areas, such as golf courses, parks, residential properties and highway medians
- Dust control and aesthetic features
- Agricultural irrigation
- Environmental restoration
- Groundwater recharge, including salinity barriers
- Industrial uses, including wash down water, processing water and cooling water

Florida leads the nation in water reuse, producing approximately 660 million gallons of reclaimed water each day, according to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. In 2006, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency granted its first Water Efficiency Leader Award to Florida's Water Reuse Program.

To help implement water reuse, the District and the State of Florida have invested more than \$74 million in 146 water reuse projects through the District's [Alternative Water Supply Funding Program](#). Within the 16-county region, reuse systems produce and reuse more than 240 million gallons of reclaimed water per day. This water irrigates hundreds of golf courses and thousands of residential lots, provides environmental enhancement and recharges regional water resources across the region.

The District is observing Water Reuse Week during a month that normally marks the closing stages of the dry season, when water needs across the region are most acute. That is proving especially true this year. The period from November 2008 through April 2009 ranks as the driest six-month period in South Florida history based on records dating back to 1932. During that time, an average of 4.47 inches of rain fell across the region, creating a rainfall deficit of 10.13 inches.

A majority of the District remains under two-day-a-week landscape watering restrictions. Emergency orders have been issued to create more stringent water use restrictions in specific areas of the District that warrant additional resource protection. For more information on the new rules, see www.sfwmd.gov/watershortage.

The SFWMD has taken a leading role in fostering a year-round water conservation ethic in South Florida by creating the [Comprehensive Water Conservation Program](#). Numerous stakeholders worked with the District to study ideas for new regulatory, voluntary and incentive-based programs and in-depth education and marketing plans that will encourage more responsible use of water resources. The development of

alternative water supplies, such as reclaimed water, is an important component of the program.

For additional information on water conservation, including [50 Ways to Be Water Smart](#) and the SFWMD's Comprehensive Water Conservation Program, visit www.savewaterfl.com.

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About the South Florida Water Management District – [Celebrating 60 Years \(1949-2009\)](#)

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.