



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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**SFWMD Joins State in Observing April as Water Conservation Month**  
*Conservation is essential for stretching water supplies and protecting natural resources*

**West Palm Beach, FL** – To continue emphasizing the need for conserving water, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board today joined the State of Florida and nearly 150 South Florida communities and organizations in officially declaring April as Water Conservation Month.

“The chorus of voices recognizing April as Water Conservation Month demonstrates that saving water is a full-time priority in Florida,” said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Eric Buermann. “As the droughts and water shortages of recent years vividly reminded us, our state’s water resources are finite. We each can and must do our part to protect them.”

For more than a decade, Florida has recognized Water Conservation Month in April, which represents the height of the South Florida dry season when historically limited rainfall and peak water demand often stress regional water supplies. Water conservation is now essential year-round for addressing regional weather extremes and growing demands on a limited water supply that South Florida’s 7.5 million residents, economy and unique environment all depend on.

Throughout April, the District is sponsoring and participating in a broad range of local and regional events to raise awareness and promote wise water use. The 3rd annual Landscape Challenge in West Palm Beach and participation in various Earth Day events around the region are among the upcoming activities that the District has planned.

**Progress Toward Year-Round Water Conservation**

Through the District’s Comprehensive Water Conservation Program, several significant steps have been taken toward curbing water use in South Florida – the highest in the state at an estimated 179 gallons of water per person per day. Most recently, the District enacted year-round water conservation measures that target outdoor irrigation, which accounts for up to half the water use in the region. Implementation of these measures may reduce overall potable water demand by an estimated 5 to 10 percent, based on a

recent SFWMD study of regional demand reductions experienced during the 2007-2009 water shortage.

Other water conservation initiatives implemented by the District over the last year include:

- In August 2009, the District began piloting the Water Conservation Hotel and Motel Program (Water CHAMP) in the Florida Keys. The District has so far enrolled 17 lodging facilities with nearly 700 rooms in the public education and water savings program, which helps hotels and motels conserve water, improve energy efficiency and reduce operating costs.
- For the second consecutive year, the District and the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association hosted a free workshop on how to develop effective water conservation projects in the industrial, commercial and institutional water use sectors. Held last month, the event drew more than 150 people and featured a vendor exhibition that included 15 providers of innovative water conservation products and services.
- For Fiscal Year 2010, the SFWMD Governing Board approved nearly \$460,000 in matching grants for 13 water conservation projects through the Water Savings Incentive Program (WaterSIP). The projects will save an estimated 238 million gallons of water per year.

The Comprehensive Water Conservation Program was approved by the SFWMD Governing Board in September 2008 to encourage more responsible use of water resources throughout South Florida. Numerous stakeholders worked with the District to define specific regulatory, voluntary and incentive-based programs and in-depth education and marketing plans that will help foster a year-round conservation ethic.

For details on the Comprehensive Water Conservation Program and water-saving tips, please visit [www.savewaterfl.com](http://www.savewaterfl.com). More information about the Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Conservation Measures, including which days of the week irrigation is allowed, is available in the Frequently Asked Questions at [www.sfwmd.gov/2days](http://www.sfwmd.gov/2days).

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### **About the South Florida Water Management District**

*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.*