



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Water CHAMP Expands Throughout the Treasure Coast**

*St. Lucie and Martin utilities partner with SFWMD to help hotels conserve water*



**West Palm Beach, FL** – As part of an ongoing commitment to water conservation, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is partnering with five utilities to expand a water conservation program in hotels and motels throughout the Treasure Coast.

St. Lucie West Services District, Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, City of Port St. Lucie Utility Systems, Martin County Utilities and the City of Stuart's Utility Division are now participating in the Water Conservation Hotel and Motel Program (Water CHAMP). The program is administered by the District in South Florida to encourage visitors and staff at lodging facilities to conserve water.

In the first few months that the District offered Water CHAMP on the Treasure Coast, 27 properties signed on to the program, resulting in almost 2,000 rooms in the area that now have water conservation features. This includes 634 hotel rooms in the city of Stuart and 961 rooms in the city of Fort Pierce.

The program entails installing high-efficiency faucet aerators provided by the District and implementing a towel and linen reuse program. Educational materials for the program are also provided by the District to participating hotels.

“By getting involved in Water CHAMP, hotels and motels are helping us to protect South Florida’s water resources,” said SFWMD Executive Director Melissa L. Meeker. “It’s great to have our partners reminding visitors about Florida’s ethic of water conservation.”

Participation in Water CHAMP aligns with the water conservation criteria for the Florida Green Lodging Certification Program offered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for environmentally friendly buildings.

#### **Benefits of Water CHAMP**

- ✓ Saves money on water, wastewater, energy, linens, detergent and labor
- ✓ 96 percent guest approval rating
- ✓ Participants save an estimated 20 gallons of water per occupied room per night

Throughout the state, more than 500 Florida hotels and motels now participate in Water CHAMP through regional water management districts.

Water CHAMP was initially launched in the SFWMD in 2009 in the Florida Keys, where 33 hotels – comprising more than 1,500 rooms – have signed on to this conservation program. Expansion of the program to other counties within the District will continue this year. Water CHAMP was developed by the Southwest Florida Water Management District in 2002.

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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.*