

Waterline News

March / April 2007

Tiffany Condo/Spanish Waters

Volusia County Utilities is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of six package sewage treatment plants on the north peninsula of Volusia County. Elimination of these package plants was identified in the 2003 Volusia County Water and Wastewater Northeast Master Plan. The County is working in partnership with the City of Ormond Beach to provide central sewer service to the residents and businesses on the north peninsula. Recently the City of Ormond Beach finished construction of a central force main from the Ormond Mall along State Road A1A, north to Spanish Waters Drive. The city received a \$500,000 grant from the St. Johns River Water Management District to install the force main, which will provide central sewer service to residents and businesses.

Installation of the force main will allow Volusia County Utilities to eliminate two package treatment plants in the next few months. Volusia County Mosquito Control is demolishing the Tiffany Condominium package sewage treatment plant for the Utility Division. The old plant served the Tiffany Condominium Association wastewater needs for 17 years. In the next few months, the Spanish Waters package treatment plant also will be connected to the new 10 inch force main. This seventeen-year-old plant also will be decommissioned and demolished. Elimination of these types of sewage treatment plants will continue as the force main is constructed to the northern limits of the peninsula.

Spring Cleaning in the Yard

Spring is a good time to clean the house and the yard. March, April and May are months with little rainfall and the driest soil conditions. Water use tends to be high during these months. Please do some or all of the following to help conserve our groundwater.

- Use the dead leaves and pine needles you've raked for mulch around your plants. This helps to keep your soil moist and requires less watering.
- Check sprinkler systems and timing devices to make sure they are working correctly. Broken pipes can waste 5-10 gallons of water per minute.
- Use drip irrigation on shrubs and beds when possible. Over-watering is as harmful as under-watering. Too much water can cause root rot and other plant disorders.
- Replace plants killed by this winter's freeze with waterwise plants more suited to our climate or go native and use native plants that have survived this climate for thousands of years.
- If you are replacing turf, try using natural foliage or a turf such as bahia or paspalum that doesn't require a lot of irrigation.
- Know the water restrictions for this area! Call (386) 736-5998, (386) 423-3359 or (386) 239-7890.
- Check your rain sensor for malfunctions. If you don't have one, this is the time to install one. Florida law requires sensors on all sprinkler systems installed after May 1991.
- Install a rain barrel under your downspout to capture rainwater runoff from your roof for plant irrigation.

Waterwise plant of the month Confederate rose

Hibiscus mutabilis



The confederate rose, or the cotton rosemallow, is a plant noted for its flowers and is a relative of the hibiscus. Confederate roses tend to be shrubby or treelike in our planting zone. Flowers can be double or single and are 4-6 inches in diameter. A fast grower, it can reach heights of 15 - 18 feet. However, if kept at 5-6 feet, the plant is more typical and provides more flowering. It likes damp soil but easily can accommodate to dry conditions. The Confederate rose will grow in full sun to partial shade. This is a nice pass-along plant that can be rooted easily in damp sand.

Rain barrels still available

Volusia County Utilities continues to offer a \$30 voucher toward the purchase of a rain barrel. Contact Becky Adkins at (386)-943-7027, ext. 2611, for questions regarding the rain barrel program.

Riverbreeze Park

stormwater project

The Stormwater Utility recently completed a multi-use stormwater project in Riverbreeze Park, on the shoreline of the Indian River, off H.H. Burch Road in Oak Hill. The facility offers a boat launch, fishing pier, picnic areas and walking trails for visitors.

The park is bordered on the north by Ariel Canal, which in the past discharged untreated stormwater into the Indian River from a series of ditches covering an area more than 1,000 acres. Stormwater Utility engineers identified this canal as a significant source of untreated stormwater.

A large, unused area of park land was adjacent to the canal, offering an opportunity to construct park improvements and a stormwater treatment system for the canal. Stormwater Utility engineers collaborated with County Leisure Services staff and came up with a final plan to include park improvements and a stormwater system.

The design involved the construction of an intake pipe from the canal and excavation of two large retention ponds. One of the ponds is planted with a variety of wetland plants; the other is sodded with bahia grass. After flowing through the ponds, the treated stormwater will be released into the canal and discharged to the river. Other park improvements include a walking trail, wildlife viewing area, and an expanded boat parking area.

The benefit of the stormwater project will be a significant improvement to the quality of water flowing into the Indian River from the Ariel Canal. This project was supported by a grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).



Water testing

Some of our DeBary customers have been approached by a company claiming that Volusia County Utilities has asked them to test their water. This is not true. Volusia County Utilities already tests your water and provides you with a Consumer Confidence Report annually. The report outlines where your water comes from and the quality of your drinking water. If you have questions regarding your water quality, please contact us. If you are approached by someone stating they are from Volusia County Water Resources and Utilities, ask to see their identification badge. Volusia County employees drive vehicles with the county seal and wear uniforms with a County employee identifier.

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

Like the roof of your house, the landscape around you collects rainfall that runs over the slope of the land or sinks into the soil. This same rainfall eventually finds its way into wetlands, lakes, small creeks, rivers or the ocean. Volusia County, like other agencies, measures water quality to ensure we have healthy watersheds that, in turn, have healthy plants, soil, water and air. Here is a list of things you can do to help maintain a healthy watershed:

- Dispose of household hazardous waste at local collection sites such as county fire stations, Tomoka Landfill or the West Volusia Transfer Station, or when your community has amnesty days.
- Apply fertilizer properly. Do not over-apply. More is not better.
- Use alternatives to pesticides and chemicals. For example, use garlic, hot pepper sprays and liquid soap. Use plants that have chemical defense systems so they naturally repel insects.
- Compost your yard waste. Composting holds nutrients in the soil and retains water in sandy soils.
- Install low-flow aerators, toilets and showerheads to minimize the amount of water used in your home.
- Landscape with native plants and trees that will withstand our soils and climate and create habitat for birds and small wildlife.

