



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

February 24, 2020

Honorable Alexander Soto
Mayor
Village of Sea Ranch Lakes
1 Gatehouse Rd
Sea Ranch, FL 33308-2906

Subject: Protecting South Florida's Water Resources - Water Conserving Landscape Irrigation Ordinances

Dear Mayor Soto:

With South Florida's growing demands for water, it's especially important that we work closely together to properly manage and conserve our precious water resources. Implementing water conservation measures promotes efficient water use and decreases water waste.

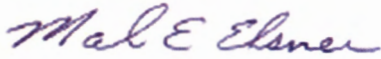
Lawn irrigation can account for more than half of residential water use. Most South Florida lawns only need to be watered a few days a week (or less) to remain healthy. To encourage more responsible use of water resources throughout South Florida, the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board adopted the Mandatory Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Conservation Measures (Year-Round Irrigation Rule), Chapter 40E-24, Florida Administrative Code (FAC), in 2010. The rule restricts the times and number of days landscape irrigation is allowed within the District's jurisdiction and follows scientifically-sound recommendations for lawn irrigation. Many local governments have since enacted/updated their irrigation ordinances to promote water conservation in their respective counties and municipalities and follow the District's Year-Round Irrigation Rule.

The District is now reviewing local irrigation ordinances by all of the counties and municipalities within the District's 16-county region and is reaching out to every local government that appears to have not enacted or updated their own irrigation ordinances. We would like to offer our assistance to you and your staff to ensure your local government's irrigation ordinance is in compliance with the District's Year-Round Irrigation Rule. Please note that local ordinances can be *more* restrictive than the Year-Round Irrigation Rule but cannot be less restrictive. We look forward to working with you and your staff to help put consistent rules and ordinances in place across South Florida so that residents understand and comply with all irrigation requirements.

Our partnership supports a safe and reliable water supply for South Florida's future, and we kindly request, **within four weeks from the date of this letter**, an update of your local government's plan to update its ordinance. The District's water conservation team, including myself, are always available to provide any assistance. The District also has templates and other information available that can be used to guide this update.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss how we can assist, please contact me at melsner@sfwmd.gov or (561) 682-6156; or Jim Harmon, the District Water Conservation Supervisor, at jharmon@sfwmd.gov or (561) 682-6777.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Mark E. Elsner".

Mark E. Elsner, P.E.
Water Supply Bureau Chief

ME/lhc

Enclosure: Mandatory Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Conservation Measures Rule Fact Sheet

c: Starr Paton, Village Clerk

Year Round Landscaping Irrigation Conservation Measures

FYi

Some city and county governments have adopted more stringent local landscape irrigation ordinances that differ from the District rule based on local water demands, system limitations or resource availability. Several counties and cities have exercised this option so residents should always check for local ordinances. To determine watering days and times in your area, contact your local government or visit www.sfwmd.gov/mywateringdays and click on the county links.



In effect since March 2010, the Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Conservation Measures Rule (Chapter 40E-24, Florida Administrative Code) limits landscape watering to two days a week throughout the South Florida Water Management District, with a three-day-a-week provision for some counties. It applies in all cases when the source of water for irrigation is a utility, lake, pond, canal or well. (See limited exclusions on next page.) The mandatory year-round rule is a component of the SFWMD's Comprehensive Water Conservation Program, which encourages more responsible use of water resources.

District Rules

2 Day-A-Week Watering

- No watering between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Residents and businesses with an **odd-numbered** street address may water lawns and landscapes on **Wednesdays and/or Saturdays**.
- Residents and businesses with an **even-numbered** street address, **no street address** or those that **irrigate both even and odd addresses** within the same zones, which may include multi-family units and homeowners associations, may water lawns and landscapes on **Thursdays and/or Sundays**.

3 Day-A-Week Watering

- No watering between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Residents and businesses with an **odd-numbered** street address may water lawns and landscapes on **Mondays, Wednesdays and/or Saturdays**.



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- Residents and businesses with an **even-numbered** street address, **no street address** or those that **irrigate both even and odd addresses** within the same zones, which may include multi-family units and homeowners associations, may water lawns and landscapes on **Tuesdays, Thursdays and/or Sundays**.

New Landscape Irrigation

The SFWMD Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Rule allows additional watering for up to 90 days following the installation of new lawns and landscaping.

- On the day new landscaping is installed, new plantings and the soil may be irrigated once without regard to the normally allowable watering days and times. Soil irrigation is also allowed immediately prior to planting.
- New plantings that have been in place for **30 days or less** may be watered on **Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and/or Sundays**.
- New plantings that have been in place **from 31 to 90 days** may be watered on **Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and/or Saturdays**.
- Irrigation is limited to the areas containing new landscaping only. An entire irrigation zone may be watered only if new landscaping is planted on at least 50 percent of that zone. If new landscaping is planted on less than 50 percent of an irrigation zone, only the new plantings may be watered.

Exclusions to the SFWMD Year-Round Rule

- The use of low-volume irrigation methods – including micro-irrigation, container watering and hand-watering with a hose (with an automatic shut-off nozzle) – is allowed anytime.
- The use of reclaimed water and harvested rainwater for irrigation purposes is allowed anytime.
- The rule applies only to water used for landscape irrigation. There are no restrictions on other outdoor uses such as pressure cleaning or vehicle/boat washing, although voluntary, water-conserving practices are highly recommended.

Alternative Irrigation Schedule

If unique circumstances prohibit adherence to the mandatory SFWMD landscape irrigation conservation measures, individuals and businesses/organizations may seek an alternative schedule that still meets the intent of the rule. Guidance is available [online](#) or by contacting Jim Harmon at (561) 682-6777 to learn more about the alternative irrigation schedule request and approval process.

Questions?

For more information on the rule, including watering days and times by county:

- Visit www.sfwmd.gov/mywateringdays
- Call the South Florida Water Management District “Water Conservation Hotline” at 1-800-662-8876
- Email a water conservation expert at conservation@sfwmd.gov

