

# SCGOVNEWS

Sarasota County Communications | [scgov.net](http://scgov.net) | 941.861.5000 | TV

**April 1, 2009**

**Media contact:** Pat Haire, 941-861-5104; cell 941-650-2850; [phaire@scgov.net](mailto:phaire@scgov.net)

**Project contact:** Tony Gipe, 941-861-6750; cell 941-650-2780; [tgipe@scgov.net](mailto:tgipe@scgov.net)

## **New stricter watering restrictions do not apply to Sarasota County**

New, tougher watering restrictions enacted by the Southwest Florida Water Management District at their March 31 meeting do not apply to Sarasota County. According to Utilities Operations Manager Tony Gipe, the new Phase IV watering restrictions are for Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas counties in Tampa Bay. Sarasota County is not included in this area and continues under Phase III restrictions.

Sarasota County residents are reminded of the new restrictions related to Phase III:

- Fountains and waterfalls may only operate four hours per day. Operating hours must be posted.
- No special watering allowances will be granted for verticutting (removing vertical growth that occurs around a grass plant) or overseeding.
- New or replacement lawns may water for a total of 30 days, if needed. Watering may occur all days during the first 15 days but will be limited to every other day after the first 15 days. No watering is allowed between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- For other new plant establishment (not including lawns), watering may occur for a total of 60 days, if needed. Watering may occur all days during the first 30 days but will be limited to every other day after the first 30 days. No watering is allowed between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Hand watering and micro-irrigation of plants (not lawns) may occur all days, however no watering is allowed between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Irrigation restrictions apply to all water sources, including private wells, lakes, and canals.
- The use of reclaimed water within various municipal jurisdictions may have different restrictions.

Along with the residential restrictions, restaurants are being asked to serve water only upon request, and residents should limit installation of new lawns and plantings.

Current watering days for Sarasota County residents, along with residents within the cities of Sarasota, North Port, Venice and the portion of Sarasota County located within the Englewood Water District remain:

- Even addresses (house numbers ending with 0, 2, 4, 6 or 8) may water only on Tuesday.

- Odd addresses (house numbers ending with 1, 3, 5, 7 or 9) may water only Thursday.
- Common areas with no address, such as medians or roadside plantings, clubhouse or recreation areas may be irrigated only on Tuesday.
- The maximum amount of water applied is limited to three-quarters of an inch in each irrigation zone, once, on each allowable watering day.
- Property under two acres may water before 8 a.m. or after 6 p.m.
- Property over two acres may water before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m.

Gipe says that as of Friday, March 27, Sarasota County had issued 133 citations for watering violations. Per the Modified Phase III Water Shortage Declaration issued in February, no warnings will occur before a citation is issued, and each citation now calls for a minimum fine of \$100. SWFWD issued the declaration in response to continued drought conditions and hopes it will reduce water usage by 10 percent.

Complete watering restrictions for Sarasota County are available at [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net).

To report a suspected watering violation:

- Call Sarasota County Utilities at 941-861-6790, option 3
- Contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000
- Fax to 941-861-0603
- E-mail [utilitybill@scgov.net](mailto:utilitybill@scgov.net)

-end-