

WEST VILLAGES IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
C/O Special District Services, Inc.
19503 S. West Villages Parkway #A3
Venice, Florida 34293

May 22, 2024

Via U.S. Postal Service

RE: Irrigation Resources

Dear Resident,

There has been significant discussion in recent months about irrigation water use throughout the West Villages Improvement District (WVID). As the local government agency responsible for monitoring water consumption throughout the WVID, it's important for residents to stay informed about conditions impacting the irrigation system.

In November, the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) declared a Phase I shortage throughout the water management district, which includes Sarasota County and all property within the West Villages Improvement District (WVID). The declaration, which remains in effect until July 1, was due to ongoing dry conditions throughout the region amid increased water supply concerns.

In response to these extraordinary conditions, the WVID informed homeowners and property owners' associations in December that it was taking steps to reduce excessive water irrigation use throughout the District, including limiting the amount of water customers could use above predetermined water allocations, which are outlined in the joint water use permit issued to the WVID and the master developer from SWFWMD. These temporary measures ensured that every community continued to have access to irrigation water during the current extremely dry conditions. A copy of these communications can be found on WestVillagesID.org.

The water use permit determines how much irrigation water is available to lands within the WVID. Permitted quantities for each development are based on the number of irrigable acres within a specific neighborhood, as well as other factors such as the type of property, plantings and soil. Chronic overuse could lead to a SWFWMD compliance action, potential for monetary fines, issuance of a consent order, and worse case revocation of the water use permit. There has been consistent and substantial overuse in certain neighborhoods, which burdens other neighborhoods within the WVID and puts the entire permit at risk for everyone.

The District's water use permit **requires** that the WVID and the master developer implement a SWFWMD-approved water conservation plan. The permit requires customers, such as homeowners' and property owners' associations, to create and implement their own conservation plans. Although the Phase 1 shortage restriction expires July 1, we must all do our part to conserve irrigation water usage year-round.

What can you do?

The goal of the water use permit is conservation, requiring an efficient use of a finite resource so that irrigation quality water is available to everyone when it is so desperately needed during the dry season. Each customer must take steps to reduce irrigation water usage more than the maximum allocation for the customer's neighborhood, such as:

- **Regularly maintain your irrigation system.** Make sure that sprinkler heads are working properly and appropriately positioned to avoid watering paved or non-landscaped areas. Customers are also encouraged to check for leaks, as these are the biggest water-wasters. Common leaks could include loose seals, leaky faucet connections or broken hose.
- **Monitoring rainfall and updating your watering schedule accordingly.** Be sure your automatic sprinkler system is equipped with a working rain shutoff device, which overrides the system when enough rain has fallen and automatically resets when more water is needed. Regularly check your device to make sure it is working properly and the switch in the control box is set to “on.”
- **Water your lawn only as much as needed.** Most Florida soils need an average of one-half to three-quarters of an inch of water per application to replenish the grass. An automatic system can provide an efficient method of irrigating lawns since controllers turn off the system after a predetermined amount of water is applied.
- **Watering your lawn on designated days.** Lawn watering is limited to twice per week, and your address determines when you can water your lawn. Even-numbered addresses can water on Thursdays and/or Sundays, while odd-numbered addresses can water their lawns on Wednesday and/or Saturdays. Common areas can be irrigated on Tuesdays and/or Fridays.
- **Watering your lawn before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m.** Since evaporation loss can be 60% higher during the day, watering your lawn during the early morning or late evening minimizes evaporation and supports conservation efforts. Also avoid watering on windy days.

As the agency responsible for the implementation and compliance of the SWFWMD water use permit, the WVID is committed to water conservation efforts and continues to work with homeowners and property owners’ associations to ensure residents have access to irrigation water. For additional information about irrigation resources, visit westvillagesid.org.

Please contact District Manager William Crosley at 941-244-2805 or wcrosley@sdsinc.org with any questions.

Thank you,
West Villages Improvement District