

Sugarmill Woods Bulletin

December 10, 2010

Dear Residents,

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) is encouraging homeowners to consider irrigating every other week during the winter months of December, January, and February instead of following the current Watering Restriction Rules in effect. SWFWMD is recommending this approach because it saves water and money and it helps to promote healthier lawns. Overwatering in winter can encourage pests and disease. The SWFWMD "Skip A Week" promotion follows:



District asks homeowners to "Skip a Week" of irrigation this winter

Overwatering in winter can encourage pests and disease

The Southwest Florida Water Management District is encouraging residents who irrigate their lawns to "Skip a Week" of watering during the cooler months of December, January and February.

According to research by the University of Florida, grass doesn't need to be watered as often during the cooler months. One-half to three-quarters of an inch of water every 10–14 days is sufficient. In fact, if your lawn has received any significant rainfall, then you can turn off your irrigation system and operate it manually as needed.

"Overwatering in the winter can encourage pests and disease in your lawn," said Sylvia Durell, Florida-Friendly Landscaping project manager. Skipping a week of watering is as easy as "off" for residents with irrigation timers. "Turn the timer to 'off' for the week that you want to skip, and 'on' for the week that you want to water," said Durell.

Homeowners can determine when their grass needs water when:

- Grass blades are folded in half lengthwise on 30 percent of the lawn.
- Grass blades are blue-gray.
- Footprints remain on the lawn for several minutes after walking on it.

Skipping a week of irrigation will help conserve drinking water supplies that the public needs for critical uses during the dry season. In fact, if everyone skipped one week of irrigation this season, it could save an estimated 1.7 billion gallons of water.

In addition to entering the dry season, the region has experienced an extremely dry fall, with dry conditions expected to continue through next spring. All 16 counties within the District are under a Phase I water shortage alert.

For additional information about water restrictions and water conservation, contact your local utility or visit the District's web site at www.WaterMatters.org/skipaweek/.

To be clear, there has been no change to the Revised Watering Restrictions Effective July 1, 2010 which limits lawn watering to twice per week. **However**, for all of the reasons stated above, please consider the SWFWMD "Skip A Week" recommendation. It can save you money and save water for all of us. It may help keep your lawn healthy and prevent the damaging effects from over watering.

Sincerely,

Duane Dueker
President, Sugarmill Woods Civic Association

cc: Cypress Village POA, Oak Village Association, Southern Woods POA