

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Water Restrictions**

**What landscape watering schedule is in place in Broward, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Martin, Miami-Dade, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties and most of Lee County?**

Since September 2008, lawn irrigation for all property sizes has been allowed two days a week on the following schedule:

- Residents and businesses with **odd-numbered street addresses** may water lawns and landscapes on **Wednesdays and Saturdays** from 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. and/or from 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.
- Residents and businesses with **even-numbered street addresses**, no street address or irrigate both even and odd address within the same zones, including multi-family units and homeowners associations, may water lawns and landscapes on **Thursdays and Sundays** from 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. and/or from 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.

For the most efficient use of water, residents should avoid irrigating during both time periods on the same day.

**When can I water newly planted sod, trees or other landscaping in Broward, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties and most of Lee County?**

Additional days and times are available for new plantings:

New landscaping can be watered without regard to restrictions on the first day it is installed.

- Landscaping that has been in place from 2 days to 30 days can be watered on **Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and/or Sundays** during the hours allowed for regular landscape irrigation.
- Landscaping that has been in place from 31 days to 60 days can be watered on **Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays** during the hours allowed for regular landscape irrigation.
- Additional watering days can only be used to benefit new landscaping. An entire irrigation system zone may only be watered if it contains at least 50 percent new landscaping.

**When can newly planted sod, trees or other landscaping be watered by water utility customers in the service areas of Dania Beach, Hallandale Beach and Lake Worth?**

For properties less than five acres:

- New landscaping that has been in place for less than 30 days can be irrigated from 2 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and/or Sundays.
- New landscaping that has been in place for 31 days to 60 days can be irrigated from 2 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

For properties five acres or more:

- New landscaping that has been in place for less than 30 days can be irrigated from 12 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and/or Sundays.
- New landscaping that has been in place for 31 to 60 days can be irrigated from 12 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

**What lawn watering schedule is in place in Orange, Osceola, Charlotte, Highlands and Polk counties beginning September 26?**

- **Orange and Osceola counties, including residents served by St. Cloud Environmental Utilities and Tohopekaliga Water Authority** should follow the twice-weekly landscape irrigation schedules set by local ordinances.
- **Charlotte, Highlands and Polk counties** should follow landscape irrigation restrictions set by the Southwest Florida Water Management. Their restrictions are online at: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/drought/>.

**Is anyone automatically exempted from water restrictions?**

Yes. Because 100 percent of the water used by the **Town of Highland Beach in Palm Beach County** is drawn from the deep Floridan Aquifer, these customers are exempt from current restrictions. Other communities and individuals may have been granted variances from water restrictions. Anyone with a variance from water restrictions must display a copy of the variance in a visible location.

**Do other restrictions apply to South Florida residents irrigating with 100% reclaimed or supplemented reclaimed water?**

Yes. Irrigation using 100% reclaimed or supplemented reclaimed water is allowed from 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. and/or 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m., any day of the week.

Water reclaimed from water sewage treatment plants is not meant for drinking and is used almost exclusively for irrigation. It is usually transferred

in purple pipes.

**How often should I irrigate my lawn?**

Proper irrigation is based on the amount of water each lawn needs. Lawns and landscapes typically need to receive only three-quarters to an inch of water each week. This usually means a maximum of two hours of irrigation per week, or a maximum of 15 minutes per irrigation zone for each water application. The lawn may not need to be watered at all if it has rained during the week.

**I water my lawn from a well, canal, pond or surface lake. Do these restrictions apply to me?**

Yes. Surface and groundwater sources are connected. Water in lakes and canals helps to protect private and public wells from saltwater intrusion, and helps store rainfall to recharge wells and aquifers.

**Can I hand water my lawn?**

Yes. You can hand water stressed plants for 10 minutes per day using a single hose with an attached automatic shut-off or trigger nozzle.

**What other low-volume watering methods are allowed?**

Drip, bubble and micro-jet systems that apply water directly to root plant zones may be used any time. However, a voluntary reduction in use is encouraged, and any low-volume system should not produce water runoff. Watering cans are also low-volume and can be used anytime.

**When can I wash my car or boat?**

Anytime. Vehicle washing is not restricted, but voluntary conservation is encouraged. When washing a car, park it over a non-paved or porous surface to limit water runoff, and always attach an automatic shut-off or trigger nozzle to your hose. Limit boat rinsing to 15 minutes after it has been in salt water.

**My organization is scheduling a fundraising car wash. Do we need to apply for a variance?**

No. There are no restrictions on vehicle washing. Always attach automatic shutoff or trigger nozzles to hoses and, if possible, channel runoff water to a grassy area or porous surface.

**When can I use a water pressure washer?**

Anytime. Pressure washing is not restricted. Use low-volume equipment that produces water pressure of 1,000 pounds per square inch to 4,000 pounds per square inch. Channel runoff water onto the grass or another non-paved surface.

**Is there a way that I can get permission to change my watering day or times?**

Yes. You may apply for a variance from water restrictions. The application form

is online at: Variance Application, and the instruction form is online at: Variance Instructions. Your application will be reviewed by South Florida Water Management District staff, and approval or denial is based on criteria listed in the Water Shortage Plan Rule. For more information, visit [www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov) or call (800) 432-2045.

**What happens if I don't follow these restrictions?**

Residential and commercial water restrictions are mandatory and will be enforced by South Florida Water Management District staff, local governments and law enforcement agencies. Residential fines vary by municipality, but typically range from \$25 to \$125 for a first offense. Civil penalties for violations of restrictions by District permittees and commercial users begin at \$1,500 and can increase depending on the severity of the violation.

**How can I report violations of water restrictions?**

You may report violations to local law enforcement or city/county zoning and code enforcement agencies. Both have the authority to issue warnings and citations that can lead to fines. See the List of County and City Enforcement Contacts. If you choose to notify your local law enforcement agency, please call their non-emergency number.

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***For commercial users:***

**What are the restrictions for golf courses, agricultural water users and plant nurseries in most of Broward, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties and most of Lee County?**

**All golf courses may use their standard monthly water allocation and may irrigate according to conditions set by their water use permit. Permit holders must report their monthly water usage each quarter. Conserve water whenever possible.**

**All agricultural water users, including those in the Lake Okeechobee Service Area, may use their standard monthly water allocation and may irrigate according to conditions set by their water use permit. Permit holders must report their monthly water usage each quarter. Conserve water whenever possible.**

**All plant nurseries may use their standard monthly water allocation and may irrigate according to conditions set by their water use permit. Permit holders must report their monthly water usage each quarter. Conserve water whenever possible.**

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All plant nurseries may use their standard monthly water allocation and may irrigate according to conditions set by their water use permit. Permit holders must report their monthly water usage each quarter. Conserve water whenever possible.

**What are the water restrictions for water users in South Miami-Dade County in the South Dade Water Use Basin?**

#### **Agriculture**

- Overhead irrigation is prohibited from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Drip, micro-jet and other low-volume irrigation systems that apply water directly to root plant zones may be used anytime. Operate these systems to maximize efficient water use and minimize water loss.
- Overhead irrigation for stressed field-grown nursery stock is allowed daily for 10 minutes per irrigation zone from 11:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.
- Water use for livestock, aquaculture and soil flooding shall be voluntarily reduced.
- Water for freeze protection is restricted to times when official weather forecasting services predict crop-damaging temperatures.
- Maximize the use of water drawn from the least restricted class when there is access to water from more than one source.
- Agricultural Water Conservation Best Management Practices should be used.

## Plant Nurseries

- Overhead Irrigation Restrictions:
- Inside: Allowed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week.
- Outside: Voluntary reduction in irrigation for water users registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services which apply best management practices. Irrigation is not allowed between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. by water users that have not registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and are not applying best management practices.
- External bench misting is allowed for 10 minutes per bench zone during daylight hours.
- Stress reduction irrigation for containerized nursery stock is allowed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., for 10 minutes per zone.
- Flood irrigation systems are restricted to 8 days per month.

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## Golf Courses

- Golf courses must reduce their allocated water use by 15%.
- If irrigation water is drawn from more than one source, the 15% cutback applies only to water that is not reclaimed. Weekly reports must specify volumes used from each water source.
- Permit holders must report their previous week's water usage by noon each Monday at [www.sfwmd.gov/conserve](http://www.sfwmd.gov/conserve).

### **What are the restrictions for golf courses, agricultural water users and plant nurseries for Lehigh Acres Sandstone and Surficial Aquifer well users in Unincorporated Lee County?**

All golf courses must reduce their allocated water use by 30 percent. They are not restricted to watering at certain days or times. Where possible, golf courses should limit watering to early mornings or evenings to reduce water loss through evaporation. Permit holders must report their previous week's water usage by noon each Monday at [www.sfwmd.gov/conserve](http://www.sfwmd.gov/conserve).

All agricultural water users may not use overhead irrigation systems from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Overhead irrigation for stress reduction on field-grown citrus crops is allowed daily for 10 minutes per irrigation zone from 11:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Hand-watering and low-volume irrigation should be voluntarily reduced.

All plant nurseries may operate overhead irrigation systems seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. for inside or shaded plants, and from 5 a.m. to 8 a.m.

and/or from 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. for outside plants. Stress reduction watering for containerized stock is allowed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for 10 minutes per irrigation zone. External bench misting is allowed for 10 minutes per zone during daylight hours. Flood irrigation systems are restricted to six days. Hand-watering should be voluntarily reduced.

No irrigation is allowed on days with sufficient rainfall. Users shall install a rainfall cut-off switch or similar measuring device to determine when there has been enough rain to meet irrigation demands.

*Other related questions:*

**What is saltwater intrusion and how is it related to water restrictions?**

Saltwater intrusion happens when saltwater from the sea flows beneath the land surface into freshwater aquifers. It is a natural process that occurs in most coastal areas, but one that can contaminate water used for drinking if it is not managed.

A graphic showing saltwater intrusion is online at: [Saltwater Intrusion Management](#).

**If we're trying to conserve water, why is the South Florida Water Management District releasing freshwater from coastal canals into the sea?**

The South Florida Water Management District is storing as much water as possible, but there are limits in a system that was designed for flood control. Many communities, particularly east of I-95, can quickly flood following an excessive rainfall event. Even if it doesn't look as if your neighborhood is in danger of flooding, communities upstream or downstream may need flood relief that can only happen if water levels in canals are low enough to accommodate runoff. The South Florida Water Management District is always exploring options to reduce the amount of water released to tide, but this is a normal part of critical flood control operations. For details about how the flood control system works, read [Know the Flow](#).

**LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION WATER RESTRICTIONS****Residents and Businesses – Effective: 9/26/08***Broward, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties***Landscape Irrigation**

Restrictions apply to all sources of water – from a utility, a private well or withdrawals from a canal, lake or pond.

**All Property Sizes:**

Landscape irrigation for all property types and sizes is allowed two days a week on this schedule:

**ODD-number address:** Wednesday and Saturday – 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. AND/OR 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.**EVEN-number address, no street address, systems that irrigate both odd and even address within the same zones, including multi-family units, homeowners associations and commercial complexes/retail shopping centers:** Thursday and Sunday 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. AND/OR 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.For the most efficient use of water, avoid irrigating during both time periods on the same day. Most lawns need only  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch of water per week. Watering is not allowed between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Low-volume systems such as drip, bubble and micro-jet systems that apply water directly to root plant zones may be used any time.

**New Plantings, Sod or Landscape**

New landscaping should be installed within a reasonable time from the date of purchase and verified with a receipt or invoice.

**All Property Sizes:****In place on first day:**

New landscaping can be watered without regard to restrictions on the first day it is installed.

**In place from 2 days to 30 days:****Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday AND/OR Sunday** (any days except Friday):  
12 a.m. to 10 a.m. AND/OR 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.**In place from 31 days to 60 days:****Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, AND/OR Saturday:**  
12 a.m. to 10 a.m. AND/OR 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.

Additional watering days can only be used to benefit new landscaping, and an entire irrigation system zone may only be watered if it contains at least 50% new landscaping. If less than 50%, use targeted or hand-watering.

**Hand Watering**

For stressed plants, 10 minutes per day on any day using a single hose with an attached automatic shut-off nozzle.

**Fertilizer, Insecticide, Fungicide and Herbicide Water-In**

Allowed during normally allowable watering days and times unless a professional licensed applicator has posted a temporary sign containing the date of application and the date(s) of needed watering-in activity.

**Irrigation System Repair**Allowed during restricted days and times for cleaning, testing, maintenance and repair no more than once per week and run time should not exceed 10 minutes per zone. **An attendant must be on site** in the area being tested and/or repaired.**Reclaimed Water**

Irrigation using 100% reclaimed and/or supplemental reclaimed water is allowed from 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. AND/OR 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. any day of the week.

**Vehicle Washing, Pressure Washing, Decorative Fountains and All Other Outdoor Water Uses**

Allowed anytime; however, voluntary conservation is encouraged.

**Variances**You may apply for a variance from water restrictions. The application form and instructions are online at [www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov).

For more information about variances, call (800) 432-2045.

For more information on water shortage restrictions, visit our web site at [www.sfwmd.gov/conserv](http://www.sfwmd.gov/conserv) or call our **Water Conservation Hotline** at (800) 662-8876 to request more information.

JR10/01/08

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## Frequently Asked Questions About Water Restrictions

### How much of these expanded watering opportunities should I use to irrigate my lawn?

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### What happens if I don't follow these restrictions?

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