

## Winter Water Use



As most of you folks already know, and for those of you arriving from the North are unaware, Florida has been in a drought. Yes, we have had recent rain, but nowhere near enough to get us out of drought conditions. Look around at the rivers and lakes and you can see for yourself that they are not full like they used to be. To get out of these current conditions and restrictions, this winter we will need above average rainfall.

Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) had eased up on some water restrictions, putting us into the Phase II category from recent Phase III category. This means we are limited to one day a week watering before 8:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m.

Remember, in the winter, turf and plants do not need as much water as they do in other months. They take advantage of the cooler weather, hanging on to the water they have. As it evaporates less water results in plant material growing slower during this time. This will do your landscape a favor, as overwatering causes plants to be more susceptible to pests and disease, not to mention depleting the water supply in our Aquifer. Contrary to popular belief, **there is no source for reclaimed water in Kings Point.** Kings Point irrigation uses lake and well water, not reclaimed water.

SWFWMD Consumptive use permit and County restrictions still apply, as irrigation water in Kings Point is pumped entirely from the Florida aquifer (ground water). There are two main irrigation loop systems that supply irrigation entirely from deep wells. The northeast loop (what we commonly refer to as the "upper loop") connects Andover, Bedford, Cambridge, Dorchester, Fairfield, Gloucester, and Knolls sections, as well as Manchester I and the community Boulevard medians.

This upper loop uses the 75 hp pump in Cambridge and the 40 hp pump in The Knolls. The southwest loop ("lower loop") connects Highgate, Idlewood, and Lancaster associations, as well as Quail Pass. This lower loop uses the 75 hp pump in Highgate and the 40 hp pump in Lancaster.

All other Associations extract water from designated lakes which are then re-filled from various wells. There is a pump for each purpose, at each location. All lakes are part of the Kings Point drainage system and each lake has an overflow system (called a "weir") that directs excess water from lake to lake. Lakes that do not supply irrigation water must fill naturally from irrigation runoff and storm water. Kings Point has a variance from SWFWMD which allows the community to irrigate according to the approved schedule, regardless of the addresses.

However, Kings Point must always adhere to county restrictions. Kings Point is still following Hillsborough County Phase II Water Restrictions as they apply to unincorporated properties that have private wells.

Thinking ahead and installing Florida friendly landscaping is a good way to do your part if you are going forward with landscape modification this coming spring. Try planting drought tolerant plants and grasses. Lists of drought tolerant plants are available through Hillsborough Cooperative Extension office. <http://fyn.ufl.edu>



Information provided for this article: <http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu>, <http://fyn.ufl.edu>, <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/conservation/restrictions>, Stormy Holloway, Sterling Management Services, Sun City Center, FL  
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