

# District declares Phase I water shortage

## *Residents urged to check their irrigation systems*

The Southwest Florida Water Management District's Governing Board voted today to declare a Phase I water shortage for the District's entire 16-county area beginning Dec. 1.

The Phase I alert is intended to raise the public's awareness of dry conditions, and to direct water utilities and their local governments to prepare for worsening conditions. Under Phase I, residents are asked to check their irrigation systems to ensure they are working properly. This means testing and repairing broken pipes and leaks, and damaged or tilted sprinkler heads. Residents should also check their irrigation timer to ensure the settings are correct and the rain sensor is working properly in accordance with state law.

There are no changes to watering days or times in a Phase 1 water shortage therefore the District's year-round water conservation measures remain in effect. Under the District's year-round water conservation measures, lawn and landscape watering remains limited to a two-day-per-week schedule, and residents may only water before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m.

Some local governments such as Hernando, Pasco and Sarasota counties have stricter local ordinances limiting lawn watering to one day per week, so residents should always check with their local government or utility.

"We had a below-average rainy season, followed by the driest October on record," said Lois Sorensen, District demand management program manager. "The region's public water supplies are in relatively good shape for now, but there is always a possibility that we will need to return to stricter measures."

Under Phase I, water utilities and their local governments are expected to review and revise water restriction enforcement procedures, begin monthly enforcement reporting and communicate with customers about water restrictions and water conservation.

For additional information about water restrictions and water conservation, please contact your local utility or visit the District's web site at [www.WaterMatters.org/conservation/](http://www.WaterMatters.org/conservation/)