



Meet our Information Incentive Program winners!

# fguaNEWS

SUMMER 2011 — Golden Gate/Lehigh Acres/North Ft. Myers

updates & information from your water and wastewater utility

[www.fgua.com](http://www.fgua.com)

## 100 donated blue road reflectors point to hydrants

*Reprinted with permission from MEL TOADVINE, Lehigh Acres Citizen*

Those new small blue reflectors that motorists are seeing throughout Lehigh have recently been installed to make it easier for fire crews in trucks to spot hydrants at night or in smoky conditions, according to Barbara Kerby, customer service representative with Florida Governmental Utility Authority.

She said there are blue reflectors in the roadways at 100 locations, some near schools and others in areas like Lee Blvd. and Homestead Rd. FGUA owns 946 fire hydrants in the community.

The reflectors will make it much easier now for firefighters to locate hydrants immediately which can save time to get their apparatus ready to fight a fire with hoses hooked up to a hydrant.

Installing them hasn't been easy, however, since they couldn't be installed during rainy days or in extreme heat or cold temperatures, so the project was done in phases to coincide with Lehigh's weather conditions and often during times when the least amount of traffic was being disrupted.

The hydrants owned by FGUA are also tested and cleaned at least once a year and get a new yellow paint job when needed.

Kerby explained that the blue reflectors are attached to the roadway at the point several feet from the fire hydrant.

She added that the project included locating hydrants that have been partially buried in landscaping or located below the road level.

"Much of the work was done in April, which is historically when there is the least amount of

rainfall," Kerby said.

There are other fire hydrants, not owned by FGUA, that are located at commercial or public properties which are privately owned. These hydrants must also be tested and maintained by the hydrant's owner each year.

"When these are privately inspected, a certificate of the inspection is provided to the fire marshal. Any licensed plumber should be able to provide the inspection," Kerby said.

By the end of April, there have been more than 85 grass, brush, or woodland fires and 29 house fires in

Lehigh during 2011. She said the latest report from the South Florida Water Management District shows rain is still below normal for this year even though the area has had rain recently, mainly brief showers. It often rains in some areas of Lehigh and not in other areas.

Kerby has some advice for homeowners.

She said they can help minimize the fire dangers at their property by making sure all garbage is properly disposed of, especially flammable items.

"Don't burn garbage or yard waste and never throw out a cigarette on the dry ground. Make sure it is fully extinguished and disposed of in a non-flammable container," she said.

With the rain season almost upon us with its storms, lightning can often ignite an area of dry vegetation.

Kerby warns homeowners to trim away brush from their homes and buildings. This means mowing the lawn, trimming tree branches away from the



### FGUA School Supply Drive

To help local families prepare for school, the FGUA will be collecting supplies to deliver to local schools. This is the second year FGUA is asking customers to help children go back to school with the materials they need but may not be able to afford. Thanks to customer support last year, the FGUA was able to collect and donate a few large boxes of supplies to area schools.

The school district supplies all the necessary items for education, but may provide a list of supplemental items that can enrich the student's learning experience. These include basic items such as pencils, pens, and lined notebook paper. A donation box is available in the FGUA customer service offices to collect these items which can be used by any grade level.

For most schools, students return to class in August but donations will continue to be accepted after that time to help as many students as possible.

roof and wooden fencing and maintaining a plant free zone next to the building walls. Pine needles and leaves should be removed from gutters that run around a house and those that are settled in where roofs dip. If a spark should hit dry pine needles, a fire can start.



Kerby said that irrigating the landscaping will keep plants from burning as quickly.

She noted that county law sets the days and times twice a week that residents can water their lawns.

Odd number property addresses may water on Wednesday and Saturday.

Even numbered property address, parcels without a property address, or systems that irrigate multiple units may water on Thursdays and Sundays.

Kerby noted that no irrigation is allowed between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., and those that break the watering laws can be fined by law enforcement.

The 100 reflectors were donated by Severn Trent, the contact operator for FGUA. Kerby said they had not been a budgeted item for FGUA since they were donated.

“When firefighters report to heavy smoky areas or at night, these blue reflectors are going to help make their jobs easier than having to search for hydrants,” Kerby said.

*Reprinted with permission from the Lehigh Acres Citizen*

## Customer Information Incentive Program

The Customer Information Incentive Program rewards customers who update their information and allows the FGUA to continue providing timely customer announcements as well as prepare for a future transition from paper-based to electronic notifications. Customers who contact the FGUA customer service offices confirming or updating their information have been entered in monthly drawings for gift certificates provided by businesses in the FGUA service area.

### The following winners were recently chosen and received gift certificates generously donated from local program sponsors:

Winners from Golden Gate are Rayda Alvarez and Lora Jones  
Winners from Lehigh Acres are Gerald Temple and Israel Gonzalez  
Winners from N. Ft. Myers are J. Paul & Joan Belliveau

### We would like to thank our business partners for supplying the gift certificates for the contest:

Polo Tropical, 5065 Golden Gate Parkway, Naples FL  
Inca's Kitchen, 11985 Collier Blvd, Naples FL  
Canton House Restaurant, 1231 Homestead Rd, Lehigh Acres, FL  
Country Roads Café, 1344 Homestead Rd, Lehigh Acres, FL  
Cactus Jack's Southwestern Bar & Grill, 3448 Marinatown Lane, Fort Myers, FL

Winners were notified by telephone. The FGUA will not and does not share, distribute or sell customer contact information to entities outside the FGUA. Businesses wishing to participate and customers updating information may contact their local FGUA customer service office.



Joan Belliveau

## UPDATES AND TIMELY INFORMATION

### Lehigh Acres:

- Water filters located after the water softening unit at water treatment plant 1 have been sandblasted, repainted, and new filter media installed. All 12 filters at the plant have been rehabbed over the last 3 years. There has been no interruption of the softening process during this time.
- The fire hydrant painting and replacement program is ongoing, and one hundred blue reflectors have been installed in the road next to hydrants in high traffic areas. The reflectors make it easier for the fire department to find hydrant connections.

### Golden Gate:

- Fire hydrant painting and maintenance is ongoing.

- A leak repair was made at the booster station storage tank at Green Blvd. While the tank was drained for the repair, the DEP required 5 year inspection of the tank was completed. There was no service interruption during the repair or inspection.
- A leak detection survey has been completed on the entire water distribution system. The leak detection company touches microphone probes to water valves and records the sound in the water mains and storage tanks. If the noise level is higher than expected, an investigation is made for leaks. The final report is due at the end of June but preliminary findings found no major leaks.

### North Ft. Myers:

- The Del Prado Reclamation Facility is slated for a substantial upgrade. Construction of the digester, a storage tank for bio solids before it moves toward final disposal, which began Sept of 2010, is nearing completion. The new digester will greatly expand the capacity of the treatment facility to handle the increased demand for accommodating flow of wastewater.
- A second oxidation ditch, a large oval tank where wastewater is treated with horizontal aerators, typically called brush or disc aerators, which provide oxygen and mixing for the microorganisms used in the treatment process, is being constructed to increase the overall plant capacity from 3.5mgd to 4.25mgd an increase of 750,000 gallons per day.
- North Fort Myers has 105 lift stations; each is being evaluated and several are undergoing rehabilitation as needed. As a result the improvements will increase system reliability and efficiency. The focus has been to reduce power consumption and save on operational costs. The improvements will also provide environmental benefits, reducing the risk for discharge or spillage of wastewater.
- Lake Fairways & Pine Lakes Customers:** Lake Fairways customers can expect to see a new roof on their water treatment plant ground storage tank. A new roof will improve the integrity of the structure and further aide in protecting the water facility from contaminants.
- Monthly manhole and fire hydrant inspections are continuing. The inspections are preventive measures used to ensure proper water flow in the community and as well as verify the integrity of the system. Replacement of four fire hydrants is planned.

## What's in Your Bottle?

Bottled water is convenient, refreshing, calorie-free and some may say tastier than tap water. It's certainly much healthier than sugary sodas. Bottled water is chosen for reasons including perceived purity, health benefits, safety and convenience. However, consumer preferences may be grounded on invalid assumptions.

Marketing efforts by bottlers promote the superior quality of their water, generating the perception that bottled water is a “better” choice. Yet there are no credible findings of bottled water having any health or nutritional benefits over tap.

Tap water is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); bottled water is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). All drinking water has to meet the same minimum standard; however, EPA standards are more rigorous than those the FDA requires. For example, water treatment plants that provide tap water must be tested for contaminants multiple times a day whereas the FDA tests bottling plants only once a week. Under “right-to-know” provisions in the drinking water law, all tap water utilities must provide annual water quality reports to their customers. An example of this disclosure is the Annual Consumer Confidence Report that was mailed in June to FGUA water customers.

With appropriate education and awareness false perceptions about tap and bottled water could be reduced so the public can make educated choices. *This information comes from www.amwater.com/files/TapVsBottle012609.pdf*

## FGUA AT YOUR SERVICE

### Lehigh Acres Office

866-310-4878 or 239-368-1615  
1229 Homestead Road N  
Lehigh Acres FL 33936-6003  
FguaCS\_Lehigh@govserv.com

### Golden Gate Office

800-818-9677 or 239-455-1583  
11985 Collier Blvd, Suite 7  
Golden Gate, FL 34116  
FguaCS\_GoldenGate@govserv.com

### North Ft. Myers Office

239-543-1005  
5660 Bayshore Rd, Suite 36  
Ft. Myers, FL 33917  
FguaCS\_NFM@govserv.com