



INSIDE



Water conservation is an easy way to trim your water utility bill. Take these simple steps and get a handle on your water costs.



The US water infrastructure is aging and that includes FGUA systems. Learn why and read about a couple of projects underway.



Snowbirds, jet-setting executives, and cross-country vacationers all can benefit from our noteworthy tips to keep your home safe while you're away.

fguaNEWS

WINTER 2007

updates & information from your water and wastewater utility

Be water wiser.

There are many ways you can conserve water in your home and use your water more wisely. For instance, most new homes have water-efficient plumbing fixtures and toilets. Retrofitting these fixtures in older homes can decrease your utility bill by reducing the amount of water you use every day.

CHECK YOUR PLUMBING. Fixing leaky faucets and eliminating just one slow drip can save you 15 to 20 gallons of water in just one day. With each repair, you'll save about 6,000 gallons of water each year. By fixing your leaky toilet, you can save even more water. Test your toilet tank for leakage by putting a few drops of dark food coloring in the tank. Without flushing, watch for a few minutes to see if the color appears in the bowl, which indicates a leak. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons of water each day from a leak in your toilet. Fixing the leak can save you up to 30,000 gallons of water a year for each repair!

WASH WISELY. Another way to conserve water is to think "five" for showers and baths. Limit your shower time to five minutes and you can save up to 1,000 gallons a month. You can turn the water off while you're "soaping up" and then it back on to wash off.

Washing your dishes and clothes in full loads can save you lots of water. Even when shorter-run cycles are available for small

loads, waiting to run automatic dishwashers and washing machines when they are full uses water and soap more efficiently. If you're in the market for a new washing machine, consider choosing a front-load washer that spins on a horizontal axis. The front-load washer uses much less water than conventional top-load models. Trust us—you'll notice your savings over time on your utility bill.

SPRINKLE LIGHTLY. Not only can you conserve water within your house, but there are plenty of opportunities to save water outside as well. Plan your lawn and garden watering by following local regulations and advice from lawn and garden experts. Most lawns don't need watering as much as people think. Grass grows best when watered evenly, deeply, and only when it needs it—no more than once every three days in any climate. You can tell when your lawn needs watering by just walking across it. If the grass springs up after your lift your foot, it's not time to water it yet. If it stays flat, however, it's time to water again.

Also, while you are outside, use a broom, rather than a hose to clean sidewalks and driveways to save water. If you have a pool, you can cut the evaporation loss by 90% if you purchase a cover.

To see more ways to conserve water, check out DrinkTap.org.

Citrus water system transfers to County management

The Florida Governmental Utility Authority is once again preparing for the successful transfer of facilities to local government. The Citrus FGUA systems will transfer to Citrus County in February.

FGUA has operated the Citrus County System since it was acquired from Florida Water Services in 2002. Since that time the system has expanded to 13,175 water users and 5,658 wastewater users. In 2006, FGUA upgraded the services including the installation of a new well to service the Citrus Springs and Pine Ridge Communities. Also in these areas, FGUA has installed high service pumps, as well as tested and color coded fire hydrants.

FGUA has proudly served these communities as it has other local governments like the City of Sarasota, Brevard and Hillsborough counties, and others.

A new deep injection well is in Golden Gate's future. FGUA is in the last phases of permitting approval for the construction of a wastewater deep injection well to help dispose of wastewater by-products. Once completed, this well at the Golden Gate Wastewater Plant site (Tropicana Blvd. & 32nd Ave.) will safely inject water waste nearly 3,500 feet underground—well below drinking water sources. This common method of waste disposal is approved by all federal and state regulatory agencies. Customers may have noticed construction staging activities on the site, but construction isn't expected to begin until April. Public education and comment sessions begin soon.

Comments about FGUA News?

Contact Tisha Keller, Editor, at tkeller@govserv.com

TAKING AN EXTENDED TRIP?

Make sure you protect your house by following this checklist.

- **Set your thermostat at 55 degrees**, but no lower to protect pipes.
- **Set your water heater as low as possible without turning it off.** When you get home, let the water in the heater reach 120° before using it.
- **Empty refrigerators and freezers** and turn them off.
- **Unplug unneeded appliances**—they draw current even when in the “off” position.
- **Wrap exposed water pipes.**
- **Turn off the main water valve** to your house.
- **When you return, let water run for 3 minutes from each tap** to flush contaminants that built up in fixtures while you were away.



Legacy pipelines

Excerpted from WaterEncyclopedia.com

The United States drinking water infrastructure network spans over 700,000 miles. Our national water-supply infrastructure is what we use to pump, divert, transport, store, treat, and deliver safe drinking water. This includes groundwater wells, surface-water intakes, dams, reservoirs, storage tanks, drinking-water facilities, pipes, and aqueducts. In general, the U.S. water infrastructure is made up of different types of pipes that were laid anywhere between the late 1800s and the 1950s during three distinct time periods. The first sets of pipes were estimated to last

NEW IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS NEAR YOU >>

120 years. The second set of pipes were installed in the 1920s and estimated to last for 100 years. The newest pipes were laid after World War II and will need to be replaced after 75 years. Simple math tells us that our drinking water infrastructure will need to be replaced over the next three decades. Luckily, few of funded original infrastructure, so we can help to financially support our updating efforts. Currently, the U.S. water industry delivers some of the highest quality water in the world. In order to secure the quality, we're making improvements every day.



The watering frenzy is just around the bend

You're probably ready for some green to appear in your bleak winter lawn. But think before you reach for the hose! The Southwest Florida Water Management District recently declared a severe water shortage in the southwest portion of the state. In response, irrigation restrictions in the 16-county service area (includes Citrus and portions of Polk) have been

increased to allow outside watering only one day per week. You can find more information at www.bocc.citrus.fl.us/utilities/watering_restrictions.html

New Lehigh Acres water treatment plant and wells.

Construction began August '06 at the Mirror Lakes site that includes three 180-ft deep raw water wells to yield 900 gal/min of raw water for treatment.

Permitting is also underway for a new **deep injection well** in the Lehigh service area. Contractors may be chosen in May.

Ft. Myers Interconnect.

Nearly 11,500 linear feet of pipeline will provide an on-demand, two-way connection between FGUA system and the City of Ft. Myers water supply.

New water main lines in Poinciana are being installed along Hunter Road/ Koa Street. New water main lines are also being installed along Halifax Drive

Poinciana also has an ongoing wastewater lift station rehabilitation project.

Water-stingy toilets promise big savings

A newly announced USEPA specification for high-efficiency toilets promises to save billions of gallons of water annually. The designation is for toilets that use less than 1.3 gallons per flush, including single and dual-flush tank-type units. Toilets manufactured to meet the specification will get to display the EPA's WaterSense label. USEPA estimates that homeowners can cut water bills by 10% and, if installed to replace older, water-guzzling models, would save in excess of 900 billion gallons annually nationwide. *Excerpted from www.awwa.org*

FGUA in Lehigh gets new digs

The Lehigh Acres Customer Service Office is moving to Bealls Plaza in February. The new address is 1239 Homestead Rd. N. and is located next to the Canton House Restaurant, behind the McDonalds.