



INSIDE



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If you're on a budget and can't afford new water and energy-efficient appliances and contraptions right now, here are a few ways to start conserving water without spending a penny.



Leaks – from toilets or faucets or irrigation systems – can result in increases in your water bill, damage to your home, as well as thousands of wasted gallons of water!

fguaNEWS

Winter 2010

updates & information from your water and wastewater utility

Meters and your monthly bill:

Each month the FGUA sends you a bill for your water and/or wastewater usage.

The utility uses the meter reading to calculate your bill. FGUA reads the meter approximately every 30 days. The meter readers have no access to the previous read, and they read approximately 600 meters every day, so they don't remember the previous read. The utility has no way of knowing how the water was used, or on what day, just how much was measured since the meter was last read.

Per the national industry standards the FGUA only count the thousands of gallons. The lower numbers are measured by the meter, but will only be counted when they add up to the next 1000 gallons. So, if the meter numbers shows that 32,439 gallons went through the meter, then the read would be 32. If the previous month's read was 29, then 3000 gallons were measured through the meter since your last read, and your bill would reflect usage of 3.

Only the fresh water entering the property is measured by the meter. Wastewater usage is the water that goes down the drain, and is not measured. For residential properties, the wastewater usage has a cap being billed monthly. Business customers are charged the same usage for both water and wastewater and there is no cap.

The utility is required by state law to read the meter, and use the measurement to formulate your bill. If the meter is not accessible, due to locked gates, bees in the meter box, something covering the meter, or any other reason, a door tag will be left on the door to arrange access to the meter.

In case the customer does not respond, the utility may have to send an estimated bill. The charges will be an average usage over the last twelve months. The bills will show the word ESTIMATED in all capital letters, and when the meter can be read again, any difference in usage will be charged or credited to the water account. Estimated bills are rare, and the utility will use every option of contacting the customer to get a correct read each month.

If your read changes drastically, the computer will flag it and a meter reader will double check the meter reading before mailing out the monthly bill. In case of a re-read, we will also check the leak detector. The leak detector is a small circle with a triangle inside it, located on the meter face with the numbers. Anytime water is going through the meter, the triangle spins. If the leak detector shows water usage when the meter is read, the meter reader will leave a door tag marked that a leak has been indicated and you should call a plumber.

You should also check your meter periodically. Make sure it is accessible. Check to see if the pipes are leaking since you could be charged if the water goes through the meter. Do this when you know that no water is being used so you can check the leak detector. Leaks can occur underground so you may not see or hear them, but could raise your bill significantly. Even a small leak can raise your bill.

A small faucet drip, or a toilet that runs, whether continuously or occasionally, will raise your usage, and therefore your total bill due.

If you think there is a problem with your bill, the utility can send a staff member out to re-read the meter. There is no charge for one re-read. It usually takes one working day to get the paperwork back from the field staff, so we ask customers to wait two days to receive results. If the read is higher than the previous read, then the meter is measuring water correctly and you may want to contact a plumber. If the read is lower, then an error occurred and you will be credited the difference.

There has never been a documented instance of a meter measuring too much water. As meters get older, they measure less water as it enters the device. The utility has a program to replace any meters that are 10 years old to ensure they measure the correct amount.



Save water; save money!

Leaks – from toilets or faucets or irrigation systems – can result in increases in your water bill, damage to your home, as well as thousands of wasted gallons of water! A single leaky faucet can waste 100 gallons in a day!

Source: <https://my.sfwmd.gov>



FGUA AT YOUR SERVICE

Lehigh Acres Office

866-310-4878

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Golden Gate Office

800-818-9677

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Pasco Office

727-372-0115

FguaCS_PascoCo@govserv.com

5 Ways to Save Water on a Tight Budget

If you're on a budget and can't afford new water and energy-efficient appliances and contraptions right now, here are a few ways to start conserving water without spending a penny.

1. Seek out dripping faucets and tighten when necessary. This seems like an obvious one, but subtle drips from hot-water taps will waste energy as well.
2. Take shorter showers. A four-minute shower uses approximately 20 to 40 gallons of water. Now, this seems incredibly short to do all of the shampooing, rinsing, and soaping necessary, so start out with a timer. For starters, try cutting back your shower by one minute every other day. Every unneeded minute can use 5 to 10 gallons of water.
3. Keep a bottle of drinking water in the fridge. Don't waste running water by waiting for it to get cold.
4. Turn off the bathroom faucet while brushing your teeth. Wet your brush and fill a small cup for mouth rinsing.
5. Pre-wash your dishwasher dishes as little as possible. The appliance is most efficient when allowed to do its job; washing your dishes twice is also a waste of your precious time. Also, only run your dishwasher once you have enough for a full load. This goes for washing machines, too.

Reference: Publish Date: 2009-06-20

<http://www.waterconservationusa.org/articles.html>

Comments about FGUA News?

Contact Yvette Hartsfield, Editor, at yhartsfield@govserv.com

FGUA Water Conservation Education Program

The FGUA Water Conservation Education Program, a new program which provides water conservation presentations to schools and school children located within the FGUA Pasco Utility System area, has been launched. Public, private, charter and home-school educators may contact the FGUA Pasco Utility System Office to receive information about the program or schedule presentations free of charge for their students. These presentations are also available in the Golden Gate and Lehigh Acres Systems.

Please notify us if your information has changed

Customers who have changed or not provided a phone number or e-mail account are encouraged to contact the FGUA Customer Service Office and update their information. The FGUA anticipates providing phone and e-mail notifications in the future to customers, who may be impacted by planned service activities, such as boil water notices and system maintenance. Lehigh Acres and Golden Gate customers may update their information at www.fgua.com, by clicking the account information button on the left side of the home page.



FGUA PROJECTS

Pasco System Projects

- A phosphate corrosion control additive has been introduced into the water supply at the water treatment plants as part of the corrosion control program. The additive, which received support from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and other regulatory agencies, will minimize the occurrence of leaks in customers' copper piping.
- The FGUA is continuing system-wide flushing of the FGUA Seven Springs System. The Flushing is part of the FGUA's prudent utility practices and assists in scouring possible build-up, increasing circulation and removing stagnant water from the service lines. Where practical, customers have been and will continue to be notified within 24 hours of activity through mailed letters and signage at the entrance of each community.
- "Coupon testing" has occurred at the FGUA well sites, entailing running potable water over a small copper sample and measuring the level of corrosion over time. The results are being gathered and will help determine the best dosage rates for the corrosion additive. Customers experiencing reddish colored water or experiencing leaking pipes should contact the FGUA Pasco Customer Service line at (727) 372-0115 so staff may track the events.
- The water distribution system mapping has been completed using existing hard maps and electronic files. The maps are being used for a computer modeling program where different customer demands are matched with alternate treatment and pumping scenarios to derive the best solution. The wastewater collection system and the reclaimed water distribution system have also been mapped to assist in ongoing operations and future planning.
- The FGUA has worked closely with Pasco County Utilities to determine future system interconnection locations. The design and construction of the interconnections is ongoing and is scheduled for completion in February of 2011. A request has been granted by the SWFWMD to extend the deadline for interconnection to the County to March 2011.
- Water auditing, required by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) was completed and submitted

to the District on October 1, 2009. The study included residential meter bench testing, well meter calibration, water main inspection and large meter flow testing to determine the amount of unaccounted for water in the FGUA Pasco Utility System. The report showed a reduction in unaccounted for water, and recommended continuing the meter replacement program, inspection and repairs of leaks and metering unmeasured flows.

• The FGUA Pasco Moisture Conservation Program continues. Pasco Utility System customers may receive free equipment to monitor and reduce their lawn consumption during the ongoing drought. The sensors may be obtained by visiting the FGUA Pasco Utility System Office in New Port Richey.

Golden Gate System Projects

- A water system distribution project is currently underway in Golden Gate. This project will loop identified water mains to improve hydraulic conditions and water quality.
- The expansion of the Golden Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is nearing completion. This project expanded the current plant capacity from 0.95 MGD to 1.50 MGD and included a dedicated brine disposal line and pump station that directly routes RO concentrate byproduct from the water treatment plant to the newly constructed deep injection well at the (WWTP).
- An Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) removal project is currently under construction. This project is intended to reduce (I&I) into the collection system during the rainy season. Construction includes testing and sealing joints and laterals, manhole to manhole lining, smoke testing, cleaning and video inspecting gravity sewer lines.
- A manhole rehabilitation project is currently under construction and includes sealing and coating of deteriorated manholes and adjustments that are necessary to restore the manholes to their original condition.
- A lift station pump replacement project is currently underway in Golden Gate. This project includes replacement of aged pumps that have been repaired or rehabbed multiple times. Replacement of these pumps helps prevent possible lift station overflows.

- A project is currently underway to install automatic flushing devices in Golden Gate. Installation of automatic flushing devices at locations experiencing low chlorine residuals will help maintain water quality and ensure a better finished product.

Lehigh Acres System Projects

- An Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) removal project is currently under construction. This project is intended to reduce (I&I) into the collection system during the rainy season. Construction includes testing and sealing joints and laterals, manhole to manhole lining, smoke testing, cleaning and video inspecting sewer lines.
- A wastewater lift station rehabilitation project is currently under construction in Lehigh Acres and is estimated to be completed in April 2010. This project will increase the size of Master Lift Station No. 44 and help prevent possible overflows.
- Construction of a reuse expansion project began in December 2009 and will increase the availability of reclaimed water in Lehigh Acres.
- A well rehabilitation project is currently underway in Lehigh Acres which is for the yearly rehabilitation of the existing groundwater wells. The rehabilitation consists of video inspection, flushing, pump inspection, etc.
- A manhole rehabilitation project is currently underway and includes sealing and coating of deteriorated manholes and adjustments that are necessary to restore the manholes to their original condition.
- A filter rehabilitation project is currently underway at the Lehigh Acres Water Treatment Plant (WTP) No. 1. The rehabilitation includes removing and disposing of all existing media, acid cleaning all stainless steel filter discs, sand blasting the interior to bare metal and recoating with an NSF epoxy and installation of new media.
- A wastewater lift station telemetry project is currently underway in Lehigh Acres. The project includes installation of radio telemetry units that will be integrated into the current SCADA system.