

APPROVED
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING SUMMARY
Green Industry Advisory Committee
And
Agricultural Advisory Committee
Southwest Florida Water Management District
July 8, 2010

The Green Industry Advisory Committee (GIAC) and the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) of the Southwest Florida Water Management District convened for a special joint meeting at 1 p.m., July 9, 2010, at the Tampa Service Office, 7601 Highway 301 North, Tampa, Florida.

Committee Members Present

GIAC

Travis Council, Vice-Chair, FL Sod Growers Coop., Inc.
George Cook, FL Golf Course Supt. Assoc.
Celia Nichols, American Society of Landscape Architects
John Miragliotta, FL Irrigation Society
Brad Suder, Tampa Parks & Recreation Dept.
Tom Burish, Landscape Maintenance Association

AAC

Mac Carraway, Chair, FL Turfgrass Assoc.
Jeff Krieger, Vice-Chair, FL Irrigation Society
Curt Williams, FL Farm Bureau Federation
Ray Crawford, FL Farm Bureau Federation
Laurie Hurner, FL Citrus Mutual
Dale Lewis, FNGLA
Shaun O'Brien, FL Sod Growers Assoc.
David Boozer, FL Tropical Fish Farms Assoc.
Barbara Carlton, Peace River Valley Citrus Grow
Steve Davis, Tampa Wholesale Growers

Governing Board Members Present

Hugh Gramling, AAC Liaison
Doug Tharp, GIAC Liaison

Staff Members Present

Lou Kavouras
Lois Sorensen
Kevin Wills

Recording Secretary

Joanne McClellan

Approved summaries from previous meetings can be found on the District's Web site (www.WaterMatters.org).

The sole agenda topic for the special joint meeting of the Green Industry Advisory Committee and the Agricultural Advisory Committee was to discuss proposed amendments to the Water Shortage Plan (Rule 40D-21, F.A.C.)

Referring to a "cheat sheet" summary and actual draft amendment rule language, advisory committee members raised questions and provided input that will be taken into consideration by staff when revising the amendments prior to staff recommendations going to the Governing Board in August. The following are items were discussed:

- How the decision-making process for a water shortage declaration works – staff summarized the process and answered questions about proposed enhancements
- Proposed Phase I requirement to check irrigation systems – Staff clarified that a self-check is okay, and noted that this additional requirement was based in input from second public workshop to parallel the planning and preparation steps required of other water uses
- Irrigation hours in Phases I, II and III versus Phase IV – Staff clarified that people get to pick whether they use the morning or evening hours in the lower phases; those present noted flexibility (to accommodate a range of circumstances) versus enforceability (difficulty enforcing only being able to water once when two time windows are provided) could be an issue, but flexibility should prevail in lower phases
- Phase III and Phase IV new plant establishment – The "15, 15" exemption may be too restrictive for non-turf plant material
 - RECOMMENDATION: Re-evaluate, consider dropping "15, 15" (at least for non-turf)
- Turf spot treatment – Staff clarified what it was (temporary handwatering of "high and dry" patches of grass until the underlying irrigation system deficiency could be resolved, instead of having people overwater a whole lawn to adequately irrigate those patches), and how and when the amendments would have this activity restricted or prohibited
 - RECOMMENDATION: Keep Phase IV the same as Phase III (limit, do not prohibit)
 - RECOMMENDATION: When implementing water shortage orders with such provisions, make sure professionals and the general public are educated regarding what they can and can not do

- Irrigation after chemical applications – Staff clarified that the allowance would not change (current provisions to follow manufacturer’s instructions in Rule 40D-22, the year-round water conservation measures, would carry over)
 - RECOMMENDATION: If the “cheat sheet” is updated, add that information
 - RECOMMENDATION: When implementing water shortage orders, make sure professionals and the general public are educated/reminded about the provisions
 - GENERAL RECOMMENDATION (affects “cheat sheet” and implementation education): Refer to turf and non-turf plant material separately, so any differences are clearly understood
- Water fountains – staff explained the origin and nature of the “small fountain” exemption, which was only alluded to in the “cheat sheet” (includes tabletop fountains, decorative water features that provide water circulation in Koi ponds and other situations specified in the amendment language, which were developed in response to issues that arose during recent Phase III and Phase IV declarations)
- Interactive fountains – Staff clarified that these are classified as recreational water use (in terms of state health regulations, they are considered pools or spas)
 - RECOMMENDATION: Specifically state in the rule that they are recreational devices
- Watering days during once-per-week restrictions versus those for twice-per-week restrictions – Staff noted that the twice-per-week schedule was decided at that state level as part of a consistency initiative for year-round water conservation measures, whereas the Monday-Friday version of a once-per-week schedule has historically been necessary to alleviate pressure problems on public supply systems that occur during a drought. Those present noted that it was unfortunate that the two schedules don’t better mesh ; staff noted that making everyone adjust their controllers provided a public awareness benefit heading into a drought, but had unintended consequences on the way back to normal conditions
Common areas and other locations with no address – Staff noted that a separate irrigation schedule for such locations was addressed for post-establishment twice-per-week watering, but that a corresponding new plant establishment schedule had been omitted; the problem was discovered during this rulemaking effort, and would be addressed as a separate expedited rulemaking effort to tweak one sentence in the year-round rule.
- Governing Board members in attendance also spoke. Hugh Gramling stated that staff had “hit the target” on comments received as a result of prior input opportunities and the suggestions made today should be easy to work into the revised amendments. Doug Tharp stated that the Governing Board continually looks for input from the advisory committees, not only throughout the rulemaking process, but also when considering whether to declare or modify a specific water shortage order.