

Superior Environmental Stewardship

*Environmental responsibility
in day-to-day operations*

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) incorporates superior environmental stewardship and efficiency into its daily operations in support of the state's climate change initiative. This initiative, signed into order by Florida Governor Charlie Crist in July 2007, seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as use smart building and operational practices to reduce the carbon footprint of state government agencies.

The District's approach to the state's climate change initiative has been named the Environmental Stewardship Initiative. This initiative is integrated into all aspects of the District's daily operations in support of its mission to protect water resources and related natural systems. In doing so, the District continuously monitors the changing natural world and uses a science-based, progressive approach to adapt water resource management activities while focusing on sustainable environmental stewardship and community responsibility.

Southwest Florida
Water Management District

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A Team Effort

The District has fully embraced the Environmental Stewardship Initiative as a permanent part of its culture. The District's Governing Board approved a policy that outlines the Board's support for environmental sustainability and provides guidance and education to staff for moving forward with environmental initiatives, projects, procedures and practices.

The Governing Board and executive staff created a diverse team of staff members to develop and incorporate this commitment to superior environmental stewardship into every aspect of the District's day-to-day operations. The team looks at the District's entire operation for opportunities to achieve greater efficiencies and further reduce its carbon emissions. In doing so, the team balances environmental responsibility with its ongoing obligation to Florida's taxpayers to make wise decisions with taxpayer dollars for the best return on investments. Each project identified by the team is evaluated for feasibility, cost and priority.

Operational Enhancements

The District has taken significant steps toward incorporating superior environmental stewardship into its daily operations:

District Vehicles

Having already replaced several existing traditional fuel vehicles with electric or hybrid vehicles in its fleet, the District is evaluating replacing more vehicles with hybrid, fuel efficient and alternative fuel models.



The District uses fuel-efficient and alternative fuel vehicles to reduce fuel consumption and reduce emissions into the environment.

Building Maintenance

District staff has increased energy efficiency by retrofitting existing buildings with new technologies. The Tampa Data Center was remodeled with new energy-efficient low-e windows; a high-efficiency heating, ventilation and air conditioning chilled water system; a building automation system to control the building's lighting, cooling and heating needs; and energy-saving T8 fluorescent lighting fixtures with efficient electronic ballasts controlled with occupancy sensors. In addition, building materials, such as wood doors, were reused or recycled during the retrofit, which helped divert waste from entering the landfill.

All four District service offices have received a Florida Yard certification from the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods program. This designation recognizes Florida-friendly landscapes that are environmentally friendly by saving water, reducing fertilizer and pesticide runoff, and providing native habitat for birds, butterflies and other



Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ principles are applied through out District campuses to save water and protect the environment.

wildlife. To support the use of these principles, some Facilities and Construction Services staff members have become certified in Green Industries Best Management Practices from the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Several Facilities staff members have also become professionally accredited in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®). The LEED professional accreditation program, administered through the Green

Building Certification Institute, includes a multi-faceted credentialing system that ensures LEED professionals have the latest knowledge and understanding of green building practices. This certification assists staff in facilitating the successful design, development and certification of high-performance green building projects at the District. The District will strive to achieve LEED Platinum certification on all new construction projects.

Savings Through Technology

The District uses several different types of technology, such as video conferencing and streaming video, to reduce fuel costs, paper use and more.



District employees attend video conference meetings to save fuel and time.

The District has also implemented virtualization technology that allows a single physical computer to host several virtual computers. Through this technology, there are currently 27 physical host servers that support more than 447 virtual computers, reducing hardware expenditures, maintenance costs and power consumption. The estimated energy cost savings for the District is \$514,844 annually.

The District also uses a web-based tool to hold meetings both within the District and collaboratively with outside

parties, reducing or eliminating the need for travel and printing. By using this tool, in less than a year there has been a savings of \$4,550 in estimated mileage costs and \$55,000 in estimated consultant fees for travel time.

Resources for District Staff

The District has an internal web site that provides employees with information and resources to educate them about office and personal practices that conserve energy, fuel, water and other resources. The site features a blog for staff to share ideas and a ridesharing network to promote carpooling among staff members.

In addition to reducing impacts to the natural environment, the Environmental Stewardship Initiative also creates a better working environment for the District's employees with improved lighting, environmentally friendly cleaning products, new ENERGY STAR appliances and ergonomic office design.



The District has many recycling facilities at its headquarters and service offices.



Recycling Programs

The District has long had programs in place to recycle paper, batteries, aluminum cans, printer cartridges and cardboard. In 2007 the District added a plastics recycling program; in 2008 the District enrolled in a rechargeable battery recycling program and recycled approximately 2,260 pounds of unusable rechargeable batteries. This progressive approach to recycling allows staff to bring these items from their homes as well, using the District as a recycling center.

Working Together

As part of the Environmental Stewardship Initiative, the District works cooperatively with project team members from other water management districts to share ideas and move forward in a coordinated fashion.

The District also coordinates with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Department of Management Services in the state's development of a carbon scorecard for the Governor's agencies and departments. The District voluntarily provides quarterly reports on its fuel and energy consumption. This information will be used in the carbon scorecard to track state agencies' progress in reducing energy and fuel consumption, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Next Steps

In April 2008 the District's Governing Board approved a policy to support environmental sustainability initiatives and projects. Therefore, the District is taking a number of steps to ensure that the Environmental Stewardship Initiative will be incorporated into all future activities. Some of those steps include:

Environmental Purchasing

New guidelines are in place to encourage departments, employees, contractors and consultants to choose recycled and other environmentally preferable products whenever they meet price and performance requirements. These

guidelines are expected to decrease the use of products that may have an adverse impact on the environment, increase the selection of environmentally preferable products and services, and identify and implement pilot projects to test the best ways to incorporate environmental preferences into purchases.

Lowering Energy Use

New guidelines have been developed to provide standards for lowering the District's energy consumption and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in its office buildings by efficiently managing heating, ventilation, air conditioning, lighting and electronic equipment. The guidelines also support the District's successful partnerships with ENERGY STAR and the United States Green Building Council.

Planning for the Future

An important part of the District's planning process was to incorporate superior environmental stewardship and responsibility in its five-year strategic plan. In this document staff includes goals for the District's initiative, strategies for reducing its water and carbon footprints, and success indicators. The District's strategic plan undergoes review and enhancement each year to ensure continual improvements in the agency's approach to environmental stewardship. The District has also incorporated environmental stewardship and climate change concerns into the *Regional Water Supply Plan*, which is its primary water supply planning document

Contact Information

For more information on these or other District efforts to incorporate superior environmental stewardship into its daily operations, please contact District Deputy Executive Director Eugene Schiller of the Division of Management Services at 1-800-423-1476, ext. 4605.

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The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) does not discriminate on the basis of disability. This nondiscrimination policy involves every aspect of the District's functions, including access to and participation in the District's programs and activities. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation as provided for in the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the District's Human Resources Director, 2379 Broad St., Brooksville, FL 34604-6899; telephone (352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only), ext. 4702; TDD 1-800-231-6103 (FL only); or email ADACoordinator@WaterMatters.org.

