

IRRIGATION WATER SUPPLY – HOW CAN YOU HELP CONSERVE?

One of the most valuable assets within our community is the extensive lake system. Although the lakes serve many purposes one of the important functions is to provide irrigation water. Some may think that when rain is plentiful and the lakes are full, irrigation water is unlimited. However, there are restrictions placed on the SOA by the State of Florida and monitored through a “Consumptive Use Permit”.

Reclaimed (recycled) water is provided to Sandestin by Regional Utilities, and is used to supplement our irrigation water supply but delivery of this source is not readily available to all locations. This water is ultimately “free” water as it does not count toward our available gallon usage in our Permit.

It is important for all owners to understand that although we have full lakes, we are limited in the amount of water we can take from them. The Board, the Maintenance Committee and the Landscape Committee are collectively evaluating the current status of our irrigation network to safeguard against a permit violation, while ensuring our owners continue to have irrigation water readily available without restrictions.

Some of the options that are being considered are:

- Moratorium on any future connections onto the SOA supply
- Rebuilding the irrigation network to allow for more use of reclaimed water
- Collaboration with the SDI Golf Group to use reclaimed water at Burnt Pine Golf Club
- Enforcement of state law regarding rain sensors
- Educating our membership on sound water conservation practices

Of course, we do not want to take drastic measures to control water use. Unfortunately, if we don’t start exploring sound conservation practices today, we may be forced into those actions tomorrow.

One way to assist the SOA in keeping within our use limits is to ensure you have a rain sensor installed on your irrigation system. Florida Law suggests that any person who purchases and installs an automatic landscape irrigation system must properly install, maintain, and operate technology that inhibits or interrupts operation of the system during periods of sufficient moisture (Chapter 373.62 Florida Statutes). Please have your landscape company check your system to be sure a moisture sensor is installed and if so, be sure it is functioning properly.

We appreciate the community support while we continue to research and takes steps to improve the irrigation network.