

Conservation News



Environmental News and Information from the City of Melbourne
Public Works & Utilities Department ~ Environmental Community Outreach Division

Programs in full swing with start of school year

The start of the new school year also brings the start of many environmental education and outreach programs. Conducted by the City of Melbourne Environmental Community Outreach (ECO) Division, a number of the events are also done with the Brevard Water Resources Conservation Team (BWRCT).

The school-year events and programs were kicked off with the Brevard Teacher Open House at the Zoo. Held September 5, more than 100 teachers from throughout the



Jennifer Wilster (left) and Michelle DeVillo of the City's ECO Division show the popular wheel of water. They were putting it to use here at the recent Teacher Open House at the Brevard Zoo event held in September.

county visited the BWRCT's area and most played Melbourne's "Wheel of Water" questions and answer game.

In October, events include the annual Old Florida Fest at Erna Nixon Park, and Central Middle School's Community Awareness Fair.

The beginning of the school year also started the 3rd grade water conservation and environmental awareness programs at area elementary schools. Programs have been scheduled all the way through to next spring at various schools.

For more information on Melbourne's outreach programs, please call (321) 953-6302.

Easy steps to read your meter to detect leaks

Learning to read your water meter can pay off. It's easy to do and it's the way to determine if you have a leak that can be costing you an unnecessary expense on your bill while wasting valuable water.

To use the meter as a leak-detector, you will need to first turn off all the water in your house or business and check the meter. Don't forget to turn off the automatic ice maker, if you have one in your freezer.

Next, go to your water meter and jot down all the numbers you see. Also, look at the flow indicator gauge, which is a small red triangle or diamond. If it is not moving, you do not have a serious leak. To check for slow leaks,

read the meter after two hours. If the numbers have not changed and the gauge has not moved, you don't have a leak. If these have changed, it's time to search for the cause.



Some areas to check include toilets, faucets, malfunctioning water softeners, swimming pools, water heaters, and faulty irrigation valves.

Other leaks can be harder to find such as underground leaks, foundation leaks, and leaks behind walls. These may require the assistance of a plumber to locate.

If you do establish that you have a leak, you may qualify for a credit on the sewer portion of your bill. If you

live inside the City limits of Melbourne, call 953-6390. Outside the City limits, call Brevard County at 633-2092.

Bill payment options available

Utility bill payments can be made by cash, check or money order, payable to the City of Melbourne. Visa and Mastercard payments can be made at City Hall or by phone during regular hours.

Automatic debits from your checking account are also available. You can get an agreement form from City Hall or the City's web site.

There is also a drop box located at City Hall. The drive-through window has been closed due to City Hall construction.



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Containerizing leaves, loose material a must for pickup

As fall weather approaches and leaves begin to drop, remember the yard waste must be placed in appropriate containers. Leaves, grass clippings, pine needles, twigs, berries, and other loose material, must be placed in reusable garbage cans that are no larger in size than 40 gallons and weigh no more than 50 pounds when filled.



Yard waste cannot be placed in plastic bags, which are not accepted at the landfill.

The yard waste material is recycled into mulch and is available for green at the Sarno Landfill. To reach them, call 255-4365.

Recycle corrugated cardboard

It's easy to recycle corrugated cardboard boxes rather than throwing them away where they take up valuable space in the landfill. Make sure to flatten them first and remove any packing material. Then bring them to the specially-marked dumpsters located throughout Melbourne. Paperboard boxes, such as those that cereal and other food and drink products are packaged in, can be recycled curbside in Melbourne.

Corrugated cardboard drop-off dumpsters are located at the following Melbourne sites:

- Fire Station # 71, 1865 W. Eau Gallie Blvd.
- Fire Station #72, 2937 Sarno Road
- Fire Station #74, 1500 S. Hickory St.
- Fire Station #75, 151 E. University Blvd.
- Fire Station #76, 2470 Croton Road
- Melbourne Public Library, 700 E. Hibiscus Blvd.
- SP Recycling Corp., 2850 Harper Road

Lawn watering rules in effect

**No watering
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**



One of the most important ways to help meet our water supply needs for today and the future is through conservation. Lawn and landscape irrigation can account for more than half of residential and commercial water use. Watering wisely promotes healthier lawns and landscapes and preserves our water resources.

Year-around rules allow for watering no more than two days per week, and only between the hours of 4 p.m. and 10 a.m. The rules apply to water from private wells, surface water bodies, and City-supplied water. Irrigation with reclaimed water, however, is exempt.

System-wide unidirectional water flushing program begins

Melbourne's water distribution system includes approximately 2,100 miles of piping which provides water to more than 150,000 customers. Various locations in the City's system have been experiencing discolored water. To control these problems, the City is taking a three-pronged approach that is now underway.

First, chronic water quality problems can be caused by old galvanized steel and cast iron pipes. The City is budgeting \$1.5 million per year to replace these lines throughout the system.

Second, a recent water quality study has shown that our water is tending to become slightly more corrosive in nature after it leaves the water production facilities. Though the water is safe, this change may be contributing to some of the water quality problems. The City has \$400,000 budgeted in the coming year to address this issue.

Third, the City is beginning a system-wide, \$1 million unidirectional flushing program. The system has been divided into 340 flushing zones. After all valves and hydrants have been

located and operated, the program will begin to systematically flush the entire system in less than a year. This involves using clean water to flush the system from the source using strong water velocities in one direction. The flushing will scour the



Unidirectional flushing at a Melbourne neighborhood.

lines completely of any deposits and debris that may be in the lines. The water that is flushed is dechlorinated so that it can be sent into the stormwater system without any negative environmental impacts.

Public notices will be sent to the affected areas two to three weeks in advance of each event. In addition, signs will be placed at ingress/egress points just prior to the events as reminders. Wachs Utility Services is serving as the City's contractor for the flushing.

During the testing, residents may notice reduced water pressure and discolored water. The water is safe, however, we recommend that it not be used during the flushing period for consumptive uses, bathing, or washing clothes because it may be discolored.

For more information and weekly updates on locations where the flushing is underway, you can go to the City's web site at www.melbourneflorida.org and click the "Flushing Program Update" or call the City hotline at (321) 674-5726, ext. 203.