



Over 85 Years of Service

Manager of Operations Annual Report

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014

South Indian River Water Control District is a special taxing District which serves the residents of Jupiter Farms, Palm Beach Country Estates, Egret Landing, and Jupiter Park of Commerce. The District office currently employs thirteen people who handle the day to day operations. Positions include a Manager of Operations, Office Administrator, secretary, nine full-time operators, and a full-time mechanic. Also, the office interacts on a regular basis with several other agencies including South Florida Water Management, Solid Waste Authority, the Town Of Jupiter and Palm Beach County Departments including, Road and Bridge, Environmental Resource, the Sheriff's Department, and Fire and Rescue. In addition, the District participates as committee members with several agencies including Florida Association of Special Districts, Loxahatchee River Management Coordinating Council, Loxahatchee Preservation Initiative, Safety Council of Palm Beach County and the North County Land Managers Association. These interactions ensure good relationships with governmental department heads and also provide the best service and information possible to the people who live and work within our District.

Within the 12,000 acre service area, there are over a hundred miles of dirt roads, three hundred seventy miles of road side swales, and sixty miles of canals that are maintained by the District. This year

provided many maintenance challenges as we faced yet another extreme wet season. In a ten week span that started June 1st, we received over 27 inches of rain at the District Work Center! That's more than 40% of our average annual rainfall. It is during these periods of heavy rainfall that we receive the most calls for service regarding road and drainage issues.

The District's road maintenance operation includes two John Deere motor graders and two ten foot box blades that grade the roads on a weekly basis. Maintenance includes adding road material when needed or re-contouring and re-establishing the crown of the road by pulling in the dirt from the sides of the road. Both methods provide maximum storm water runoff and keep the roads passable. Most District road easements are sixty to eighty feet wide and are for the purpose of maintenance. We do not advise or encourage residents to install any type of irrigation, electrical lines, plants, trees, or shrubs within the easement, for this could interfere with maintenance operations.

The District's drainage program consists of road-side swale and canal mowing and cleaning, canal culvert replacement, aquatic weed spraying, and quarterly inspections of water control structures. The District operates two John Deere 710 backhoes and one Kobelco trackhoe to remove blockages and debris from swales and canals. This year we purchased a mowing attachment for our trackhoe which allows us to cut back overgrown trees and shrubs along our canals and decrease the chance of culverts being clogged with debris after a storm event.

One of the most common factors that contribute to swale blockages is a construction plug. Over the past couple of years, the District has seen an increase in housing construction with many lots being developed. Because District policy prohibits any type of swale obstruction, contractors or homeowners must install a temporary culvert prior to construction. We do not advise installing the permitted culvert at this time due to damage that may occur to the culvert during construction. The temporary culvert should be no less than 12 inches in diameter and at least 20 feet long. If a culvert is not installed, then the plug will be removed and an attempt will be made to contact the contractor or homeowner.

Another common occurrence that contributes to a swale blockage is when a homeowner fills in the swale to eliminate standing water. The swales were designed for three purposes: storm water runoff, retention, and percolation. Depending on where you live in the District can determine whether you will have standing water. And if you have standing water in your swale, that doesn't necessarily mean that you have a drainage problem. Over the years, the District has targeted areas where drainage improvements could be made. We have listened to landowners and their concerns regarding standing water and have made every effort possible to provide proper storm water runoff.

Another effort to improve drainage includes the inspection and replacement, if needed, of District drainage culverts. This year, we installed over 1,200 feet of culvert pipe followed by rip-rap headwalls and sod to reduce erosion and provide maximum flow. (Please note, though, that it is the homeowner's responsibility to inspect their driveway culvert and remove any sediment build-up, if needed.) Also,

we are making improvements and gaining access, with landowner cooperation, to canal right of ways and outfall drainage systems in order to better service them in the event of an approaching storm. If any landowner suspects that there is a possible drainage issue whether it is a swale blockage or a collapsed culvert, they are advised to call our office to have it inspected.

The District continues to apply regulated and permitted herbicides in the canal and outfall systems for the control of aquatic weeds. These systems are checked regularly and sprayed on an as-needed basis. The District's aquatic weed spraying contractor is Terra-Tech Environmental. Mike Martinez and his staff do a great job in minimizing aquatic vegetation in the canals. Mike is also a resident of Jupiter Farms.

The District's mowing schedule is perhaps the most challenging of all of our maintenance services. With three ten foot wing mowers and three boom arm mowers, the schedule is usually completed within six to eight weeks. However, the schedule can be delayed due to weather and mechanical or personnel issues. If a homeowner wishes to mow their own swale area, they can call our office to be put on the "Do Not Mow" list. This list is reviewed daily by the operators before beginning mowing operations in each section.

There are ten water control structures that are checked and serviced on a quarterly basis. These inspections are recorded as part of our National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

In addition, our operators are trained to monitor any type of illicit discharge entering the drainage system. If an illicit discharge is

suspected, Palm Beach Environmental is informed of the situation and the area is investigated. If necessary, those responsible are notified to correct the issue and in some cases, may receive a notice of violation.

Landscape debris that is dumped on canal right-of-ways or other restricted areas of the District is illegal dumping. Debris must be left in front of a homeowner's lot in order to be picked up by Solid Waste. They do not pick up debris left in front of a vacant lot. Landscape debris must be cut correctly and placed alongside the road. Solid Waste will not pick up stumps. Please call our office immediately, if you suspect or witness illegal dumping activity of any kind.

The District office is open Monday through Friday 8-4:30. We are located at 15600 Jupiter Farms Road. Our phone number is 561-747-0550. You are invited to visit our web site at sirwcd.org or stop by the office to express any concerns you have regarding District issues.