

Commissioner Sue Gunzburger

Broward County Commission, District 6

Residents Urged to Conserve Water During South Florida's Dry Season

With a wet season recording below normal levels of rain, Broward County enters the dry season of winter when water demands reach a peak level. This year, those demands are coming on the heels of a shortened wet season which dropped below average rainfalls in most regions of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). To ensure that adequate drinking water supplies are available to all residents, water conservation is critical throughout the winter months until May. The SFWMD is asking residents in south Florida to voluntarily limit water use to reduce the chance that widespread mandatory water restrictions will be implemented later.

Usually two-thirds of Florida's annual rainfall occurs in the five-month wet season, stretching from June to October. This year, the district received 88 percent of the average wet season's rainfall, leaving it about four inches below the target of 33.21 inches. The shortage is most notable over the district's northern, central and southeast coastal regions where rainfall deficits of up to 12 inches occurred.

Officials hope that a weak to moderate El Niño could bring 2-7 inches of above average rainfall to the district through March. District scientists and meteorologists anticipate that even a wetter than normal season may not prevent the district from implementing mandatory water restrictions in many parts of South Florida at a later date in 2007.

Residents and businesses can help ease the pressure on water supply by practicing responsible lawn care. Daily lawn irrigation uses 50 percent or more of available drinking water. During Florida's dry season, lawns don't need to be watered until they begin to wilt. In addition, lawns are more likely to survive the dry season if they have been conditioned to live without excess watering.

Anyone who doesn't have to maintain a lawn can help conserve water by making simple changes at home. A short shower using an ultra low flow showerhead can use one-half the water of the average 40-gallon bath. Less water is wasted when dishwashers and washing machines are run with full loads. Thousands of gallons of water a year can be saved just by turning off the water when brushing your teeth.

For more information about water conservation, visit www.broward.org/watermatters.

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Broward County Transit Plans Improvements and New Routes March 25

Following a number of improvements in January, Broward County Transit (BCT) will inaugurate improvements and new routes in March. BCT registered 39 million passenger trips last year, an increase of 3.5 percent. Improvements scheduled to begin March 25 include:

- **Route 15** – Realign the northern segment to provide two-way service along Griffin Road, between Southwest 40th Avenue and the Griffin Road Tri-Rail Station. Service along Stirling Road will be provided by the new route 16.
- **Route 16** – New local bus service along Stirling Road between U.S. 1 and Flamingo Road with service to the Griffin Road Tri-Rail station. Frequency of service to be 30 minutes during the weekday peak hours of 6 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. Bus service will be 60 minutes all other times.
- **Route 17** – The northern segment of the route will end at the Sheridan Street Tri-Rail Station. Remaining part of the route will be picked up by routes 12 and 16. Service frequency will be adjusted from 45 to 60 minutes daily.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time to share your concerns and priorities. I can be reached at 954-357-7006 or you can e-mail me at sgunzburger@broward.org.

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!

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