



FLERA FOCUS!

Florida Local Environmental Resource Agencies

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Quarterly Educational Meeting

FLERA is reinstating the practice of Quarterly Educational Meetings for its members on topics of current interest to the membership! The first member education meeting will be held in Orlando on November 12th from 12 noon until 2:00 PM at Orange County's Barnett Park. The Park is located at 4801 W Colonial Drive in Orlando (407/836-6248.) There is no cost to attend unless you would like to order lunch for \$11. Go to <http://www.flera.org/pdf/NovMtg08.pdf> for more information and registration forms.

Rick Wilkins Award Presentation

The first Rick Wilkins Environmental Leadership Award will be presented at the Board of Director's meeting on November 12th in Orlando. This award is given to professional staff who have displayed outstanding leadership qualities on environmental issues. 2008 marks the first year that the award will be renamed in honor of the late Rick Wilkins, FLERA Past President, who was a leader in environmental policy at both the state and local levels. Steve Kintner of Volusia County will receive this year's Award.

FLERA's 2008 Commissioner Award was presented locally to Sarasota County Commissioner Jon Thaxton on October 22nd for his long and outstanding history of protecting our environment, both before and during his tenure on the County Commission.

Southeast Rebuild Collaborative Webinar "Green Local Government" on October 30 at 2:00 PM

As the first of a three part series entitled "SRC Greening Local Government" Rob Viera of the Florida Solar Energy Center and Lori Cunniff (Orange County), will present a webinar on the Florida Green Building Coalition's Green Local Government Standard. Mr. Viera will present an overview of the program, including the guides in the Standard. Ms. Cunniff will present on Orange County's experience as an active participant in the program. Please join us for this session, as well as the other two sessions in the series: waste to energy, and an overview of recent legislation. Visit the Southeast Rebuild Collaborative Website at <http://www.southeastrebuild.org/> to register for the Webinar.

Environmental Health Tracking Network

In 2002, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) began the development of a national Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) network. The EPHT network is a collection of state and national web-based data query systems that facilitate the integration, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data on environmental hazards, exposures to those hazards, and health effects that may be related to the exposures. CDC is leading the initiative to integrate these three types of data into a standardized electronic network. Florida is one of 17 states and one city to receive CDC funding to develop a state EPHT network. The EPHT network is designed to examine health concerns at the state and local level. There is a great need to use hazard and health outcome data to evaluate, prevent and control environmentally related disease. The EPHT Network will assist researchers, policy makers, and the general public to better plan for appropriate public health actions at the national, state and community levels. The EPHT state networks will be available in phases, with the first phase operational in late 2008. *See resource links below.*



EPHT 101 (View the free learning modules and earn up to 4 CEU's):

http://www.nehacert.org/catalog/index.php?cPath=28&main_page=index

Florida EPHT web page:

http://www.myfloridaeh.com/programs/environmental_Public_Health_tracking

Florida EPHT Network Portal:

<http://www.floridacharts.com/charts/epht.aspx?Domain='05'>

National EPHT: <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/tracking/>



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Sarasota County Turns Green!

Sarasota County achieved the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) Green Local Government Designation recently with a score of 47 percent - the highest score to date - making them the second county in Florida to achieve the FGBC Gold certification! For more details or to learn how you can become a Florida Green Local Government, visit <http://www.floridagreenbuilding.org>. Remember that membership in FLERA gives you credits toward your FGBC certification!

Alachua County Considering Extensive Rapid Bus Transit Network

Unable to approve some projects because of state-set concurrency requirements, including insufficient local road capacity and developer traffic impact fees, Alachua County officials saw an opportunity in the state's Department of Community now "promoting a new way to look at things," said Assistant County Manager Rick Drummond, and they quickly told staff to redraw a previously outlined concurrency management plan, focused on road construction and expansion, into one aimed at creation of an extensive bus rapid transit network along dedicated traffic lanes -- all funded mostly by a new "mobility fee" related to development location and type, with rates lower for mixed-use and higher-density projects near urban centers. *Source: Smart Growth News*
<http://www.smartgrowth.org/news/newsmail.asp?art=6828&state=10>

Governor Crist Signs Energy Bill

On June 25, 2008, Florida Governor Charlie Crist signed comprehensive energy legislation during the second Climate Summit. The bill includes provisions for a renewable portfolio standard, a carbon cap and trade program, new energy efficiency standards and various energy tax credits. Many measures are included to encourage energy efficiencies and sustainability in both the public and private sectors. Grants and incentive programs were approved for solar (<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/energy/energyact/solar.htm>) and renewable energy ([http://www.dep.state.fl.us/energy/energyact/files/grant/2007%20grants/2008%20Energy%20Grant%20One-Pagers%20\(8\).pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/energy/energyact/files/grant/2007%20grants/2008%20Energy%20Grant%20One-Pagers%20(8).pdf)). Copies of the legislation can be found at the link below:
http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?FileName=_h7135er.xml&DocumentType=Bill&BillNumber=7135&Session=2008.

Local Governments promise "Reasonable Assurance" to Improve Tampa Bay

Earlier this year, Tampa Bay area local governments signed a Declaration to maintain Tampa Bay water quality through cooperate nitrogen reduction efforts. Since 1996, Tampa Bay area local governments have been members of the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium, a unique public/private partnership originally organized by the Tampa Bay Estuary Program. The Consortium members have coordinated numerous water quality improvement projects to reduce nitrogen loads entering Tampa Bay. This voluntary approach to reducing nitrogen employed for over 10 years has resulted in great improvements to bay quality preventing the need for stricter regulatory controls by federal and state agencies. The Declaration serves as a commitment to the regulatory agencies for continued efforts to control nitrogen inputs to the bay and will help to avoid potential lawsuits and administrative challenges that could risk continuous improvements to the Bay. The Declaration includes a Reasonable Assurance (RA) Document that provides detail concerning how the Consortium will achieve future additional nitrogen reductions.

Lake Worth Lagoon and Chain of Lakes Partnership Grant Program Award Winners Announced

Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management is pleased to announce the grant award winners for the Lake Worth Lagoon and Chain of Lakes Partnership Grant Program. Since 1998, the Legislature has appropriated \$19 million and local sponsors have provided over \$40 million to fund projects that improve water quality and restore fish and wildlife habitat within the Lagoon and the Chain of Lakes.

On September 5, 2008 the Selection Committee met to allocate the Florida Legislature's appropriation of \$500,000 to the Lake Worth Lagoon and \$200,000 to the Chain of Lakes for State Fiscal Year 2008-09. The South Cove Natural Area Phase 2 project in the Lake Worth Lagoon was recommended by the Selection Committee for funding and awarded \$415,000. The John Prince Memorial Park Campground Sewer Project in the Chain of Lakes was awarded \$165,000. A portion of the remaining funds will be used for grant administration, monitoring, and outreach within the Lake Worth Lagoon and Chain of Lakes systems. For more information on the Lake Worth Lagoon visit <http://www.pbcgov.com/erm/lakes/estuarine/lake-worth-lagoon/partnership-grant-program/> and Chain of Lakes Partnership Grant Program visit <http://www.pbcgov.com/erm/lakes/freshwater/index.htm>.

"Providing Community-Based Environmental Protection"