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Southwest Florida Water Management District

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Brian J. Armstrong, P.G.
Executive Director

November 15, 2023

City of Sarasota/Attn: Verne Hall
1750 12th Street
Sarasota, FL 34236

SUBJECT: Declaration of Modified Phase I Water Shortage Order

Public Supply Permittee:

At its November 14, 2023 meeting, the Governing Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) voted to declare a Modified Phase I Water Shortage for all of Charlotte, Citrus, DeSoto, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota and Sumter counties; portions of Lake and Levy counties; the City of Dunnellon and The Villages in Marion County; and the portion of Gasparilla Island in Lee. This area specifically excludes unincorporated Levy County, since restrictions in those areas are managed by the Suwannee River Water Management District in accordance with an interagency agreement between the two Water Management Districts. Order No. SWF 23-041 is effective as of November 21, 2023. The Water Shortage Order will remain in effect through July 1, 2024.

The District is required, by state law, to monitor and respond to droughts and other regional water shortage events. Currently, five Drought Indicators were classified as Severely Abnormal within the District's central counties, one drought indicator is classified as Severely Abnormal in the southern counties, and three drought indicators are classified as Severely Abnormal in the northern counties in accordance with Table 21-2 of the Plan

All Water Use Permits include a standard condition which allows the District to modify permits during a declared water shortage. The Phase I order specifically requires applicable water utilities to review and implement procedures for enforcing year-round water conservation measures and water shortage restrictions, report enforcement activity to the District on a monthly basis and take other appropriate actions.

For your reference the following information provides a brief explanation of the Modified Phase I water shortage requirements:

Effective November 21, 2023

- Everyone must continue following current lawn and landscape irrigation restrictions for their community
- "Wasteful and Unnecessary" water use is prohibited, including: allowing water to be dispersed without any practical purpose, using water in a grossly inefficient manner, and using water for a purpose that can be readily accomplished by other means
- Water utilities, in consultation with applicable local enforcement agencies, must:
 - Review, update and implement enforcing year-round and water shortage restrictions
 - Report information to the District regarding violations involving a Water Use Permit holder
 - Respond to residential and other enforcement referrals made by the District
 - Transmit enforcement data to the District on a monthly basis
 - Inform customers about the declaration, local supplies and water conservation opportunities
 - Address inquiries from the District and citizens about line flushing and disinfection activity

Effective December 1, 2023

- Lawn and landscape irrigation will be restricted to one day a week until March 1, 2024, for all uses within Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas counties
- All other requirements listed above remain as specified
- Water utilities should review and update enforcement procedures, implement the ability to issue and process citations, refer complaints to the District, submit status reports of enforcement activities to the District within 60 days, and submit all monthly enforcement data to the District monthly.