Administrative Procedure
Alachua County, Florida

Bargaining Unit employees should review their appropriate Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) to determine if this policy applies to them. In case of a conflict between the applicable CBA and these policies, the provision in the CBA controls.

Procedure No.: AP-54
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Water Conservation

Purpose:
This policy implements Policy 4.5.21 in the Conservation and Open Space Element and Policy 1.1.3 in the Energy Element of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan. This policy outlines the best practices for conserving water through work practices at all of Alachua County's facilities.

The Alachua County Water Conservation Policy will guide Alachua County in efforts to protect our water by leading by example. Implementation will lead to reduced utility consumption and reduced costs associated with maintaining resource intensive landscaping.

Policy:

Water conservation shall be maximized as a result of the following Alachua County Procedures.

Scope: This procedure applies to all employees of the Board.

Procedure:

1. New Construction. All newly constructed County facilities shall receive Florida Water Star Certification. Language referencing these water conservation policies should be included in bid and contract language with outside contractors performing new construction tasks.

2. Indoor Water Conservation. All newly installed indoor water fixtures (new construction and retrofits) will meet current Florida Water Star prerequisite standards, which can be found at https://floridawaterstar.com/program-criteria/commercial/. The standards, as of 2018, are outlined below.

    a. Showerheads will have a flow rate of 2 gallons/minute or less, preferably with an on/off valve at the showerhead.

b. Toilets shall be high efficiency (maximum of 1.28 gallons/flush with a UNAR MAP rating above 350 grams/flush). When dual flush toilets are installed, signage clearly explaining the flushing options shall be prominently placed and maintained.

c. Lavatory sink faucets shall have flow rates of 1.5 gallon/minute or less

d. Appliances that utilize water must meet current ENERGY STAR performance criteria.

e. Leaking fixtures (including outdoor spigots) shall be fixed immediately. Employees should report leaks to Facilities Management, Parks or Conservation Lands upon discovery.

f. Language referencing these water conservation policies should be included in bid and contract language with outside contractors performing plumbing tasks.

3. Landscaping. Landscapes shall incorporate the Florida Friendly Landscaping principles. Permanent landscape irrigation shall not be installed, except for athletic fields or edible landscapes. Temporary above ground irrigation may be used for the establishment of new landscapes.

    a. The use of native vegetation shall be maximized in new landscaping.

    b. The use of fertilizers shall be minimized. Fertilizers shall only be applied by GIBMP trained employees/contractors on an as needed basis to address deficiencies.

    c. The use of herbicides and pesticides shall be minimized and shall only be applied by licensed applicators to spot treat issues as a last resort. Integrated Pest Management shall be routinely practiced.

    d. Landscaping wastes (including grass clippings) shall not be discharged to streets, stormwater systems, or surface waters.

    e. All irrigation systems that are routinely operated (sports fields) must be inspected for leaks and misaligned heads at least twice a year, with a preference for quarterly inspections.

    f. Language referencing these landscaping policies should be included in bid and contract language with outside contractors performing landscaping tasks.

4. Exceptions to the Guidelines

a. If it is not feasible to meet an element of this policy or a more innovative approach is available, the County Manager or designee may approve a variance from these policies upon a finding that:

    i. An alternative method or approach achieves the same, or greater, water conservation provided by this Policy; or

    ii. That the materials required to meet the policy as written are prohibitively expensive, unavailable at the time of need, or are not compatible with the space being built or renovated;

b. Any variance approved by the County Manager, or designee, is limited to the specific project for which it is granted and shall be communicated to the Board of County Commissioners prior to approval.