

1. Requested Motion:

Meeting Date: Nov. 5, 2012

Approve Town participation with other Lee County cities and Lee County government, on a campaign to educate the public on the connection between excessive fertilizer use in commercial and urban landscapes including its resulting impact on our coastal water quality and economy.

Why the action is necessary:

To enable the Town Council to establish a position on the subject of excessive fertilizer use education.

What the action accomplishes:

This action enables our various local government entities to work together on a public education campaign that will reach county-wide.

2. Agenda:

- Consent
- Administrative

3. Requirement/Purpose:

- Resolution
- Ordinance
- Other

4. Submitter of Information:

- Council
- Town Staff
- Town Attorney

5. Background:

Most cities in Lee County have local fertilizer ordinances to regulate fertilizer application within their respective jurisdictions. Not every jurisdiction has a public education program however, and those that do exist mainly focus on informing the public about the existence of the ordinances.

This education campaign will instead focus on the role that fertilizer plays in regards to impact upon our water quality and how poor water quality will impact the environment and well as the quality of life and economy of this area.


6. Alternative Action:

Do not approve participation

7. Management Recommendations:

Approve Town participation

8. Recommended Approval:

Town Manager	Town Attorney	Finance Director	Public Works Director	Community Development Director	Parks and Recreation Director	Town Clerk
						

9. Council Action:

- Approved
- Denied
- Deferred
- Other

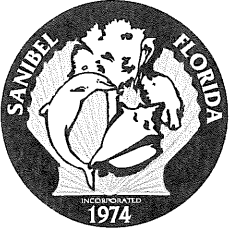
TOWN OF
FORT MYERS BEACH

OCT - 1 2012

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COUNCIL MEMBERS
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TOWN MANAGER
TOWN CLERK

September 28, 2012



City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road
Sanibel, Florida 33957-4096

www.mysanibel.com

AREA CODE - 239

CITY COUNCIL	472-4135
ADMINISTRATIVE	472-3700
BUILDING	472-4555
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	472-3111
FINANCE	472-9615
LEGAL	472-4359
NATURAL RESOURCES	472-3700
RECREATION	472-0345
PLANNING	472-4136
POLICE	472-3111
PUBLIC WORKS	472-6397

The Honorable Terrance Stewart, City Manager
Town of Fort Myers Beach
2523 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers, Florida 33931-3354

Dear Mr. Stewart:

Members of the Sanibel City Council have engaged in conversations with local officials and community leaders over the past few months regarding the importance of having a region wide comprehensive Citizen Education Program directed at the responsible use of fertilizer on commercial and residential urban landscapes.

The aim of the Program is to promote and develop an understanding that appropriately limited and responsible application of fertilizer would render extensive enforcement programs unnecessary.

Several communities have indicated a desire to become partners in this endeavor including Lee County and the Cities of Cape Coral and Sanibel, as well as Sanibel-Captiva Chamber of Commerce and Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation.

I would like to ask for the City of Fort Myers Beach to consider joining this worthwhile enterprise. For this to be really effective it is desirable for everyone to have some "skin in the game." At the same time I recognize the budget constraints we all have, but a modest contribution from all stakeholders will allow for a professional Citizen Education Program for our region to be put in place.

Yours Sincerely,

Mick Denham
Vice Mayor

Enclosure

ps/MD

City of Sanibel

Proposal

Comprehensive Citizen Education Program to Encourage Responsible use of Fertilizer to Protect the Quality of the Waters of South West Florida

August 29, 2012

Overview

Most Cities and Counties in our area have local ordinances that regulate fertilizer application within their respective jurisdictions. Sanibel and Lee County have educational campaigns geared towards educating citizens and contractors about local fertilizer ordinances. While these educational campaigns are useful in educating the public about the ordinances, they fall short of educating citizens on the roll that fertilizer plays in regards to water quality and how poor water quality can impact our local economy and our very way of life

The City of Sanibel would like Gulf Coast Cities and Counties to consider partnering with the City on a citizen education campaign to educate the public on the connection between excessive fertilizer use in commercial and urban landscapes and its resulting impact on our coastal water quality and economy.

Background:

- Property values and tax income in all Florida counties bordering the Gulf of Mexico are largely dependent on tourism. Similarly, tourism is greatly influenced by water quality.
- Excessive nitrogen from fertilizer used in urban lawns and landscapes has a detrimental effect on the coastal waters in Southwest Florida. This is particularly true during Florida's rainy season (June – October).
- Excess nitrogen encourages the growth of algal blooms including drift algae, blue-green algae and has been implicated in red tide blooms, all of which have harmful impacts on our beaches, our wildlife, and our very way of life.
- Between 2003 and 2007 the Caloosahatchee estuary experienced some of the worst algae blooms ever recorded.
- Subsequent research funded by Lee County and the City of Sanibel clearly demonstrated that stormwater runoff containing nitrogen from fertilizer contributed to these extensive algal blooms. The research team who conducted the work recommended that water quality best management practices should include controls on urban fertilizer application.
- Responsible use of fertilizer, including rainy season blackout periods imposed by local ordinances, is a cost effective way of controlling nutrient pollution of our waterways and estuaries.
- Equally effective, possibly more so, would be to increase awareness among urban fertilizer users of the risk to our local waters of fertilizer runoff. Among these users are the many citizens who regularly apply fertilizer to promote the health and growth of their lawns and landscapes.