



LAKE COUNTY FLORIDA

Where the best comes into view

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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COUNTY MESSAGE:

From the County Manager's Desk

We are pleased to present the second edition of the Lake County Quarterly Newsletter. As I mentioned in the first edition, our goal is to provide citizens with inside information about

Lake County Government so that you get a flavor of the types of things we deal with on a daily basis.

This newsletter features the activities of two operations: Traffic signs and how they are maintained and fabricated on County premises, and the intricacies

associated with County computers and our efforts to efficiently maintain our technical capabilities. Additionally we will update you on a new ordinance related to water conservation and on functions of one of the County's key staff positions: that of Architect.

I hope you enjoy this information. While often

behind the scenes, the activities are critical to the smooth operation of our governmental responsibilities and to the quality of life we enjoy in Lake County. If you would like to learn more about County government, please feel free to call my office at (352) 343-9888. ▲

Cindy Hall,
County Manager



INSIDE SCOOP:

Saving a Precious Commodity

The Lake County Department of Conservation & Compliance, Code Enforcement Services Division, began enforcing landscape irrigation rules in May, after the Lake County Board of County Commissioners approved an ordinance in April giving

the Division authority to enforce the rules established by the St. Johns River Water Management District.

The first violation of the ordinance is a written warning. The second violation is a minimum \$50 with subsequent violations doubling each time to a maximum of \$1,000 for each violation.

Residents can make a landscape irrigation complaint by calling the Code Enforcement Services Division at (352) 343-9639. A searchable database of open and closed code enforcement cases and complaints is available on the Lake County Web site at www.lakecountyfl.gov, keyword: code.

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FEATURE FUNCTION:

A 'Clear Sign' of Hard Work

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Traffic Operations Section is responsible for the fabrication and installation of traffic control devices, including signs and pavement markings. The Section also maintains all traffic signals in the County, including traffic signals, school flashers and warning flashers in every municipality in Lake County, except the City of Groveland.

Next time you drive past a street-name road sign, consider what it takes to keep that sign maintained or replaced when it is damaged or worn out.

The Traffic Operations Section of the Lake County Department of Public Works, Road Operations Division, is responsible for many of the markings, signs and signals motorists see on roadways. Tucked inside the Section's facility on County Road 561 in Tavares is the County's "sign shop."

The County purchases standard road signs, such as stop signs and speed-limit signs; however, street name signs, informational signs, route markers and directional signs are fabricated in-house. The Traffic Operations Section maintains 25,766 road signs for Lake County.

"We have fabricated about 60 signs a day and have done as many as 400 signs a month," said Chris Stephens, Lake County Sign Fabricator.

The sign shop is currently undertaking a large project of replacing all the street name signs that were made with engineer-grade material on County-maintained roads. Using a new reflective sheeting background — high-intensity prismatic — the sign shop is replacing the street name signs to increase their visibility at night and to increase their life expectancy.

The process begins with the three sign technicians. Each technician is designated a specific zone in the County. The technicians conduct physical inspections on each road sign in their zone on an 18-month cycle.

"As they are doing their inspections, they test a sign's reflectivity using a special instrument," said Kathy Wilson, Office Associate with the Traffic Operations Section.

If the sign doesn't meet reflectivity standards, it is marked for replacement. The sign shop receives the order and using the blank back of old signs it begins making two new street name signs, since

two signs — a front and a back — are needed for each sign.

Using a desktop computer connected to a 54-inch cutter plotter, the street sign name is cut twice into green adhesive sheeting. The back of two old signs are cleaned and then covered with the high-intensity prismatic, green film and the County logo. The new signs are taken to the location by the technicians and replaced. The Traffic Operations Section is about 55 percent complete with upgrading all the street name signs in the County to the high-intensity prismatic.

"Although they are little more expensive, hopefully we will have less replacements costs over the long haul as we will have to replace them less," Wilson said.

In addition to replacing worn out signs, the sign shop is constantly fabricating signs to replace those that are damaged in a traffic accident, vandalized or stolen. A stop sign, for example, can cost more than \$60 to replace.

"The costs can add up over time," Stephens said. "Occasionally, we do get reimbursed from an insurance company if a sign is damaged in a traffic accident, but it is a very small percentage of the entire cost of replacing the sign."

In addition to the unnecessary costs, stealing a sign can lead to unsafe driving conditions. Getting caught stealing a sign can be a petty theft charge, but if

the theft leads to an injury, then the thieves may be found criminally liable. ▲



MAKING CENTS:

The Cost of Computing Power

With nearly 800 computer users in Lake County Government, the task of maintaining these computer systems is a monumental task for the Office of Information Technology, Information Systems Division.

The cost of outfitting employees with personal or laptop computers is more than just purchasing monitors and computers as a big chunk of the Division's budget is software maintenance for desktop systems and servers. In all, the Office of Information Technology manages more than \$3.2 million in assets.

In addition to maintaining software licenses for operating systems, the Division looks after devices and software that benefit all computer users, such as those that scan for spam e-mails, filter Internet access and scan for viruses. The Division also maintains computer systems for several other agencies, including the Supervisor of Elections, Lake-Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Guardian Ad Litem. While developing and updating the infrastructure to support the County's computer systems is expensive and time consuming, the cost of a single desktop computer can

F A S T F A C T S

About 70 percent of Lake County employees are assigned a computer. Replacing a standard desktop computer and monitor can cost about \$750. Other costs include software licenses, which averages out to about \$800.

there's a good chance you're going to spend significant time and money repairing it."

The vicious cycle of replacing outdated and failing computers can be costly, but change for the better is on its

be pricey in its own right.

"There is a lot of maintenance on personal computers," said Leon Platt, Information Systems Director, who deploys three technicians to deal with everyday computer issues.

From a standard desktop at \$500 to the more expensive \$2,500 engineering workstation, the cost of supplying computer power to employees is multifaceted as, unfortunately, these systems do not last forever. The computer technicians receive about 15 work orders a day for computer maintenance. These work orders come from 43 different locations from as far north as the fire station in Astor to the County's southern border in the Four Corners community.

"Two problems that kill personal computers are moving parts and heat," Platt said. "By the end of six years,

way as new alternatives to desktop computing are becoming more advanced. A \$350 Pano Cube is about the size of a soda can. According to magazine PC World, "the device has no operating system or drivers, no CPU, no memory, no hard disk, and no graphics chip. The computer, if it can be called that, consists only of the interfaces to connect a mouse, keyboard and monitor, and external USB drive." The small device runs software and accesses information from a local server. With no moving parts and needing only a few watts of electricity to operate, the new Pano Cube eliminates the moving parts and heat factors that often spell doom for personal computers.

"Instead of having a personal computer for every person, you have a server running 25 of these smaller devices," Platt said. ▲

PINPOINT POST:

Road to Capital Improvements

What: Lake County Public Works Offices

Where: 437 Ardice Ave., Eustis, FL 32778

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday

Phone: (352) 483-9000

Staffed: 47 full-time positions

Services available: The Engineering and Funding & Production divisions are housed at the Department of Public Works' administrative offices. The maps sales counter is popular at this location as it provides various maps for review and purchase, including tax maps, plats, right of way maps and current & historic aerials.

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A brief summary of the St. Johns River Water Management District lawn and landscaping irrigation rules are:

- Irrigation is prohibited between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. zone per irrigation day.
- During daylight-saving time, irrigation is limited to no more than two days per week on scheduled days.
 - ◇ Residential irrigation at odd numbered addresses or no addresses is allowed on Wednesday and Saturday.
 - ◇ Residential irrigation at even numbered addresses is allowed on Thursday and Sunday.
 - ◇ Nonresidential irrigation is allowed on Tuesday and Friday.
- During Eastern Standard Time, irrigation is limited to no more than one day per week on scheduled days.
 - ◇ Residential irrigation at odd numbered addresses or no addresses is allowed on Saturday.
 - ◇ Residential irrigation at even numbered addresses is allowed on Sunday.
 - ◇ Nonresidential irrigation is allowed on Tuesday.
- Irrigation is limited to no more than ¾ inch of water per zone per irrigation day.
- Irrigation is limited to no more than one hour per irrigation zone per irrigation day.
- Irrigation is limited to only that amount necessary to meet landscape needs.
- When reclaimed water is available for irrigation use, the use of private irrigation wells is not authorized.
- Irrigation limitations apply to water withdrawn from ground or surface water, from a private well or pump, or from a public or private utility.
- Irrigation limitations apply to all landscape irrigation not currently regulated by a consumptive-use permit. Typically, this includes residential, commercial and industrial establishments.
- Persons irrigating with an automatic lawn irrigation system installed after May 1991 shall install, maintain and operate a rain sensor device or switch that overrides the system when adequate rainfall has occurred.

For more information about watering restrictions and exceptions, log on to www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions

IN THE FOLD:

Designing for the Future



Position Architect

Department & Division Facilities Development & Management

Employee Richard LeBlanc, AIA

What are the main responsibilities of your job?

My main responsibilities are to facilitate a smooth, efficient and cost-effective management in overseeing the planning and design of new and existing County building projects, along with associated space planning needs.

What are you currently working on?

Currently, I am working on the space planning projects for the Sheriff; overseeing consultant services for the Animal Services addition, Scalehouse renovation and the Yalaha Community Center; providing planning information for future proposed projects; and assisting, as needed, with the development of our downtown projects.

What has been one of your favorite projects to work on?

It's a bit of a toss-up between the Cagan Crossings Community Library and the Umatilla Health Clinic. I enjoyed the experience of working with the user group for both projects and the architects were very responsive in attending to the respective project needs. The Cagan Crossings Community Library turned out to be a handsome building, but it is the Umatilla Health Clinic that is the "green apple" of my eye.