

From the **MEDITERRA NORTH AND SOUTH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS**

November 2010

DEAR RESIDENT

You are receiving this newsletter as our records indicate that you own property or live within the boundaries of the Mediterra North or South Community Development District (CDD). We would like to take this opportunity to briefly share with you what the CDD is, what it does for you and how it fits into your Community.

WHAT IS A CDD?

A CDD is a local unit of special purpose government that is established pursuant to Chapter 190 of the Florida Statutes and by local County Ordinance. Mediterra North, (boundaries are within Lee County) was established in 2001 and Mediterra South (boundaries are within Collier County) was established in 1999. The CDDs are each governed by a five (5) member Board of Supervisors (the “Board”). Currently, for Mediterra North, Mr. Thomas Van Tassel serves as Chairman, Mr. Dan Abrams serves as Vice Chairman and Mr. Brian Neary, Mr. Marc Hirsch and Mr. Gary Kaenzig all serve as Assistant Secretaries. For Mediterra South, Mr. Kenneth Nails serves as Chairman, Mr. Frank Godshall serves as Vice Chairman and Mr. Dallas Luby, Mr. William Rowe and Mr. Mark Wilson all serve as Assistant Secretaries.

Additionally, as a small local unit of special purpose government, the CDDs hire several professional administrative consultants to serve part time in what would typically be a full time capacity in a larger unit of government. These specific consultants provide Management/Accounting, Legal and Engineering services.

As is very common, there are currently over 575 CDDs in existence throughout Florida, the original Developer established the Mediterra CDDs with an initial purpose of issuing tax exempt revenue bonds to finance the community’s basic infrastructure during development. During the development of the community and as infrastructure was completed, the CDDs acquired potable water and sewer facilities, which it conveyed to the local utility. It also acquired, and operates and maintains, the storm water management system.

The CDDs collect non ad valorem assessments that are a part of your County property tax bill each year, to offset the annual repayment obligation of the bonds and to also fund the ongoing operations and maintenance of the aforementioned infrastructure the CDDs continue to own and operate. The CDDs ownership and operation responsibilities for the infrastructure will continue in perpetuity.

For more information on how Community Development Districts are created and operate, you may view Chapter 190, under the Florida Statutes section, at www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.

WHAT IS THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

The CDDs storm water management system is comprised of 79 lakes, totaling 151 acres, and 22 wetlands, totaling 211 acres, the interconnecting pipe work, between the lakes and wetlands, and the control structures.

The storm water management system is maintained to meet very strict permit requirements through the use of licensed contractors, who specialize in lake and wetland maintenance. The lakes are reviewed and treated as needed, on a weekly basis. The wetlands are reviewed and maintained to be free of State recognized exotic and invasive vegetation on a semi-annual basis.

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Lake bank erosion can be a very serious issue for a community as the cost restoring lake banks, can be significant. Both planted littoral shelf areas and pine straw can be effective lake bank erosion control methods with pine straw providing immediate erosion control impact.

Storm water lakes fluctuate between the dry and wet seasons with the lowest water levels typically in April and May which can be 1 foot, or more, lower than the normal lake level or Control Elevation. When, for water quality purposes, a storm water lake includes a planted littoral shelf then there is an area along the perimeter of the lake that has a flat or up to an 8:1 sloped area to 2 feet below the Control Elevation. This area is intended to support the installation and management of beneficial aquatic plants. As indicated earlier, the beneficial aquatic plants are an effective means of erosion control along exposed lake banks as their root zones will hold and stabilize the soil and minimize negative effects normally associated with water run-off, especially during times of low water levels, as well as natural wave action. An equally important benefit of the aquatic plants includes their ability to passively improve the water quality, through their absorption of fertilizers, chemicals and other impurities that run-off of lawns, golf courses and roadways during storm events. Additional benefits include providing habitat for fish and birds as well aesthetic benefits, particularly during the seasonal blooming periods.

Pine straw is recognized as effective mulch for weed and erosion control while having somewhat of a mistaken reputation of high acidity. Although pine straw is more acidic than many other mulches it breaks down more slowly so that the overall impact to soil and water is not significantly different than other wood product mulches. The fact that pine straw does not float and forms a mat that resists washing away makes it a good choice for seasonally exposed lake banks.

As you can see both means of managing lake bank erosion are effective, however, the use of aquatic plants is more effective and efficient for the long term. That is why the CDD Boards adopted a budget, for Fiscal Year 2011, that diverts more funding emphasis to supplemental aquatic plantings and less emphasis on the annual pine straw mulch program. It will take a few years, however, it is anticipated that in the near future we will recognize an aquatic plant population that will allow the CDDs to move completely away from the annual pine straw mulch program.

WE NEED YOUR HELP.

As indicated above, the CDDs are spending a portion of your annual assessment monies on the aquatic plant program. Please help us in insuring the success of this program by not removing, mowing or spraying these plants. Additionally please be sure to contact us if you observe anyone else damaging or destroying the aquatic plants.

For more information regarding the CDDs or to report a concern with a lake or wetland, please contact the District Manager's office at (239) 498-9020.