

SEE Water Committee: Pelican Cove Case Study

Frequently Asked Questions

The SEE Water Committee is working on a case study of water use at Pelican Cove, a condominium community in Osprey. Learn more about what Pelican Cove has done to promote “right water for right use.”

Pelican Cove by the Numbers:

- ❖ 1200 people
- ❖ 731 condo units
- ❖ 88 buildings
- ❖ 6 pools
- ❖ 75 acres on Little Sarasota Bay
- ❖ 2 ¼ miles of shoreline (bay, creek, ponds, harbor)

Pelican Cove was developed in the mid 1970's with no stormwater retention design and a 100% manually operated landscape irrigation system with 200+ zones covering approximately 35 acres.

Because Pelican Cove has limited stormwater retention design, every inch of rain that falls on the property creates one million gallons of stormwater runoff into the bay. In light of emerging environmental factors, residents of Pelican Cove have worked hard to redesign this to put less water into the bay.

Pelican Cove 2008 water sources and usage:

- ❖ 20 million gallons potable water from one master meter, none used for landscape irrigation. (Purchased from Sarasota County)
- ❖ 15 million gallons reclaimed water for landscape irrigation. (Purchased from Sarasota County)
- ❖ An unknown quantity of water for landscape irrigation (Drawn from three wells - metered as of March 2009)
- ❖ 85 million gallons of rainwater on our property
- ❖ 10,000+ trees on our property. (Promote rainwater retention)

Why did the SEE Water Committee, in cooperation with Pelican Cove, focus on installing well meters?

Pelican Cove is pulling an unknown quantity of water from its wells for irrigation. Well water is commonly thought of as 'free water' because there is no immediate and apparent cost to draw it from the ground. However, the SEE Water Committee would like to determine exactly how much water is being withdrawn and to correlate that data with the actual electric power usage.

What process did you have to go through to get the grants to install well meters at Pelican Cove?

Several Sarasota County organizations recently came together to fund the SEE Water Committee's Pelican Cove Case Study.

The three well water meters were installed in March 2009 and funded by:

\$1500 = Sarasota County Neighborhood Services NEST mini-grant program

\$1400 = Gulf Coast Community Foundation

\$1000 = SCOPE

\$3400 = Pelican Cove

\$7300 TOTAL

To receive the County mini-grant, Pelican Cove resident Chuck Butterfield and the Water Subcommittee researched grant programs, completed a written application form, developed a resident education quiz, wrote an article for Pelican Cove's newsletter, made resident education presentations about irrigation water use and prepared a completion report for the County.

The Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice is a community foundation that strongly supports leading our region in sustainable initiatives. They very quickly responded to SEE Water's request for the outstanding \$1400 needed to complete the purchase of the meters.

The SCOPE contribution was secured through a grant SCOPE received from the Case Foundation as part of the Make It Your Own Awards. The grant is intended to support the work done by the Summit for Environmental Action committees.

Briefly describe the community training and input process for water changes at Pelican Cove.

Pelican Cove's basic governance process involves ten standing volunteer committees as well as other sub-committees. These committees investigate and work on recommendations for Board approval and implementation by paid staff. Water conservation and Low Impact Development (LID) have primarily involved our Grounds, Bay & Water, Rules and Buildings & Facilities standing committees with sub-committees working on specific topics.

What initiatives are you currently considering to change your water usage and decrease your storm water runoff?

Pelican Cove's primary focus on water usage the last couple of years has involved water loss from leaks in our water system. The community has gone from an estimated 40% loss to 33% loss by implementing a condo unit water pipe replacement program and finding/fixing pool leaks and other underground pipe leaks. Pelican Cove just received a \$5000 grant from South West Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to assist in additional leak investigation efforts.

Regarding water usage, Pelican Cove is looking into individual unit water meters, another toilet tank parts replacement or complete toilet change-out program, as well as an irrigation system upgrade.

To decrease stormwater runoff they are considering landscaping a low maintenance zone around the bayfront, installing a bioswale to capture water from major runoff areas, storm drain filters flowing to ponds and rainwater harvesting for pools.

All of the above activities are in various stages of investigation. Some already involve grants we have received from SWFWMD, Sarasota County and Sarasota Bay Estuary Program.

Where would you like the SEE Water Committee to go from here with the Case Study at Pelican Cove?

- ❖ Assist Pelican Cove in assessing the amount of water accessible by Pelican Cove through various sources (well, rain, potable, etc)
- ❖ Assist Pelican Cove in assessing the amount of water used by Pelican Cove and the sources of that water use (irrigation, pool filling, leakage, indoor use, etc.)
- ❖ Make cost-effective recommendations regarding water conservation and using alternative water sources.
- ❖ Share what is learned with other communities in similar circumstances.

The SEE Water Committee was formed from the goals set at the Summit for Environmental Action in February 2008. Their mission is to develop rainwater, stormwater, graywater and reuse as alternative water sources. Learn more at www.connectthedrops.com

SCOPE is a nonprofit organization in Sarasota County, Florida. They convened the Summit for Environmental Action. Their mission is to connect and inspire citizens to create a better community. Learn more at www.scopexcel.org