

## “GREEN” LAWN CARE TIPS TO HELP WITH STORMWATER RUNOFF

Many Florence citizens take great pride in maintaining a lawn that is lush, green and beautiful during the spring and summer months. In order to minimize environmental impacts associated with maintaining your yard, the City suggests the following lawn care facts be observed and tips be practiced. Observing these facts and following these tips can result in a beautiful landscape and lawn. This in turn will result in a more environmentally-sound Florence for future generations.



A well-manicured Florence lawn

### FACTS

- **Reduce waste by recycling nutrients.** Mulching mowers help to recycle grass clippings on your lawn.
- **Reduce Energy Consumption.** Proper landscaping can also help reduce noise, heat, and possibly reduce energy consumption through its cooling effects often associated with vegetated urban areas.
- **Reduce stormwater runoff.** Lawns and landscaping help reduce soil erosion through the development of deep roots that hold the soil in place during heavy rain storms.
- **Clean The Air.** Lawns help reduce and trap airborne pollutants and dust.

### TIPS

- **Conserve water.** Invest in a rain gauge, as most lawns require only one to 1.5 inches of water per week. Rain barrels are also an option for watering lawns and other landscaping.
- **Use fertilizers responsibly and don't over feed your lawn.** Information on fertilizing lawns can be found at [www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/landscape/lawns/hgic1201](http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/landscape/lawns/hgic1201).
- **Mow responsibly.** To help retain moisture and absorb sunshine in your lawn mow at the right height. Most grasses in the south do best at two to three inches in height.
- **Prevent landscape pollution.** Dispose of oils, paint and other toxic materials in the approved community waste management systems. Don't dispose into storm drains.

Continued from front page story: "New Wastewater Facility"

The second contract is currently in the design and permitting stage. Contract two work includes primary and secondary clarifiers, aeration basins, an influent flow equalization storage tank, anaerobic sludge digesters, sludge dewatering centrifuges, odor control facilities and a laboratory and control building. Plans and specifications for contract two are scheduled for completion in October 2009 and bids will be received in December 2009. The planned start date for construction is March 2010, with project completion three years later in March 2013.

The estimated construction cost for contract two is \$60 million. The majority of the cost for this project is being financed through revenue bonds, bank loans and/or low-interest state infrastructure loans. Beginning in 2007, Florence City Council implemented a three-year phased adjustment of water and sewer rates to provide funding for this work. The last of these adjustments became effective in July, 2009. The

City continues to seek federal grant funds for the project to provide full funding for the project without additional rate adjustments.

"We are enthused about moving forward with Phase I of Florence's new wastewater management facility," said Mayor Stephen Wukela. "With growth a constant in the Florence area, we want to make sure we provide the best possible wastewater services to our customers. In all, this plan for our water and wastewater utilities is a positive step forward for the City of Florence and the Pee Dee region."

## CITY DISCONTINUES FLO-GRO

As the City of Florence moves forward with the construction phase of its new Wastewater Management Facility, Flo-Gro (compost material) will no longer be available for residential use after the existing inventory is depleted. This disruption of the City's Flo-Gro program will continue throughout the construction phase of the project.

The City will continue assisting Florence residents with gardening needs as mulch will continue to be available free-of-charge at the City's Public Works Department, which is located at 1440 S. McCurdy Road. For more information about mulch, call the City's Public Works Department at 843-665-3236.

## UPCOMING CITY EVENTS

**Scrap Metal Collection Week for City residents**  
October 19-23, 2009

**South Carolina Pecan Festival**  
Downtown Florence  
November 7, 2009

**USSSA Baseball Tournament**  
Freedom Florence  
November 14-15, 2009

**Christmas Tree Lighting**  
City-County Complex  
December 1, 2009



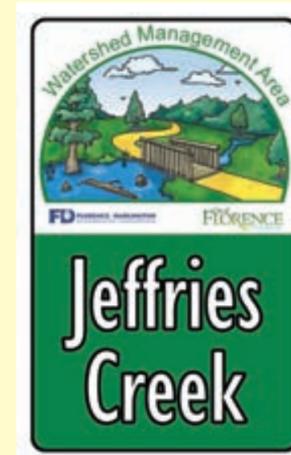
## ALLIANCE FORMED TO PROTECT LOCAL WATER QUALITY



The City of Florence, along with Florence County and Darlington County, has partnered with Clemson University's Carolina Clear program to educate area residents about stormwater pollution and involve citizens in reducing their impact on the environment. Together with additional education partners within the community, this new alliance is represented as the Florence Darlington Stormwater Consortium.

Stormwater is water runoff generated from rain and excessive irrigation, coupled with everything it picks up along the way. This can include pet waste, dirt, leaking car fluids and many other items and pollutants left on the ground. This mixture then flows into the nearest ditch, stream or creek. Without treatment, polluted stormwater can negatively affect the quality of local waterbodies such as Jeffries Creek, Middle Swamp and Pee Dee River. Stormwater pollution is thought to be the greatest threat to the health of waterbodies. However, there are actions we can take to improve water quality.

Since stormwater pollution is "people pollution," everyone plays a role in reducing his individual impacts on the environment and ensuring that our local waterbodies are kept in a clean and natural condition.



The Florence Darlington Stormwater Consortium works to help curb people pollution

## FLORENCE READIES FOR NEW WASTEWATER FACILITY

During September 2009, the City of Florence began construction on Phase I of the City's new wastewater management facility project.

The wastewater facility improvements have been divided into two phases of work, which will chronologically and geographically partially overlap each other. Bids for contract one, which will include new influent headworks, new effluent disinfection facilities, rehabilitation of secondary clarifiers, a post aeration basin and sludge holding tanks, have been received. The contractor selected for this project is Seaside

Utilities of Moncks Corner, S.C., which submitted a bid of \$16.5 million.

Project financing will be provided by low interest and no interest loans from the State Revolving Loan Fund (SRLF). The debt will be repaid over a period of 20 years from utility system revenues. Of the monies used, \$4 million of the loan is interest-free as a result of federal stimulus funding. Construction will begin in early September 2009 and is scheduled to be completed by September 2011.

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## Florence City Council

Stephen J. Wukela,  
Mayor

Billy D. Williams,  
District 1

Edward Robinson,  
District 2

Frank J. Brand, II,  
District 3

William C. Bradham, Jr.,  
Member-At-Large

Octavia Williams-Blake,  
Member-At-Large

Steve Powers,  
Member-At-Large

The Mayor and City Council serve four-year terms. City Council meets the second Monday of every month at 1 p.m. in Room 604 at the City-County Complex, 180 North Irby Street, Florence, SC.

[www.cityofflorence.com](http://www.cityofflorence.com)



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# STORMWATER GUIDELINE IMPLEMENTATION GROWS THROUGHOUT THE CITY



*A stamped storm grate near the Florence Civic Center*

Since early 2006, the City of Florence has been working to comply with and inform residents about the stormwater regulations implemented by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These regulations are referred to as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II requirements.

Administered in South Carolina by the State Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), Phase II requirements significantly alter the way stormwater runoff has been handled in larger metropolitan areas, including Florence. In response to these regulations, the City is reducing the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, protecting water quality and satisfying other requirements of the Clean Water Act.

Under the Phase II program, stormwater discharges are authorized, but are subject to regulations outlined in a permit issued and monitored by DHEC. The City is required to improve the quality of stormwater runoff by implementing a program that addresses six program components: public education and outreach; public participation and involvement; illicit discharge detection and elimination; construction site runoff control; post-construction runoff control; and pollution prevention and good housekeeping.

In complying with these regulations, the City has worked closely with other regulated governmental entities (Florence and Darlington Counties), educational institutions (Clemson University), consulting engineers and environmental interest groups. Since 2006, the City has:

- Developed an educational pamphlet that outlines the enforcement compliance process for distribution to construction site owners/operators
- Implemented programming of educational stormwater issues by way of Carolina Clear (Clemson University)
- Developed and posted stormwater signs at watersheds within the City
- Completed an initial inventory of stormwater outfall pipes
- Developed an outfall investigation schedule
- Developed a dry weather field screening procedure
- Completed investigation of 25 percent of the total outfalls within the City
- Developed and implemented a database for the storage of plan review, site inspection and enforcement activities
- Developed a priority inspection schedule for erosion and water quality at construction sites
- Developed an Enforcement Response Guide to ensure uniform application and enforcement of stormwater regulations
- Developed a maintenance agreement for post-construction management of stormwater ponds and other water quality practices
- Developed and implemented Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans for the Wastewater Treatment and Public Works operations sites
- Reviewed all City locations for impact of daily operations on stormwater quality
- Developed a training schedule for all City employees as related to stormwater
- Formed the Florence/Darlington Consortium to implement regional watershed education and protection by addressing the common interests of the City of Florence, Florence County and Darlington County
- Created a Storm Water Advisory Board (SWAB) to review policies, make recommendations and evaluate concerns of the Florence community

With all of these initiatives now in place to respond to the Phase II guidelines, the City is also working to meet several more goals during the remainder of 2009 and into 2010, which include:

- Complying with the NPDES stormwater permit and protecting water quality within the City watershed area to the maximum extent practical
- Obtaining a satisfactory rating during the upcoming SCDHEC inspection
- Successfully submitting and updating the required annual report to SCDHEC
- Meeting all implementation goals for the "Six Minimum Control Measures"
- Developing successful channels of communication with the Florence community
- Improving the knowledge of the community as it relates to stormwater issues
- Increasing public participation and involvement with stormwater events throughout the area
- Developing an interactive stormwater web site
- Showing improvement of water quality within the Florence watershed
- Increasing the use of low impact development by developers within the community to minimize impact of future developments

If you have questions about Phase II implementation or about what you can do to help limit stormwater runoff, contact the Public Works Department at 843-665-3236.



*A stormwater compliance officer inspects a silt fence for proper placement*

## FLORENCE VETERANS PARK HOSTS UPCOMING EVENTS



*Veterans Park's Wall of Honor*

The Florence Veterans Park Committee and the City of Florence held the official opening and dedication ceremony for the Florence Veterans Park on November 11, 2008. Members from various branches of the military, both active and retired, took part in the opening ceremonies which included the presentation of colors, Pledge of Allegiance, invocation and the raising of individual service branch flags.

The keynote speaker for the event was Columbia native Major Gen. (Ret.) Charles F. Bolden, Jr. USMC. Following his remarks, former Florence Mayor Frank Willis and sculptor Alex Palkovich unveiled the Park's center obelisk and bronze eagle. This was followed by Veterans Park committee co-chairs Rick Walden and Tom Marschel, both U.S. Army Vietnam veterans, unveiling of the Wall of Honor.

The City contracted with local construction firm FBI, Inc. for the construction of the park on approximately six acres. The site is comprised of land donated for the Park by the estate of the late R.P. Byrd and by World War II veteran and

former Florence S.C. State Congressman Edward L. Young. The project was first announced by former Mayor Willis in June 2005.

The \$2 million project cost for the park, which is adjacent to the Florence Civic Center, was funded through the City's hospitality funds. Besides the obelisk and the Wall of Honor, Park features also include: an amphitheater; a water wall and pool; steel wall with the oath of enlistment; and a landscaped circular trellis area. These areas, along with several other areas surrounded by pathways or landscaping, allow for the future placement of monuments, memorials and plaques.

The park was designed to feature monuments and memorials to the wars of the 20th century, including World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the first Persian Gulf War, as well as an amphitheater surrounded by commemorative flags. In addition, a large, three column obelisk, which supports a bronzed American Bald Eagle, is the centerpiece featured in the park.

Funding for the monuments and plaques is being raised through private donations and the sale of plaques for the Wall of Honor by the Veterans Park Committee. These plaques are to recognize, honor or memorialize those who are serving, or have served, in the U.S. armed forces. Brochures and applications for those interested in purchasing a plaque for the Wall of Honor are available at the City of Florence Parks & Beautification Department, the Chamber of Commerce and Brown Memorial.

In the coming months, several open-to-the-public events are scheduled to take place at Veterans Park. The dates and events are listed in the adjoining box. For more information, visit [www.cityofflorence.com](http://www.cityofflorence.com) or call 843-665-3236.

- November 10, 2009**  
Marine Corps Birthday
- November 11, 2009**  
Veterans Day Ceremony

**November 11, 2009 through February 2, 2009**  
The American Soldier - A Photographic Tribute  
Inside the Civic Center

**December 7, 2009**  
Pearl Harbor Day and Retreat Ceremony



*The three column obelisk and bronzed American Bald Eagle at Veterans Park*

## CITY ADDS ELECTRIC CARS IN EFFORTS TO GO GREEN

With Americans making a conscious effort to be more earth-friendly and reduce their carbon footprint, the City has also started taking more steps in going green.

This new step involves the recent purchase of an electric car to replace a daily-use fleet vehicle for the City's Utility Department. Instead of purchasing a vehicle that runs on fossil fuels, it was determined that an electric car would be a more overall efficient purchase. Monies used to purchase the vehicle came from the City's equipment replacement fund.

The car, a 2009 Columbia Mega van, is used on a daily basis by meter readers working in the City's central business district. A cross between a traditional car and utility vehicle, the Mega is a welcome addition to the department's fleet.

In addition to the Utility Department adding an electric car, the Florence Police Department has added one to their vehicle fleet. A Global Electric Motorcars (GEM) model, the Police Department's car will be used for downtown patrol. Monies used to purchase the vehicle came from a federal Byrnes Justice Assistance Grant.

"The addition of these new electric powered vehicles is a positive step toward being more earth-conscious and green-centric," said Florence Mayor Stephen Wukela. "These versatile and practical vehicles are not only the perfect fit for each department's needs, but they are also helping to reduce the carbon footprint put forth by the City for future generations."



*The City's new electric car, a Columbia Mega*

## FLOOD INSURANCE FACTS

The City of Florence participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) so that flood insurance is available for local residents and businesses. Area residents need not be located in a floodplain to obtain flood insurance. It is suggested that all residents who live in low lying areas know their risk of flooding.

Flood insurance premiums are relatively minor compared to the cost of repairing flood damages, which are usually not covered by homeowners insurance policies.

For more information about NFIP or flood-related questions, call the City of Florence's Urban Planning and development office at 843-665-2047. Helpful websites are [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) and [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).