

2013 Delray Beach Sustainability Report

Growing *Greener* Every Day



Educating Future Generations



Reclaiming Water



Celebrating Earth Day



Promoting Recycling



Saving Energy



Compacting Trash Using Solar Power

Reducing Carbon Emissions



From The Delray Beach City Commission

Building a Sustainable Future

The goal from the very beginning was simple. For Delray Beach to continue to be the thriving community it has been for decades – a magnet for business, visitors and residents alike – City leaders realized they needed to protect the natural environment and preserve resources for future generations.

That simple goal and a determination to simultaneously experience significant cost savings through innovative environmental programs have been the blueprint for Delray Beach's continued environmental efforts.

Today, the City has a growing reputation as an environmental leader in South Florida and as a community, whose leaders understand the value of sustainability.

In just a few short years, Delray Beach unveiled an ambitious electric vehicle charging program – the first in Palm Beach County and one of the first in Florida – while at the same time becoming one of the few to earn a Green Local Government designation from the Florida Green Building Coalition.

One of the first cities in the region to close its ocean outfall and stop pumping treated sewage effluent into the ocean, it has also been involved in a massive water reclamation project

in which treated effluent from the regional sewage treatment plant is used for irrigation, thus protecting our drinking water supply.

Recently, Delray Beach launched the largest beach-recycling project in Palm Beach County and also expanded its use of solar trash-compactors, which can hold three times more trash than traditional receptacles.

Through partnerships with state and federal governments, with non-profit organizations and local businesses, the City has been able to implement these programs at reduced costs. In addition to helping save the environment, many of these programs are also creating tax savings that are being passed on to residents and may be targeted to fund new green initiatives.

All of these highly visible projects are helping create cultural changes throughout the community that will lead to long-term sustainability.

While the City is making great strides, true success depends on involvement by the entire community. That's why, as you read through this report, you'll see that we've listed simple ways you can be more green while you live, work and play in Delray Beach.



*Vice-Mayor Al Jacquet, Deputy Vice-Mayor Shelly Petrolia,
Mayor Cary Glickstein, Commissioner Angeleta Gray,
Commissioner Adam Frankel*

A Leader in Saving Energy

During the past winter season, when visitors from the North flocked to Florida, a new type of tourist set sights on Delray Beach.

Word had spread throughout the Northeast about Delray Beach being one of the first cities in Florida to install electric car-charging stations in public parking lots. Soon, message boards and blogs were filled with praises from electric car owners hundreds of miles away for Delray Beach as a winter destination.

"Delray Beach is becoming known as the electric-car capital of South Florida," says Charles Whalen, president of Plug-In Florida, which teamed up with the City to install three charging stations in 2011 and is planning to install another three in the Tennis Center. "We have the charging stations with the most use in the area."

The stations are just one facet of Delray Beach's sustainable energy strategy which is not only reducing carbon emissions into the atmosphere by reducing gasoline consumption but also enhancing the long-term economic stability of the community by attracting new visitors and new businesses.

"We're now South Florida's leading destination for eco-tourists," Whalen said. "During this last season, usage at our charging stations was up 600 percent and a lot of that is due to eco-tourism."

While the City continues to increase the number of electric car-charging stations – several more will be operational in the coming months – it is also focusing on expanding its fleet of alternative-fuel vehicles.

Delray Beach is in the process of studying the cost effec-

tiveness of purchasing additional hybrid vehicles while simultaneously exploring the possibility of using compressed natural gas to power some of its vehicles and the possibility of hosting compressed natural gas facilities that could service other large public or private fleets.

In addition to saving fuel, the City is also focused on reducing electricity consumption to save money and to save natural resources.

At Pompey Park, federal grant money was used to purchase high-efficiency lights for the sports fields, which now show reduced energy usage and costs by as much as 12 percent. In addition, because of a warranty that was supplied with the lights, the City has been able to save on maintenance costs as well. Throughout City buildings, steps have been taken to install low-use lighting, more efficient cooling systems and dozens of

LED street lights which have been installed on West Atlantic Avenue using federal grant dollars. Plans are in the works to install more should funding become available.

Delray Beach is the first City in South Florida to enlist the services of Planet Footprint, which helps the City track its energy and water usage as well as fuel and garbage in municipal buildings and provides reports of any anomalies, which can then be tracked and corrected, thus saving additional dollars.

Whalen, a resident who arranged for the Florida Electric Auto Association to meet monthly in the City, sees Delray Beach as leading the way when it comes to saving energy.

"Delray's leaders have the vision to see the potential of energy-saving initiatives," he said.



Saving energy is a priority for Delray Beach, which is becoming known as the "electric-car capital of South Florida."



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Observe** the speed limit and keep your vehicle well maintained.
- **Use** energy efficient lighting when possible.
- **Walk or ride** a bike for short trips.
- **Install** a solar water heater in your home. Check with your provider for possible discounts.
- **Have** an energy audit done for your home or business.



Preserving the Environment



Among Delray Beach's greatest assets is the City's two mile-long public beach, as well as its numerous parks and green spaces.

Through an innovative public-space pilot recycling program, as well as through the use of solar trash compactors, the City is taking a leadership role throughout Palm Beach County in keeping the community attractive for residents and guests while doing its part to protect the environment.

In the fall of 2012, Delray Beach, working in conjunction with the Palm Beach County Solid Waste Authority and American Beverage Association, began installing 46 public recycling bins along its public beach as well as in selected parks and public places.

As a result, aluminum cans and plastic bottles that would otherwise have been thrown away are now being recycled.

"When it comes to recycling, Delray Beach is doing a great job," says Susan Chapman, Recycling Program Development Coordinator for the Solid Waste Authority. "Its program with recycling bins on the beach is unique."

In addition to helping the environment, the City's public-areas recycling projects also help generate revenue, with the City receiving approximately \$100,000 annually from the Authority through residential recycling.

The City's innovative solar trash compactor project, created in conjunction with Waste Management, is enabling

Delray Beach to enhance its Clean City Initiative by increasing service levels within the Parks and Recreation Department that may have been decreased due to recent budget constraints.

A projected annualized salary savings of \$50,000 to \$60,000 is expected as crews that had been assigned to empty trash receptacles are now able to focus on other projects designed to help maintain community appearance.

Delray's innovative new programs, including Curb Appeal by the Block – in which volunteers work to improve the appearance of a city block in one day – not only help enhance the environment, they're also helping to improve the overall appearance of Delray Beach – which in turn positively impacts property values.



Delray Beach maintains the largest public beach recycling program in Palm Beach County.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Help keep Delray Beach attractive and protect the environment by taking a few simple steps:

- **Be** consistent in recycling.
- **Dispose** of trash and garbage properly.
- **Participate** in a volunteer beach clean-up.
- **Volunteer** to help with the City's Curb Appeal by the Block Program.
- **Use** recycled materials whenever possible.

Taking a Leadership Role in Conserving Water



For more than a decade, Delray Beach has been quietly taking steps to conserve water by making it possible for residents, public facilities and golf courses to use reclaimed water for irrigation.

"We are very aggressive in our reclaimed-water efforts," says Victor Majtenyi, Interim Director of Delray Beach's Environmental Services Department. "We are expanding the program faster than many other communities in the area."

Through the reclaimed water program, wastewater treated at the South Central Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SCRWTP) goes through an additional and extensive treatment process for public use and then is pumped to areas throughout the City where it is used only for irrigation purposes.

Delray Beach is currently receiving about two million gallons of reclaimed water a day, from the SCRWTP (which is a partnership with Boynton Beach), a number expected to eventually reach five million gallons a day.



With its water reclamation project, Delray is helping to conserve fresh water from the area's aquifers.

As a result, the City is seeing a reduction in the amount of drinking (potable) water being used for irrigation, enabling the City to remain well below the treatment plant's permitted capacity, and saving property owners significant dollars.

The City is also encouraging water conservation through an inverted water-rate structure so the more water you use, the higher your billed amount will be.

"Our residents are realizing that they don't need to use as much water as they have in the past," Majtenyi said.

Delray Beach is also one of the first communities in South Florida to stop pumping treated sewage into the Atlantic Ocean, three years ahead of a federal mandate designed to protect the marine environment.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

With a few simple steps, you can easily conserve water and save money:

- **Remember** to turn the water off when it's not being used.
- **Do** full loads of laundry.
- **Landscape** with Florida friendly low-water use plants.
- **Irrigate** twice a week in accordance with South Florida Water Management District recommendations.
- **Consider** low water use shower heads and toilets.
- **Fix** drips and leaks right away.

Partnerships Help Delray Beach Become One of Florida's Greenest Cities

Through its partnerships with federal, state and local government agencies, as well as with local businesses and educational institutions, Delray Beach is able to institute sustainability initiatives. These initiatives generate hundreds of thousands of dollars in costs savings each year. Here are some of the projects and organizations partnering with the City to make it a better place to live, work and play for generations to come.

Project	Partner	Result	Project Cost	Cost to City	Benefit
138 Solar Trash Compactors Donated	Waste Management	First in South Florida to install solar compactors	\$601,106	\$13,040	Projected \$50,000 to \$60,000 annual salary savings
46 Public Recycling Blue Bins	American Beverage Association	Largest beach recycling program in Palm Beach County	\$19,349	\$5,637	Promotes beach recycling and marine life protection
6 EV* Stations Donated *3 Expected in 2013	Plug-In Florida	First in county; provides economic development benefit	\$30,000	\$0	Attracts additional visitors to downtown
Installed Energy Efficient Lighting & Equipment	U.S. Department of Energy	Energy efficient lights at Pompey Park and W. Atlantic Ave., City facilities & downtown	\$512,953	\$0	Reduced annual electric cost and maintenance
Installed Florida Friendly Landscaping in Medians	Florida Department of Transportation	Beautification of W. Atlantic Ave.	\$200,000	\$0	Improved aesthetics and reduced annual water and maintenance costs
Water Reuse Infrastructure *Since 2003	South Florida Water Management District	Conservation of drinking water resources by providing alternatives for irrigation	\$10.6 million	\$8.35 million	Reduces cost for wells, permits & maintenance, defers plant expansion, saves customers on monthly bills
Development of Sustainability Marketing Brand	Florida Atlantic University	Creation of City sustainability video and logo by FAU students	\$0	\$0	Brands and promotes City and its sustainability efforts
Educational Sustainability Presentations	Delray Beach Public & Private Schools	Increased awareness among younger generation	\$500	\$0	Promotes sustainability and potential recycling revenue
Annual Beach & Neighborhood Beautification	Keep Palm Beach County Beautiful and Delray CRA	Host beach & neighborhood clean up by volunteers	\$71,844* *includes in-kind labor	\$9,424	Cleaner beach and improved neighborhood aesthetics
Annual Earth Day Celebration	County & state agencies, local businesses & utility companies	Half day event promoting sustainability to families and children	\$3,000	\$0	Increases green and sustainable awareness
TOTAL			\$12,038,752	\$8,378,101	

Leading the Way in Sustainability Education

Through presentations at local schools, events, such as Earth Day celebrations and sponsorships of local beach clean-ups, as well as through newsletters, press releases and social media, the City of Delray Beach is reaching out to educate our community about the importance of sustainability.

"Involving the next generation in our sustainability efforts is crucial," says Rich Reade, Delray Beach's Sustainability Officer and a driving force behind the City's environmental preservation efforts.

For the last four years, the City, in conjunction with the Delray Beach Downtown Development Authority, has hosted one of the county's most innovative Earth Day celebrations.

Through sponsorships from the business community, Delray Beach has been able to provide a number of interesting exhibits and activities, ranging from demonstrations of electric vehicles to tree plantings, where the City's Mayor and children from the community work side by side to create a better city.

In addition, Delray Beach is also using public information tools such as the City's website, utility bills, newsletters and social media to encourage residents to be more conscious of the environment.

Reade believes programs that are already in place are encouraging our residents to make sustainability practices a priority.

"Our recycling containers and our solar trash compactors, along with our overall Clean City Initiative, continually serve as reminders that we all need to be considerate of our environment," he said.



Earth Day 2013

WHAT YOU CAN DO

All of us can help encourage others to also be aware of the impact we have on our environment. Here are some steps you can take:

- **Set** an example for others, especially children, by recycling frequently.
- **Encourage** your family members to recycle and to put trash in proper receptacles.
- **Create** a family sustainability plan that includes water and energy saving ideas.
- **Attend** events such as Delray Beach's Earth Day and beach clean ups with your children.
- **Order** recycle bins by calling the Solid Waste Authority at 866-639-2467.

Continuing the Momentum

Led by the City Commission, the City's volunteer Green Implementation Advancement Board (GIAB) and other City staff and community leaders, the City of Delray Beach's sustainability efforts are gaining recognition throughout the state as well as throughout the nation.

"Delray Beach is becoming known as an environmental leader," says Rich Reade, the City's Sustainability Officer. "People are starting to say that Delray Beach is a green community."

Throughout the past five years, Delray Beach has partnered with organizations such as Florida Green Energy Works, which created the PACE program that helps commercial-property owners finance energy efficiency improvements to their properties. The City has also worked with developers and the U. S. Green Building Council to promote environmentally friendly projects.

In the coming months, the Green Implementation Advancement Board (GIAB) plans to bring recommendations to the City Commission, and steps are already being implemented (earlier recommendations from the Green Task Force) throughout City government to ensure sustainability remains a priority. Suggestions most likely will include creating a guide to educate "How Residents can Go Green," providing additional bike racks and bike corrals throughout the City and developing a community Green/Sustainability Ambassador program.

"All of these pieces are part of a larger puzzle that will allow us to achieve our greater goal," Reade says. "When we put the pieces together they become a strong wall instead of a chain-link fence and our community will benefit by being more sustainable and green."

Over the years, the City of Delray Beach has become a leading force in a slow but steady cultural change where taking steps to save the environment while making a positive financial impact – for both individuals and the community – is becoming part of our every day thinking.

Moving forward, the focus will be on continuing the powerful momentum that has been carefully developed over the years and building upon it through innovation and community commitment.



City of Delray Sustainability logo courtesy of Florida Atlantic University

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