

CYPRESS WOODS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

At our CWHOA BOD meeting on 6/15/16, several gentlemen from Clear Waters Inc. came to talk about the condition of our ponds & what we might do to keep them healthy. The following includes information they gave, along with information I got for an article in the magazine, "Florida Gardening". At the meeting, questions from the few attending CW residents were answered by Damien, who is the person who takes care of our ponds here at Cypress Woods. He stated that storm water runoff is the single largest contributor of contaminates and that all pollution from residents is due to runoff from our own properties.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO PROTECT THE CLEANLINESS OF OUR PONDS?

1) Use of Fertilizer:

Overuse of fertilizer causes nutrient pollution. The nitrogen & phosphate cause algae to bloom. Nitrogen & phosphorus are banned during the rainy season (June 1 to Sept. 30). A slow release fertilizer should be applied before the rainy season begins. Also, cutting back on fertilizer in the summer may reduce the need for pesticides as well. The University of Florida reported evidence that shows chinch bugs & some types of fungus both prefer lawns with high levels of nitrogen. For those with St. Augustine grass, 3 applications per year is enough. Slow release fertilizer applied in March, May & October, with a summer application of iron should do it. Established trees & shrubs should not need additional fertilizer if they are problem free. Mulch & other organic materials (horse or cow manure) are more important than fertilizer. NEVER apply fertilizer before a heavy rain, as more than ½ an inch of water will wash it away rather than soaking it into the ground.

2) Grass Clippings:

Grass clippings should be left on or blown back on the lawn. Left in the street, they go into the sewers & end up in the ponds to rot.

3) Dog Poop:

Pick up dog poop. Left in the yard, it will cause contamination if it washes into the pond with heavy rain or even by watering. Damien even stated that bags used to pick up dog poop have been removed from our ponds.

4) Sewers:

NOTHING should be thrown down a sewer.

EROSION AROUND THE PONDS

The last couple of years we have received complaints from residents about the problem of erosion around the ponds, making mowing difficult or unsafe. Damien was asked what might be done to alleviate the problem, and if grasses or ground cover whose roots might hold the sand & soil could be planted around the edges of the ponds. He responded by saying that anything that might do that would end up being killed by the regular spraying required to keep unwanted growth in & around the ponds down.

THE FUTURE OF OUR PONDS

Although Damien said that our ponds are in good shape now, aeration may be something to consider in the future, one pond at a time. Even an aeration system in one pond would, in turn, affect the others as the system of ponds is all connected. An aerator moves the bottom water up to the top & a 1 hp can turn over 8,000 gal. of water per minute. Among other things, this can help with algae growth, chemical usage, improve water clarity, reduce sedimentation rate & eliminate fish kill potential. A system would initially be costly but would last many years with very low upkeep.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Stuart, President