Hillsborough County Florida

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On Our Pond

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How to Protect Your Plants in the Winter

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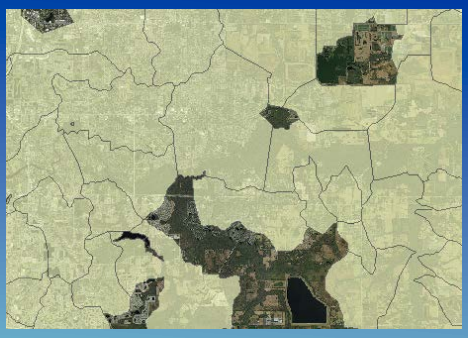
Take a pledge to choose tap water in Hillsborough County! 2

What is a WBID?



WBID stands for Water Body Identification, and it is an assessment unit used to represent Florida waterbodies. 3

Upcoming Events in Tampa Bay



Check out upcoming events in the Tampa Bay area. 5

The Hillsborough County *Quality on Tap* Pledge

I pledge to choose Hillsborough County tap water as my primary source of drinking water.

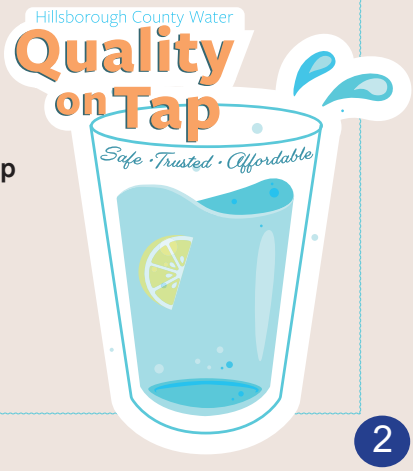
I understand that drinking tap water is safe, reliable, and affordable and helps reduce plastic waste in our environment.

I trust the hardworking professionals at Hillsborough County Water Resources who test, treat, and monitor the water around the clock to protect my health and ensure clean water flows from every tap.

By taking this pledge, I commit to supporting our local water system, reducing my reliance on bottled water, and making a smarter choice for my family and community.

Because in Hillsborough County, quality is always on tap.

HCFL.gov/QualityOnTap



Signature

Date

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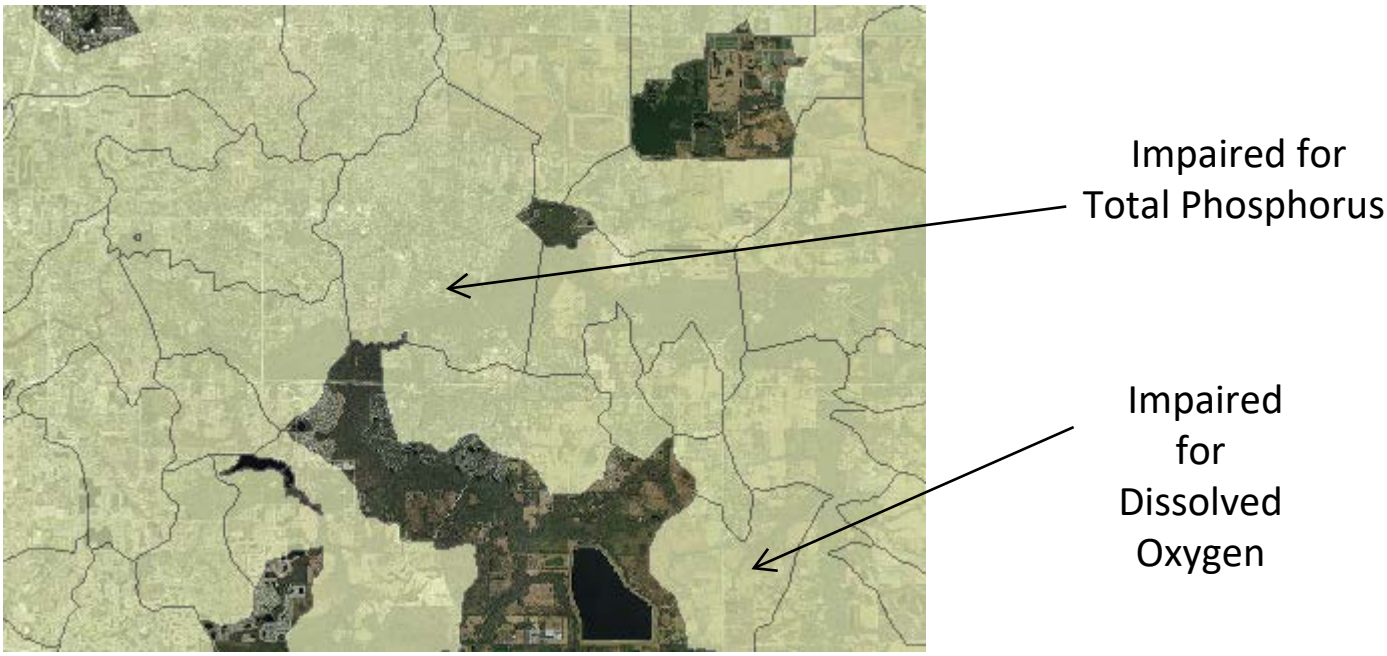


WBID stands for Water Body Identification, and it is an assessment unit used to represent Florida's waterbodies at the watershed or sub-watershed scale. These waterbodies can include drainage basins, lakes, lake drainage areas, springs, rivers and streams, segments of rivers and streams, coastal, bay and estuarine waters in Florida. WBIDs have a unique identification number that is tracked by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and have a geographic delineation as a polygon layer on GIS software. Each individual polygon represents a particular WBID and gets its shape based on roughly where that waterbody drains to (the drainage basin). Using GIS software, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and other departments, can track which waterbodies are impaired for things such as dissolved oxygen and/or nutrients. The WBIDs identified as impaired can then be prioritized for projects to improve water quality.

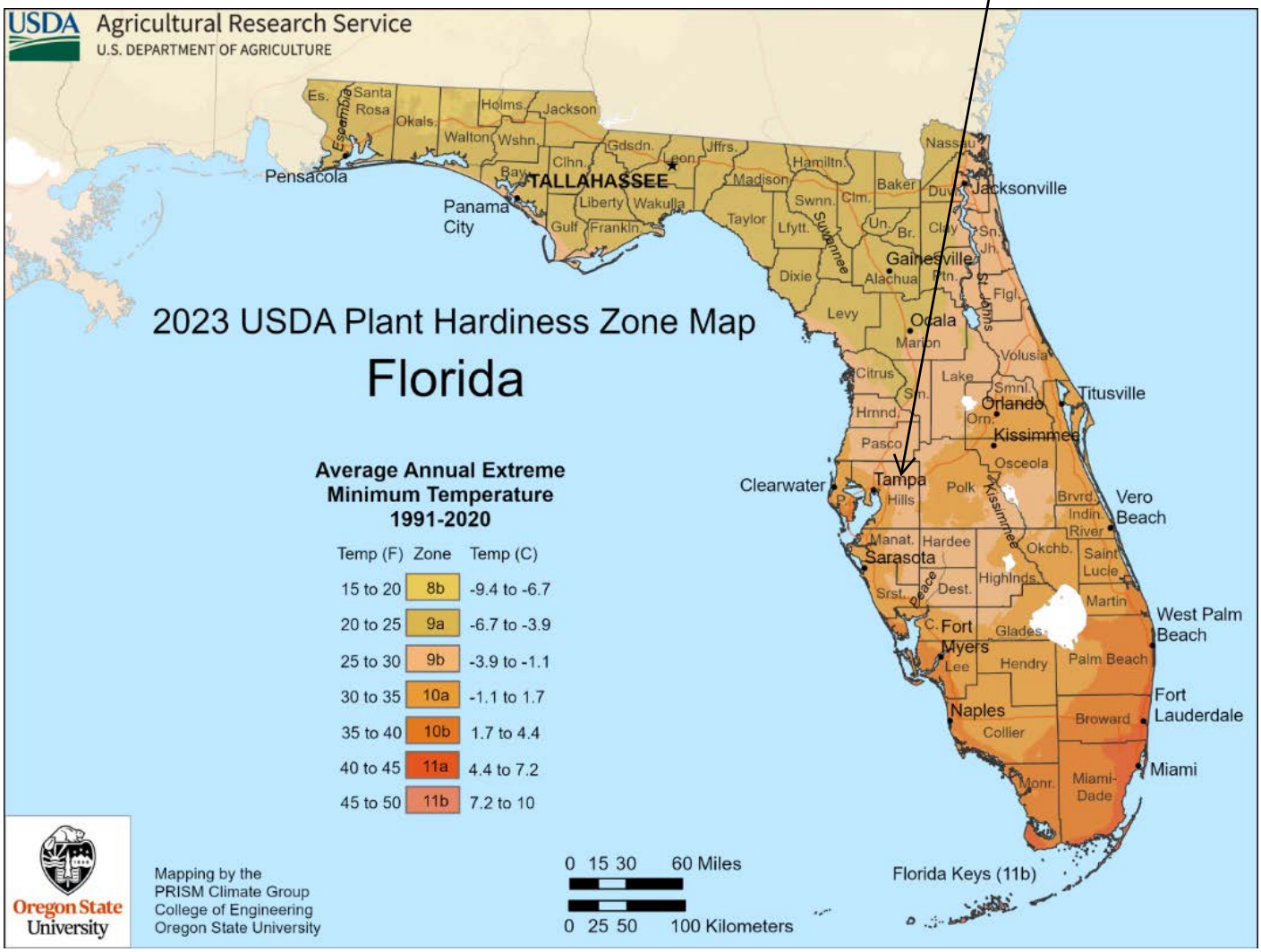
Storm Drain Marking Program

Did you know that Hillsborough County provides storm drain markers to residents for free? Storm drain markers are placed on curb inlets as reminders that storm drains are only for rain - not oil, grass clippings, leaves, fertilizers, trash, or pet waste! Kits can be requested and include storm drain markers, glue, and door hangers to let everyone in the neighborhood know about the markers and the message they carry. Go to https://hillsborough.wateratlas.usf.edu/adopt-a-pond/storm-drain-marking-kit.aspx and fill out the requested information for your storm drain marking kit today!

How to Protect Your Plants in the Winter

While we think of Florida as a tropical oasis, there are nights when temperatures fall below freezing. Native plants have a greater chance of survival in freezing temperatures, but not all Florida Friendly plants are native. So, what can be done to protect plants when it gets just a little too cold? According to IFAS, there are some preventative measures that can be taken before freezing temperatures arrive. For one, residents can make sure the soil and roots of plants are well-watered. Also, mulch is a great option because it helps retain soil moisture and creates a buffer between soil and air. Overall, IFAS says healthy plants will tolerate cold more than stressed ones. So, make sure plants are free of pests, pruned and fertilized correctly, and overall, just well taken care of.

Check out what zone you are in!



Upcoming Events in Tampa Bay:

IFAS Triple Workshop Series – Rainwater Harvesting, Composting, and Microirrigation

Feb 7

- Hillsborough County Extension Services, 5339 County Road 579, Seffner, FL 33584
- Composting at 8:30 a.m.
- Microirrigation at 9:45 a.m.
- Rainwater harvesting at 11 a.m.

Hillsborough County Prescribed Fire Fest

Feb 21

- Edward Medard Conservation Park from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Watch the wildland fire crew conduct a live prescribed fire, get up close with equipment and specialized tools used for prescribed fires, and kids can participate in free games and activities.

Hillsborough County Neighborhoods Expo

Feb 28

- Feeding Tampa Bay, 3624 Causeway Blvd, Tampa, FL 33619, from 9 a.m. to noon.
- Residents can learn about a wide variety of government programs and services including Adopt-A-Pond.

Dover Family Fun Day

Mar 7

- Keith Waller Park from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Free family-friendly event with games, competitions, local vendors, food trucks, raffles, and more.
- Registration is required.

MOSI 5th Annual Water Days

Mar 28

- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Family-friendly event with a variety of interactive learning stations led by MOSI educators, community partners, and local experts.
- Hands on learning about stormwater, conservation, and sustainability.
- Included with MOSI admission.

Hillsborough County Photo Contest

Do you spend a lot of time around stormwater ponds in Hillsborough County? If so, we're holding a photo contest for residents to submit photos taken around stormwater ponds. Why stormwater ponds? Often seen as just reservoirs for stormwater, stormwater ponds are so much more! They provide nutrient reduction through submerged and emergent vegetation, they are habitats and food sources for all kinds of animals, and they can be beautiful spaces for people to enjoy. Submit your best photo to SaccoS@HCFL.gov for a chance to be featured in an upcoming Hillsborough County newsletter!







How to Identify and Report an Illicit Discharge

Have you seen something other than stormwater entering a stream or lake, or witnessed somebody dumping something down a storm drain? Are you concerned about sediment washing away from a construction site? Hillsborough County makes it easy to report illegal dumping or discharges. Here is a link to report discharges or dumping into waterbodies, curb inlets, or stormwater ponds: https://hillsborough.wateratlas.usf.edu/atlas-forms/ReportPollution.

To report illicit discharges, first make sure to write down key information. Don't be brief; describe everything you know about the situation. It is essential to thoroughly describe the facts. Describe exactly where the problem occurred, including the address. Be specific about how much material you saw. Describe the people involved. Was the weather an important factor? What was the exact time and duration of the event? Listed below is a brief example of the information you will need to report:

- Date and time of incident
- Location of incident
- A description of the illegal activity witnessed
- Waterbody (optional)
- Photos (optional)
- Contact information (optional)

Examples of illicit discharges you can report!



Sediment tracking from a nearby construction site



Resident blowing yard debris down a storm drain