**Green Teams**

### Frequently Asked Questions

*Last updated June 2017*

## Green Teams

### Q: What is a Green Team?

**A:** Green Teams develop new initiatives appropriate to their departments in addition to actively participate in campus-wide sustainability initiatives. They identify how their department can increase efficiency through sustainability. Incorporating sustainability goals into departmental processes and ensure that these practices become institutionalized is the tangible goal.

### Q: What responsibilities does a Green Team member have?

**A:** The focus of Green Teams vary depending the department it serves but the overall role of members are to facilitate the creation, promotion, and implementation of sustainability programs within your unit. To provide feedback to the Office of Sustainability on the process and programs your group is involved in. Hold and attend departmental green team meetings to assess your internal process. Also contribute to the greater Green Team network by provide information and serve as a resource in your area of expertise.

### Q: How much of a time commitment is serving as a Green Team captain?

**A:** Many of the Green Team related are organized during lunch or after work with the occasionally event scheduled during the work day. Green ream participation is solely volunteered-based and is an addition to the typical work day. 3-5 hours each month is the typical commitment anticipated to promoting sustainability.

### Q: Do you need any prior experience/knowledge to be on a Green Team?

**A:** No. Your passion for sustainability is enough to get you started. We have resources to help you become an active member in the Green Team Network.

### Q: What resources are available to support my Green Team?

**A:** Members will have access to many different types of online resources coming from different campus units. Resources consisting of guides on improving your workplace. Energy reduction tips worksheets, how-to guides incorporating best practices, sustainable purchasing guidelines, and presentation materials are the types of resources member will be privileged to. Members of the network are some of the vital resources serving as a represent of their departments as well as their personal knowledge and experience in sustainability. Meeting minutes from main the Green Team Symposium will also be available.

## Recycling and Waste

### Q:  I have a stockpile of old batteries that I need to dispose of properly. I was told that they are hazardous waste, but am not sure what the protocol is for this type of waste at UF, can you help?

**A:** If you are disposing of regular, old-fashioned acid batteries, they are not considered hazardous waste, and should be disposed of with your regular garbage. Rechargeable batteries, or those containing heavy metals such as lithium, should be taken to the Hazardous Waste facility off of Waldo road. For hours and more information, please visit [this county website](http://www.alachuacounty.us/government/depts/epd/pollution/hhwcenters.aspx) or call 334-0440. At this time, UF does not have a location to collect personal hazardous waste, though we do try to have a round-up at least once a year (usually in April) in conjunction with our Earth Day festivities.

University-generated hazardous waste is handled by the Environmental Health and Safety Department. If you have batteries, lab chemicals, or other waste generated at UF you believe to be hazardous, you can contact them at 392-1591.

### Q: I can’t seem to find a place to recycle cans and bottles on campus. Can you tell me where I can find a recycling bin?

**A:** The University of Florida has set an ambitious goal – to be [zero waste](http://www.zerowaste.org/case.htm) by the year 2015. Reaching this goal will undoubtedly require an effort from all members of our community to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Regarding can and bottle (glass and plastic) recycling, we are currently working on an indoor recycling program for campus that should be complete by autumn 2009.  
  
This effort consists of supplementing the outdoor bins that currently exist, and systematically placing indoor bins in buildings. You can view all the current recycling locations on the campus map under the sustainable campus link at [UF's campus map](http://campusmap.ufl.edu/).

The outside bins will be paired units for cans, plastic and glass bottles, paper, and trash in locations across campus that will supplement the bins that should already be outside almost every building and in high traffic areas such as the North Lawn.

The indoor bins are going in faculty/staff lounges, copy rooms, conference rooms and graduate student lounges or areas. We are currently not placing any bins in public hallways or classrooms. This is due to several considerations, including university regulations, fire codes, and research done on the behavioral response to these bins. It is also a funding and staffing issue. We are partnering with several groups across campus and working on all of these issues, including sourcing paired recycling-trash bins, so that we can provide better access.

If your department ever generates significant amounts of glass, or other very heavy recycling loads, please contact UF's Solid Waste Coordinator, [Dale Morris](mailto:damorris@ufl.edu) (392-7396) to make special arrangements so that you do not endanger the workers who empty the recycling bins.   
  
We are very encouraged by the high level of support for recycling in our community, and are optimistic that our efforts will ultimately be successful. In the meantime, please keep the Office of Sustainability posted on your departmental efforts to cut waste through reduction and reuse (the other two “R”s!), and we will let you know as we expand the indoor recycling program to more buildings.

One last note, paper recycling is also available across campus in all buildings. You can find these bins in building common areas, such as stairwells, copy rooms, and elevator alcoves.

### Q:  How is electronic waste, or “e-waste,” handled at UF?

**A:**  UF actively seeks to reduce campus generation of e-waste through preventative maintenance on existing equipment and recirculation of used equipment via the “Surplus Property” program [website](http://www.surplus.ufl.edu/available/). However, once electronic equipment has reached the end of its useful life, proper disposal is very important due to the toxic constituents of many of these products.  
  
Asset Management handles disposal of all electronic waste regardless of the size or cost of the item (i.e. , even smaller items such as jump drives and phones). For an extensive list of electronic items recycled by the university, visit UF’s Asset Management [website](http://fa.ufl.edu/uco/handbook/handbook.asp?doc=1.4.9.17).

Once items have been collected and all efforts to reuse them have been exhausted, the university contracts with [Creative Recycling](http://www.crserecycling.com/) to assure that they are diverted from the waste stream and properly recycled.

### Q: I was wondering if you know whether the juice boxes are good for recycling. They look like they’re made of paper but on the other hand they are covered with some sort of synthetic inside. I don’t know if I should put them in the paper bin for recycling or just trash them in the “normal” trash-bin?

**A:** Unfortunately, these boxes you refer to must go in the trash. The paper on them is very high quality, but because they are often lined with a metal such as aluminum, and they are coated in that waxy plastic, they are not recyclable in our area.

My recommendation is to try to find similar drinks that come in a can or plastic bottle that is recyclable or, better yet, buy your favorite beverage in a larger size, and bring it with you in a reusable single serve container that you can wash. I think they even sell these in that fun juice box shape.

### Q: Is there a way to get recycling at my apartment complex?

**A:** Yes! Everyone should be able to recycle. First of all, talk to the leasing office at your apartment complex. They may have recycling bins placed somewhere that you just aren't aware of. Apartment complexes are required by the City of Gainesville to provide recycling for newspaper, glass, aluminum, and plastic. If your complex does not, you can call (352) 334-2330 and leave a message with your name and contact information. The city will contact the complex and follow up to improve recycling there.

### Q: Can pasteboard be recycled on campus?

**A:** Thanks to Alachua County and City of Gainesville's recent contract, pasteboard (such as breakfast cereal boxes), junk mail, and plastic numbered 1-7 are now recyclable in Gainesville and on campus.   
  
Paper recycling bins on campus not only accept copy paper, but also cardboard, phone books, newspapers, magazines and other books that do not have hard covers. The comingled recycling bins on campus collect aluminum, glass, plastic jars, jugs, and tubs, numbered 1-7. However, brittle plastic materials such as Solo cups and to-go food clamshells are not recyclable. To find the number on your plastic container, look at the number inside of the recycling symbol.

### Q: Every year, UF staff members receive a new phone book from UF. How do we recycle the old ones, and isn’t continuing to print large quantities of phone books a waste of trees, energy, and time?

**A:** The Campus Directory is monitored closely. The quantity is based on specific orders received from each department, so someone in your department requested the number of directories your unit received. If directories are being thrown away, please request that the number ordered for your department be reduced for next year. The University only orders the number of directories that are requested. This process is how we determine how many to have printed each year.  
  
Over the past three years, the number of directories that the campus receives has been almost cut in half. Campus directories are provided free to the campus community through advertising revenues. Two goals of the staff who work with the directory contract are to reduce the size of the publication and to eliminate unwanted copies. Starting in 2008-09, the UF Campus Directory became available on CD, and departments were able to choose if they wanted a printed copy or a CD. A Print-to-Electronic conversion initiative is also underway for other publications on campus and already almost 40 publications at UF have been converted to electronic distribution. We still have a long way to go, but we've made a good start.   
  
If you would like to reduce the number of directories your department receives, please have your department respond to the electronic Directory Request Form that will be included in the Campus Directory and Local Telephone Book Distribution DDD Memo from OIT- Telecommunications in August 2009. Finally, you can access the [AT&T Yellow Pages Online](http://www.realpageslive.com), and visit [Yellow Pages Goes Green](http://www.yellowpagesgoesgreen.org/stop-yellow-pages/) to stop unsolicited delivery of printed Telephone Directories from commercial sources.

With regards to recycling your old campus directories, the best method is to place them in a nearby paper dumpster or compactor around campus. If there is not a dumpster or compactor near you, please only deposit a few directories at a time in your building’s paper bins. Otherwise, these bins get terribly heavy, and are difficult for our recycling staff to service.

### Q: Recyclable plastics are stamped with different numbers. What types are recycled locally?

**A:** All Gainesville recycling goes through SP Recycling. SP has a hand-sorting facility at the Alachua County Transfer Station for waste. They sort various plastics for baling and sale. The largest container they will take is 2.5 gallons.  
  
Here are plastics they collect:  
#1 PET (mostly small water/soda bottles),  
#2 "natural" jugs (like milk jugs),  
#2 "colored" jugs (like detergent bottles),  
#3-7 bottles (like shampoo bottles).  
  
Other #3-7 plastics (like berry baskets, Solo cups, etc.) are still not recyclable. The rule for plastics is "anything with a neck on it." Brittle plastics are not accepted.  
  
The types of plastics that are accepted are limited by the markets in which they can be traded. If there isn't a market for it, SP can't collect it. Thanks for helping UF's community understand what can be diverted from the landfill!

### Q: How are lab and research plastics handled at UF? Are these recyclable?

**A:** Corning® pipet tip tracks are recyclable thanks to the company’s Recycle Now Program! For more information on how to recycle pipette tracks visit the [UF Purchasing site](http://www.purchasing.ufl.edu/main_contracts-fisher.asp) and scroll to the section on Corning.

Unfortunately, there is currently no recycling program in place for many other medical or lab plastics, but the university is exploring various options and strategies in terms of tackling unique waste streams and unconventional recyclable products. The desire to expand the definition of what is recyclable is certainly there, but a key challenge is coordination with other involved parties to accept such varied items. Be sure to check back here on the Common Questions page for updates regarding this topic.

### Q:  I have some empty ink cartridges in my office. Does UF have a program to recycle these?

**A:** All printer cartridges (Inkjet and laser) can be recycled through our contract vendor Mr. Paper. When you have cartridges to recycle, simply contact [Mr. Paper](http://www.purchasing.ufl.edu/main_contracts-recycled_toner.asp), and they will arrange to have your cartridges picked up.

### Q: Our office regularly receives Styrofoam packaging. Can it be reused or recycled on campus?

**A:** [Campus Copy Fax & Pack](http://www.union.ufl.edu/campuscopy/), the mailing business on the bottom floor of the Reitz Union, takes Styrofoam peanuts and reuses them. They will also take bubble wrap, and small personal electronics, such as cell phones and pagers.

At this time there is not a way to recycle Styrofoam on campus, but the university is actively pursuing a solution that is both fiscally and logistically sound and sustainable in regards to recycling this material. Having reliable numbers is critical in terms of designing a strategy for any waste stream, thus we are looking into ways to capture data on the volume of Styrofoam UF generates, as well a what possibilities exist for collection, storage, and transport. Stay tuned here for updates on this topic.

## Energy

### Q: I have been replacing incandescent light bulbs with the more efficient compact fluorescent (CFL) ones. I know they use less energy and have a longer life span, but I was disappointed when found out I should dispose of burned out compact fluorescent bulbs as hazardous waste, due to the fact they contain some mercury. Have I been wrong all this time by going for the more efficient bulbs? Tell me which is the lesser evil?

**A:** According to calculations, a U.S. kilowatt-hour generates .012 milligrams of mercury, through the burning of fossil fuels such as coal. So, a 20-watt CFL running for a lifetime of 10,000 hours would generate ~2.4 mg of mercury, while comparable 75-watt incandescent bulbs running collectively for 10,000 hours (one would not “live” this long), would generate 9.0 mg. Add in the 5 mg of mercury that might reside in a CFL bulb (a high average) and you get a total of 7.4 mg -- still less than the incandescent.  
  
Therefore, the cost benefit seems to be in favor of the more efficient bulb. An added benefit for the efficient CFL’s is that in Gainesville, they can be recycled (the mercury is reclaimed and the ballast is recycled) by taking them to Georges Hardware, Zells Ace Hardware, or Indigo.

### Q: My colleagues and I were discussing ways for our departments to be more energy efficient. We've heard that "dormant" appliances still draw energy. What can we do about this?

**A:** Electronic devices obviously draw electricity when in use. Most also draw electricity when not in use. They do this while they wait poised on "standby" or because they have a clock or LED light. Sometimes they do this because their plug is poorly designed.  
  
The amount of "phantom" power drawn is amazing. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, around 75 percent of the energy used by our appliances is drawn while we think they are "off. " Typical offenders include computers, peripherals, televisions, and chargers for cell phones or iPods, etc.

A quick solution to this financial and sustainability conundrum is plugging electronics into a power strip with an on/off switch. When you are through using the equipment on a strip, you can turn off the strip, which cuts the electricity to the appliances. Of these power strips, I think the most interesting is the SmartStrip. It has multiple outlets: one is the master outlet, and when a piece of equipment plugged into this outlet is turned off, all the connected outlets also shut off power.  
  
It’s a lot easier to remember to power down one electronic device, like a desktop computer, than it is to remember to shut off the monitor, printer, scanner, charger cradle, etc.

### Q: I have noticed that most of the buildings at UF seem to be overly cold due to the use of air conditioning. This seems like a waste, and I am wondering why UF does not turn up the thermostat to save money and energy?

**A:** A large majority of UF buildings are cooled through a very efficient Chilled Water utility produced by UF’s Physical Plant Division (PPD). This system cools the supply air to 55 degrees. Each building is different, but many have a re-heat type system that uses heated piped steam to reheat the air back up to the desired air temperature set for the zone or space.

Having a cooler temperature setting actually saves energy by not reheating up the air. However, we must reheat to a minimum level of comfort for all the occupants.  
  
Currently, in our humid climate, this is the best way we have of removing the humidity from the air to keep our buildings healthy, and free of mold and mildew. We are continuously trying to improve our systems by increasing comfort and unit efficiency, while still focusing on decreasing energy consumption. PPD can always use feedback from our customers by calling our Work Management Center to report an area that seems to be too cold or too hot at 392-1121.

### Q: I have heard that it uses more energy when you turn fluorescent lights (like those we have in our buildings at UF) off and back on, rather than just leaving them on. Is this true?

**A**: No. This is a common misconception. At one time the technology in lighting was not very advanced, and the energy used to turn the light on in some systems did, in fact, use up a lot of energy, but this is no longer the case. Currently, the trade off time is only around 10 seconds, so if you are headed out of a classroom or your office, hit the switch.

### Q: I have noticed that our on-campus lighting still uses older technology that is less energy efficient and less bright, which also means more lights are needed. LED lighting is more energy efficient, brighter, and lasts longer. Why don’t we use LED lighting?

**A:** LED lighting, as well as other lighting systems like induction, metal halide, and fluorescents, have had relatively recent developments in improved efficiency. However, because of the high capital costs of these systems, the number of lights on campus, and other factors, it will take time to transition to newer technologies.

UF is in the process of performing comprehensive research and pilot projects using some of the technologies named above, but before these systems can be implemented over the entire campus, they must conform to our lighting standards.  
  
The UF lighting standard is currently being revised to account for newer technologies. A student-prepared report that was used to help modify the standard can be found [here](http://www.facilities.ufl.edu/cp/presentations.htm).

### Q: What does UF do during the holidays to save energy?

**A:** Physical Plant Division has had a program in place for several years to reduce energy consumption by setting back heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) settings in select buildings when they are unoccupied. UF's building setback programs are in full effect during the holiday season. Building control systems allow UF to turn off air handlers in the unused areas of buildings to save energy.  
  
The most obvious benefit of the setback program is monetary. During the Thanksgiving break, setbacks saved 776,787 kWh of energy which is equivalent to $82,572. That is equivalent to more than $20,000 per day. Additionally, the program helps UF reduce our carbon footprint, more than 70% of which is directly related to electricity for buildings. Building setback programs are an important part of the campus plan to be carbon neutral by 2025.

## Food

### Q: Where is the organic garden, and how do I get a plot?

**A:** The [UF Organic Garden](http://uf.organic.gardens.googlepages.com/) is located on SW 23rd Terrace, about ¼ mile south of Archer Road. The cost of a 12-foot x 25-foot plot is $10 per half year, plus a $5 deposit. Members of the cooperative plant vegetables and flowers of their choice on their plots, and are responsible for up-keep. They are expected to practice organic gardening methods and to participate in community workdays several times each semester.  
  
Water, manure, and some seeds are provided, and various tools are available onsite. For more information, and to rent a plot, please call or e-mail [Ginny Campbell](mailto:epaulc@bellsouth.net) (378-6103), the plot coordinator.

## Maintenance

### Q: What is UF doing to change to less toxic cleaning products?

**A:** UF and Shands have begun the transition to "green" cleaning products. Many of the products already being used are Green Seal certified. Some of our cleaning equipment, such as our vacuum cleaners, have also been “green certified” by [Green Seal](http://www.greenseal.org).

## Paper

### Q: There are so many choices when selecting a sustainable paper for our office, and I was wondering which component is most critical-certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), or recycled content?

**A**: The answer is both. Recycled content paper reduces waste, reduces the need to use trees to create new paper, and the recycling process requires less resources to generate paper.  
  
FSC certification is a third-party program that ensures that forests and forest products are managed responsibly from the silviculture practices and harvesting, all the way to paper and wood product production. For more information, read Grist's answer to a similar recently asked question.

### Q: What types of paper can I recycle?

**A:** UF accepts a wide array of paper for recycling. The basic collection list for paper recyclables on campus includes office paper (basic white and multi-colored paper), copy and notebook paper, junk mail, envelopes (with and without windows), index cards, manila folders and computer paper, newspapers and magazines, soft cover books, pasteboard (i.e., cereal boxes) and corrugated boxes.  An extensive list of acceptable and unacceptable items is available through the [Physical Plant Division](http://www.ppd.ufl.edu/groundsrefuserecycle.htm).

Small amounts of **shredded paper** can be placed inside a permanent paperbin, as long as it does not fill it up and prevent others from being able to dispose of their paper. It is preferred that offices get in touch with the [Physical Plant Solid Waste Management Office](http://www.ppd.ufl.edu/groundsrefuserecycle.htm) to arrange pickup of shredded paper waste.

UF also accepts items withboth **staples and post-it notes**. Other paper binding items such as binder clips and paper clips should be removed but can be reused.

While **cardboard** is also a recyclable product at UF, unless it can be compactly placed in an internal collection bin, we recommend that large cardboard boxes be broken down and placed in an **outdoor cardboard baler**. This simply helps to maximize the space available for newspaper and office paper collected indoors by sending bulkier cardboard items into their larger, designated bins.

**Pizza boxes** however cannot be recycled. Unfortunately, paper products that have held food and liquid products cannot be recycled alongside regular paper products. This is referred to as contamination in the recycling business and applies to all paper products that have come into contact with grease, oils and other residues. During the recycling process, the paper fibers are broken down for reprocessing. When paper is contaminated, the fibers do not separate from the oils and the integrity of the resulting paper product is compromised. Please dispose of these items in trash receptacles.

### Q: Where can I find the collection bins for paper recycling?

**A:** Paper collection bins are available all across campus. The bins have been strategically placed for maximum accessibility. Bins are often centrally located in all offices, lounges, copy rooms and printing labs. Most of the indoor collection bins are open containers lined with a canvas bag, and marked with the blue recycling logo designating it as a paper collection location.

Desk side paper collection bins are an ideal way to siphon used paper from office desks into the recycling bin. Mixed paper can be collected in large paper bags or shallow cardboard containers and emptied into the central collection bin at each individual’s convenience. Desk side collection containers are available for offices and departments through PPD. If your area is interested in securing a quantity for your office space, please contact a [Building Services](http://www.ppd.ufl.edu/buildingservices.htm) representative or Dale Morris at PPD for more information.

In addition to indoor collection options, there are many paper bins located outside. These are typically in high traffic areas and alongside most buildings near other trash receptacles. For the map detailing all outdoor paper collection sites, please visit [here](http://www.ppd.ufl.edu/Refuse_Recycle/Outdoor_Paper_Sites.jpg).

### Q: How can I make sure confidential material remains secure during the recycling pick-up process?

**A:** Confidentiality is a concern for certain paper documents generated across campus. Throughout the entire recycling process, paper is considered strictly confidential and is treated carefully. That said there is no monitoring process available for paper once it’s placed in a recycling collection bin until it is picked up. If this is a concern, individuals may consider storing their documents in their locked offices and disposing of them only at the time of recycling pick-up by custodial staff. Indoor paper bins are emptied by [Building Services](http://www.ppd.ufl.edu/buildingservices.htm) into the main collection bins. UF’s recycling contractor, [Recycling Services of America](http://recyclingservicesofamerica.com/) empties these main locations and moves the paper off campus to its Gainesville Collection facility. From there, paper is bundled and transported to the pulping process location.

Paper collected from main campus recycling bins does not go through a shredding process. If this is a concern, UF does have a contract for a paid service shredding option with CINTAS Document Management that each office may pursue at their discretion.

## Purchasing

### Q: Does UF have a sustainable purchasing policy?

**A:** [Purchasing and Disbursement Services](http://www.purchasing.ufl.edu/default.asp) has done much in the past few years to ensure that the vendors contracted by the university are engaging in activities that are aligned with UF’s sustainability goals. In 2003 it drafted purchasing guidelines intended to lessen UF’s environmental impact by purchasing environmentally preferable products whenever they perform satisfactorily and are available at a reasonable price. Now they are moving toward a holistic purchasing directive, which encourages a broader commitment to the social and environmental aspects of sustainable purchasing.

Among other things, the guidelines mandate that the school will buy products with recycled content whenever possible and purchase products such as remanufactured print cartridges, Energy Star certified appliances, and non-toxic cleaning products. These guidelines also encourage vendors to reduce the packaging and take products back at the end of their useful lives.

## Transportation

### Q: How do I sign my department up for the Zipcar Program?

**A:** Visit [Transportation and Parking Services' Commuting Options webpage](http://www.parking.ufl.edu/pages/commuteoptions.htm). The Department will need to sign up for a Departmental Membership with fees waived. Then each driver will need to sign up for a membership using the Departmental account number. Membership for both is free.

Individual memberships from the public are converted in part to driving credits. Individuals may sign up for a Departmental and personal membership.

### Q: Why does UF keep building more parking garages when it says it’s trying to keep cars off the road?

**A:** The [UF Campus Master Plan](http://masterplan.ufl.edu/MasterPlan.htm) anticipates the addition of about 5,000 new students and 2,000 new employees on the main campus over the next 10 years. Along with this campus growth will be continued growth in visitors and patients, particularly in the areas around the Health Science Center and clinics in the area of the Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Institute building. Currently, the University provides approximately 24,000 parking spaces for its population of 45,000 students, 17,000 employees and untold visitors. Clearly, the ratio of parking supply to demand is quite low and will remain so.

To accommodate the transportation access demands of the campus community, the university relies heavily on its very successful partnership with the Regional Transit System that provides universal prepaid transit access for faculty, staff and students. Additionally, the University is continually expanding its support of non-auto travel as demonstrated by its recent collaboration with [ZipCar](http://www.zipcar.com/) and [GreenRide](http://portal.greenride.com/UFL/home.aspx) carpool matching. These new programs are in addition to ongoing efforts to encourage and accommodate carpooling, walking and bicycling.

For information about UF's commitment to providing alternatives to single occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel, please visit the [Office of Sustainability](http://www.sustainable.ufl.edu/) and [Transportation and Parking Services](http://www.parking.ufl.edu/commuteoptions.htm) websites.

### Q: What transportation alternatives are there at UF if I don’t want to drive my car?

**A:** UF’s Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS) offers a number of alternative transportation options. In addition to simply taking a walk or biking to and around campus, UF offers the RTS bus service, GreenRide ridesharing, the Zipcar car-sharing program, and even has an on-campus taxi for faculty and staff. For more information on how you can make the switch to sustainable transport, check out the [TAPS website](http://www.parking.ufl.edu/commuteoptions.htm).

## Water

### Q: Why is the irrigation system running in the middle of the day, which is against the watering restrictions set by the St. John’s River Water Management District?

**A:** The University of Florida is under the jurisdiction of the St. John's River Water Management District and abides by all guidelines mandated regarding water use and permits.

Almost 100% of UF's irrigation water is reclaimed from our on-campus waste water treatment facility. The requirement to water landscapes before 10am and after 4pm water management and only twice a week requirement, applies to potable water resources.  
  
Because we, the users of potable water at UF, consume a great deal, the campus creates a great deal of reclaimed water. Our storage capacity for treated water is surpassed by our generation of water that needs to be treated. It's an unfortunate reality that we can and sometimes need to irrigate at all times of the day and night to distribute the reclaimed water.   
  
The sustainability concern is on the front end of this equation. Our laboratories and building users do not treat water as a precious commodity because they do not have to pay for it. Our EH&S staff is trying to work with laboratory users on campus to install water saving devices, but again, there is not a financial incentive for researchers to spend their funds on conservation measures.

### Q: Why are there broken sprinkler heads on campus?

**A:** The [Grounds Department](http://www.ppd.ufl.edu/groundsirrigation.htm) Irrigation is responsible for the maintenance, repair and installation of irrigation systems on the University of Florida main campus as well as surrounding facilities. There are currently over 235 acres of active irrigation on the main campus. The T.R.E.E.O. Center, Whitney Lab at Marineland, and Biotech in Alachua’s Progress Center are some of the outlying facilities maintained by Grounds Irrigation.

Very often, irrigation problems have simply not been reported to Grounds. If you spot an irrigation related problem i.e. ; broken sprinklers or lines or sprinklers systems running for an excessive amount of time, please contact the **Work Management Center** at (352) 392-1121 or be clicking [here](http://www.ppd.ufl.edu/workorder-submit2.asp) to submit a work order.

### Q: Is UF using low-flow toilets anywhere on campus?

**A:** The University of Florida takes stewardship of our water resources seriously, as reflected in our commitment to integrating water-saving devices into UF buildings and using reclaimed water for over 98% of irrigation on campus. [UF Construction Standards](http://www.facilities.ufl.edu/dcs/PDF/15400.pdf) mandate that for all new construction and bathroom renovations (e.g., bathrooms in the Reitz Union and Phillips Center), toilets shall be dual flush, low flow, or ultra low flow, while urinals shall be waterless. These devices can save anywhere from one pint to a few gallons per flush when compared to older models.

There are also numerous low-cost devices that allow you to convert an existing toilet to a low-flow fixture. Here are a few examples:

* + [The Controllable Flush](http://www.indigogreenstore.com/index.php?main_page=index&cPath=42_44_114&zenid=eeb4313e8aac93de148b879ec8a5be22)
  + [Fill Cycle Diverter](http://www.usalandlord.com/tankeeclipper.html)
  + [Toilet Tank Bag](http://www.itseasybeinggreen.com/water-saving-products/bathroom/toilet-tank-bank.html)

### Q: Is UF using low-flow faucets/aerators to reduce water usage on campus?

**A:** Yes. All new construction and renovation projects install low flow faucets/aerators. Central Stores stocks low flow faucets/aerators for faucet repairs or replacements. Faucet aerators deliver a strong spray, but help to control water consumption. They can be installed by homeowners in all faucets and showerheads to increase spray velocity, while reducing faucet water use by 50 percent. Low-flow showerheads work by mixing air into the water flow (like an aerator), and restricting the flow to increase the water pressure. Shower water use can be reduced 50% with a low-flow showerhead, and can save up to 20,000 gallons of water per year!

Believe it or not, UF’s water usage has not increased to a measurable amount in over 10 years.  This is due to the ongoing water conservation efforts of Physical Plant Division including requiring low flow fixtures such as faucets, toilets, showers and urinals for all new construction and renovation projects on campus.