

Conservation Newsletter



RUSKIN RECREATION CENTER

New Officers for the HSWCD Board

Hillsborough Soil and Water Conservation District just had their first meeting of the year on January 10, 2025.

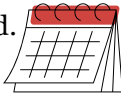
The board made the decision to have only two officers for the board:

Chair, Vice Chair/Treasurer.

Supervisor Parke was elected to Chair and Supervisor Hoke was elected to Vice Chair. Congratulations to the newly elected officers.

Mark Your Calendars!

HSWCD Regular Board Meetings for 2025 will be held every 3rd Monday of every month at 10 AM at the HSWCD Offices in Plant City unless otherwise posted.

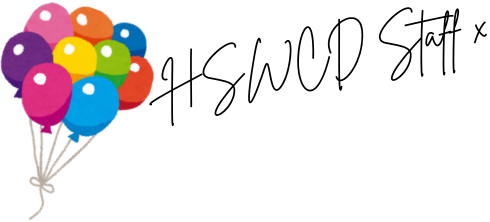


Meeting Dates for 2025:

- March 17 August 18
- April 21 September 15
- May 19 October 20
- June 16 November 17
- July 21 December 15

Supervisors of the Hillsborough Soil & Water Conservation District:

- Chair Parke, Seat 1
- Supervisor Tompkins, Seat 2
- Vice Chair Hoke, Seat 3
- Vacant, Seat 4
- Supervisor Sullivan, Seat 5



Welcome to HSWCD's Quarterly Conservation Newsletter!

High Water Mark Initiative

As part of the National Flood Insurance Program, the High Water Mark (HWM) Initiative is a community-based awareness program that increases local communities' awareness of flood risk and encourages action to mitigate that risk.

As part of the program, communities:

- Host a high-profile HWM sign unveiling and/or launch event
- Develop continuous flood risk awareness and outreach activities around the signs, and
- Complete specific mitigation actions that the community will take to reduce flood risk for residents.

For more information about how to conduct High Water Mark initiatives, see the High Water Mark Toolkit (español) or contact the High Water Mark Team.

Website: <https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/products-tools/high-water-mark-initiative>

Community News: Congratulations to 2025 Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame Inductees!

The Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame honors men and women who have made lasting contributions to agriculture in this state and to mentoring of our youth, who represent the future of agriculture in Florida.

Cary & Marcia Lightsey

Cary Lightsey is a sixth-generation Florida cattle rancher who married his high school sweetheart, Marcia, in 1973. Together, they not only saved the family ranch during hard economic times, they also expanded and diversified the operations and became leaders in the conservation arena.

The Lightsey's strongly believe in landowners participating in strategies that benefit all of society. They strive to highlight the stewardship ranchers provide for wildlife and water. They have committed 80 percent of their land to conservation easements.

Madeline Mellinger

Madeline Mellinger is an innovator in the field of integrated pest management and sustainable systems production who has dedicated more than 50 years to Florida agriculture. As a business owner, scientist and mentor, she has contributed greatly to the agricultural industry and to the development of its next generation of growers.

Madeline Mellinger founded Glades Crop Care Inc. in 1972. She remains its CEO today. Through her business, Madeline has changed the way farmers in Florida approach pest and disease control. Among other achievements, her work showed producers that they could shift from calendar-based to need-based pesticide application, saving farmers money and reducing negative environmental impact while assuring high quality harvests. As a result, Glades Crop Care Inc. was selected as a founding supporter of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program.

Jim Strickland

James Arthur "Jim" Strickland, Sr., has six decades of ranching experience. Born into a family that has been ranching in Florida since the 1800s, Jim grew up working with his father along the west coast of Florida. When his father died in the 1970s, Jim took over the family cattle operations at the age of 17, primarily leasing land for cattle. He and his family own Strickland Ranch and Lost Girl Prairie Ranch; he is also the managing partner of Big Red Cattle Company and Blackbeard's Ranch. His passion for agriculture and conservation began at a young age, as increasing development pushed his operations farther and farther inland. He serves as co-chair of the Florida Climate Smart Agriculture Work Group, which focuses on addressing climate change impacts via agricultural land conservation and furthering research on the ecosystem services provided by agricultural land. He is also vice chair of the Florida Conservation Group, a science-based organization focused on protecting Florida's ranchlands. In this capacity, he serves as a spokesman on ranchland conservation and on the need for conservation funding to protect Florida.



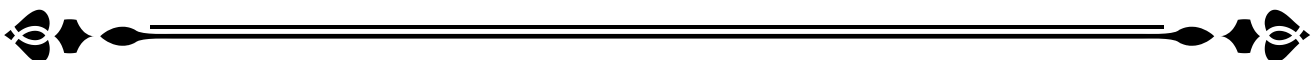
Cary & Marcia Lightsey



Madeline Mellinger



Jim Strickland



SOIL TESTING



The UF/IFAS Extension Soil Testing Laboratory can test your soil and provide a detailed analysis.

Why Soil Testing Is Important

Good crop production often requires the application of lime and fertilizer. Soil testing enables you to find out the makeup of your soil and helps you determine how much lime and fertilizer you need to apply.

What to Know About Your Soil

To find out what you need to do to improve your soil's quality, you should know each of the following attributes of the soil:

Current pH levels of your soil.

Fertility levels of the principal nutrients.

Type and quantity of lime your soil needs.

Nutrients need to be added to your soil as fertilizer.

Amount of fertilizer your crop and soil needs.

If you do not have this information, a soil test may help.

Limitations of Soil Testing

Soil testing can let you know where your soil needs treatment or improvement. However, a soil test cannot do any of the following:

Tell you which crop to grow.

Prevent poor crops caused by drought, disease, insects, too much water, or other problems.

Substitute for proper cultural practices.

Replace good management.

How to Take a Soil Sample

Keep in mind that soil test results generally take a couple of weeks to arrive back from the lab. Lime may need up to six months to produce the full effect in raising the soil pH. Be sure to send samples to the lab well before it's time to fertilize so that you can use the results to determine what kinds of fertilizer to buy.

Before following these instructions, contact your [county Extension agent](#) for complete information.

- Divide your farm into fields or areas for sampling. If you have areas with different crop growth, soil color, or lime or fertilizer histories, take a sample from each area. Keep the samples separated.



- Collect samples that provide a general example of the field or area sampled.
- Do not sample areas that are too small to be fertilized or limed separately. Do not sample unusual areas, wet spots, feeding areas, burn piles, old fence rows, sand boils, and other problem areas.
- Use a proper sampling tool, such as a sampling tube or auger. If it is necessary to use a shovel or trowel, dig a 6-inch-deep V-shaped hole in the soil. Slice a 1-inch slab off one side of the hole, and lift out the slab. For the sample, save a 1-inch-wide strip of soil from the center of the slab.
- Use a sampling tube to take a 6-inch-deep core of soil from at least fifteen spots in each field or area to be tested. Sample lawns only to a 3-inch depth. Mix the cores from one field or area. Put a pint of the mixed soil in a soil sample bag.
- Identify the samples by letter or number. Make a sketch or record of some kind so you will know which sample came from which field or area.
- Fill out the appropriate information sheets and submission forms. These forms are available at your **County Extension office** and the **Extension Soil Testing Laboratory website**. Include these forms and payment when mailing the samples.
- Send samples to the **laboratory** for analysis.
- Consult with your county Extension agent if you need help interpreting the test results or fertilization recommendations.
- Follow the recommendations!

Adapted from:

Soil Testing (Circular 239) by Gerald Kidder and R.D.Rhue. **Published by:** Soil and Water Science Department (rev. 9/2003)

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Phone: (813) 744-5519

Website: <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/hillsborough/>

Before You Dig, call your local utilities company!

Florida law states that property owners and excavators **MUST call 811 or go to sunshine811.com at least two full business days prior to digging.**

APWA Pipe Color Code Chart

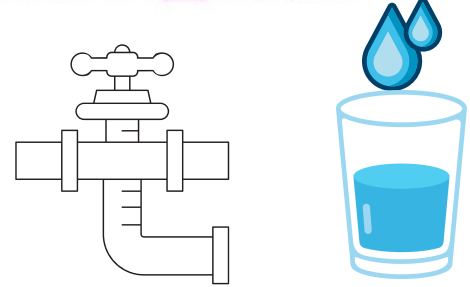
The APWA Uniform Color Code is considered a universal marking guideline across the United States and is the most recognized by professional underground utility locating companies. This Color Code system provides a universal understanding of underground utilities' marking for construction and engineering projects.

It suggests the following color scheme:

- Red denotes high and low-voltage electricity.
- Yellow designates natural gas, steam, propane, and other fuel or heating products such as fuel oil.
- Orange illustrates telephone, fiber optics, cable TV, satellite, and other communication lines.
- Blue marks out potable (drinkable) water sources such as city, municipal, and domestic.
- Green designates storm and sanitary sewer pipes, both gravity and force.
- Purple signifies non-potable (non-drinkable) water sources such as grey water, pond water, irrigation, and slurry lines. (reclaimed)
- Pink is generally used for temporary survey markings. In some instances, Pink is used to designate unknown utilities.
- White is used by excavation companies performing work to mark out the area to be surveyed.

Underground Utility Colour Codes

	Electric Power Lines, Conduit and cables.		Sewage and Drain Lines.		Temporary Survey Markings.
	Telecommunication, alarm or signal lines.		Drinking Water.		Proposed Excavation Limits or route.
	Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum, or other flammable material.		Reclaimed Water, Irrigation, and slurry lines.		



Conservation Quiz Corner

Are you smarter than a 5th grader?

Answer the following questions to find out!

1. Which are quality grades of milk?
2. Approximately how many eggs does a chicken lay annually?
3. Cattle that are young and immature?
4. Domesticated animals are known as?
5. How do Ag Industry and Ag differ?
6. What are the benefits that result from the Ag Industry?
7. What is Aquaculture?
8. What did the Smith-Hughes National Vocational Education Act do for students?
9. What is the proper term for the meat that comes from a bovine animal?
10. What year was Future Farmers of America established?



Answers: 1. A, B 2. 250 3. Calf 4. Livestock 5. Ag is raw products and industry is from products 6. food, clothing, shelter 7. Growing plants in water 8. Passed in 1917, allowed Ag classes 9. Beef 10. 1928

Thank you for reading!



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