

Administrator's Update for 4/11/12
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

Governor Rick Scott recently signed House Bill 7087, which provides Charlotte County the opportunity to apply for an enterprise zone. In 1982, the enterprise zone program was created to encourage economic development in economically distressed areas of the state by providing incentives to induce private investment. The creation of an enterprise zone creates tax advantages and incentives for businesses to locate in the zone. Now that the bill has been signed into law, an application will be prepared by our Economic Development Office and submitted to the state for final approval. The application will determine the exact location of the zone based on specific criteria outlined in the law which includes determination of areas with high poverty and unemployment rates.

EOC exercise

Last month staff from Charlotte County Office of Emergency Management and Charlotte County Fire/EMS participated in an exercise in Collier county as part of an emergency operations center support team. The exercise was held to demonstrate the efficiency of sending trained teams of experienced emergency management staff from unaffected areas to supplement the staff of an affected area. The teams also included staff members from Lee county and Sarasota county. The exercise was based on a scenario of a series of strong tornados affecting the Naples and Immokalee areas. The exercise was funded by a grant from the Federal Department of Homeland Security. Collier County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff and the support team were able to simulate an EOC response, gaining valuable experience in the process.

Easter activities

Community services staff held several Easter activities last week. The second annual "Breakfast with the Easter Bunny" event was held at Tringali Recreation Center in Englewood. Children enjoyed a pancake breakfast, made crafts and a coloring contest was held. Parents had an opportunity to take pictures of their child with the Easter bunny. Also last week was the first ever adaptive Easter egg hunt for children with disabilities and their families. This event was held at Bayshore Live Oak Park in Charlotte Harbor in association with the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency. Open to children ages 12 and under and their families, participants enjoyed arts and crafts, a story time and a traditional Easter egg hunt. All of our participants were winners and rewarded with a goodie bag full of treats.

Triathlon

The first annual Tri-Charlotte County Triathlon was held Sunday April 1 and had 100 registered athletes. Friends and family, community services staff and volunteers were present to put the event together and an estimated 400 people were at the event. The Triathlon was a partnership with Charlotte County community services department and the Charlotte County Family YMCA, with assistance from the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, Charlotte County Fire/EMS, JROTC and many other groups and volunteers in our community. Held at South County Regional Park in Punta Gorda, the course consisted of a quarter mile swim in the pool, a sixteen mile bicycle ride around the airport, and a five kilometer run.

Summer fertilizer restrictions

The Charlotte County fertilizer ordinance No. 2011-017, written in 2008, was amended in 2011 with two important changes. As we approach the rainy season here in Charlotte County, please keep in mind that as per the ordinance no fertilizer containing nitrogen or phosphorus may be applied from June 1 to Sept. 30 to turf or landscape plants. Additionally, there is a limit as to how much nitrogen can be applied per year: no more than 4 pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per year total. This ordinance applies to both homeowners and those who apply fertilizer commercially within unincorporated Charlotte County. Our extension services website, <http://charlotte.ifas.ufl.edu/horticulture/hort-fertilizer1.htm> has more information on the Fertilizer Ordinance.