

Administrator's Update for 7/15/15
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

The RESTORE Act, or "Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012," was passed by Congress to establish a trust fund for deposits of 80 percent of administrative and civil penalties paid by parties responsible for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The RESTORE Act includes methods for distribution of the funds among the affected areas, including Charlotte County.

As a prerequisite under the RESTORE Act for requesting and receiving funding for eligible activities, each county must submit a multiyear implementation plan (MYIP) to cover a period of time during which projects could be undertaken with funds available from the RESTORE Act. The MYIP must be published for public comment for 45 days.

Charlotte County's MYIP is now available for public comment. Visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click "RESTORE Act MYIP" in the Hot Topics list to access the plan and backup documentation. Paper copies are also available and can be requested via phone: 941.764.4996. The public comment period will close on August 22, 2015. Comments on the MYIP should be sent to Mindy Collier, RESTORE Act Coordinator at Mindy.Collier@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.

Lightning alerts at pools

Charlotte County Community Services department has installed WeatherBug® Outdoor Lightning Alerting Systems at all three county pools: Oyster Creek Pool at Ann Dever Memorial Regional Park in Englewood, Port Charlotte Beach Park Pool in Port Charlotte and South County Regional Park Pool in Punta Gorda. The alert system at our aquatic facilities is part of community services' ongoing commitment to providing fun, safe programs and activities for the community.

The alert system uses both audible and visible alarms when there is lightning within 10 miles of a pool. When lightning is detected, the pool area must be cleared for 30 minutes. Each time lightning is detected, the alert system timer resets to 30 minutes and the countdown begins again.

When the weather is questionable, swimmers can plan ahead by checking the status of a pool's alarms on the county website. Visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov, click Parks under Popular Links, and then click Aquatic Programs & Pools on the left. Any active lightning alerts for the pools will be displayed as well as the estimated time to all clear and information on the last lightning stroke. Every time the system detects lightning within 10 miles of a pool, the timer resets to a 30 minute countdown. For more information call the recreation program supervisor, Marc Solomon, at 941.627.1628 ext. 103.

Hospitality training

In the coming weeks, the Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau will be offering online hospitality training through Visit Florida and the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association to members of the Charlotte County tourism industry. Tourism hospitality executives and staff will be invited to participate free of charge through a special code provided by the Bureau. Courses will include "The Power of One: Creating Memorable Guest Experiences in the Sunshine State" and "Resolving Guest Conflict." Each course takes approx. 30-45 minutes to complete, including training and exam with certificate of completion. The certificate and training hours are also recorded in the FRLA (Florida Restaurant and Lodging) system. Industry partners will soon receive communications on the training, but interested hospitality-related organizations (hotels, restaurants, etc.) are welcome to email training@charlotteharbortravel.com for information.