

# SARASOTA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

### **EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER AUTHORIZING RESIDENTIAL USE OF POTABLE WATER FOR LAWN IRRIGATION IN SARASOTA COUNTY**

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1. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has established a drought index known as the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (“KBDI”), which has a scale which runs from 0 to 800, with 800 being desert conditions. The Florida Division of Forestry uses the KBDI to measure the risk of fire and has determined that a KBDI number above 400 indicates an undue risk of fire. On May 26, 2021, the KBDI number for portions of the State of Florida, including Sarasota County, exceeded 550, which placed the risk of fire at a high level.
2. The drought condition further posed an imminent threat of a water supply emergency in Sarasota County due to increased usage of potable water for residential outdoor uses, which presented an immediate danger to the health and safety of the citizens of Sarasota County, necessitating the exercise of all reasonable preparatory, precautionary, and remedial measures, including, but not limited to, imposing a temporary ban on using potable water for residential lawn irrigation uses, except where such use is allowed under an exemption in the Sarasota County Code.
3. Section 252.38, Florida Statutes, authorizes Sarasota County to declare a state of local emergency, and further authorizes Sarasota County to take whatever prudent action is necessary to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the community during a declared emergency.
4. The Board of County Commissioners of Sarasota County, through the Sarasota County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, has delegated to the County Administrator the authority to declare a state of local emergency in Sarasota County. Pursuant to that authority, on May 26, 2021, I declared a state of local emergency in Sarasota County and further ordered that the use of potable water for residential lawn irrigation uses, except where such residential lawn irrigation uses are allowed under an exemption in the Sarasota County Code, was prohibited in Sarasota County until further notice.
5. Weather and drought conditions in Sarasota County continue to present a risk of fire, however, the impacts on the water supply have improved, rendering an extension of the previously declared state of emergency unnecessary at this time, and further eliminating the need to restrict the use of potable water for residential lawn irrigation uses.

**NOW, THEREFORE, UNDER THE AUTHORITY SPECIFIED HEREIN, I, Jonathan R. Lewis, Sarasota County Administrator, do hereby order:**

The order prohibiting the use of potable water for residential lawn irrigation uses, except where such residential lawn irrigation uses are allowed under an exemption in the Sarasota County Code, is rescinded effective June 2, 2021

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan R. Lewis', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and includes a small 'Fur' or similar mark at the end.

Jonathan R. Lewis  
County Administrator

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Date