



HURRICANE SEASON 2014 NEIGHBORHOOD FLOOD CONTROL

Flood control in South Florida is an integrated system consisting of primary canals operated by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), secondary canals operated and maintained by Lake Worth Drainage District (LWDD) and tertiary neighborhood drainage systems owned, operated and maintained by residential associations.

The lake level in your neighborhood, as part of the tertiary system, is designed for a specific elevation called the *control elevation*. During a rain event, the lake receives runoff from your property, roadways and common areas. When the lake reaches the control elevation, it begins to discharge through a control structure or weir into the adjacent canal. There are two basic types of control structures: fixed and operable. With approval from LWDD, communities with operable structures may be allowed to open and increase their discharge rate prior to and after a rain event. LWDD canals convey excess water to the SFWMD primary canals which ultimately discharge into the ocean.

Community drainage systems are typically designed to handle several inches of rainfall before ponding occurs. It is important to note, as depicted in the photo to the right, that roadways, sidewalks, driveways and parking lots are designed as storage areas during heavy rainfall events. Standing water is normal and should be expected.



LWDD staff constantly monitors water levels in its canals and makes adjustments when necessary. However, flood control is a shared responsibility. The most important actions that a residential association can take is to maintain the community's drainage system. This will ensure that control structures, swales, drains and outfall pipes have an unobstructed flow. In addition, proper landscape maintenance and removal of any encroachments on LWDD canal rights-of-way is imperative to avoid potential blockages in canals due to debris and provide a clear path for large equipment should LWDD need to gain emergency access.

Hurricane season is June 1st through November 30th. However it is never too early or too late to prepare for potential storm flooding. The attached checklist provides a quick and easy reference for residential associations regarding the necessary steps to implement for flood control. Please contact us if you have questions, would like to schedule an on-site visit or need a speaker for your community meeting. Working together, we can provide quality flood control.