



## Brightwater Landscape & Irrigation Maintenance

- The community irrigation system draws water from pumps in several lakes and distributes this water through the irrigation mainline that runs throughout the common areas. Valves are tied into the mainline and are controlled by an irrigation controller that opens the valves within scheduled watering windows.
- The common areas and homes are watered by the same irrigation system/controller and run for similar durations. The common areas, however, also receive regular applications of fungicide, herbicide (e.g., for sedge and broadleaf), insecticide (e.g., for chinch bugs, grubs, cut worms, and ants), and fertilizer.
- Big Tree did not install or design any landscaping or irrigation in the homeowners' yards including the filters, sprinklers, and bubblers. Homeowners' yards were installed by a third party that contracts with the home builders.
- For each valve, there is also a filter with a 200-micron screen that we clean monthly. Cleaning the filters ensures optimal water pressure to homeowners' irrigation systems.
- After each cleaning, we run each valve ensuring it is functioning properly along with checking water flow and pressure.
- At times, the filters have required cleaning more often due to particulate matter in the water drawn from lakes.
- We have engaged the University of Florida and a private laboratory to diagnose the water quality issues. Our hypothesis is that it is a combination of biological material (e.g., flocculated algae) and sediment (e.g., silt, clay, sand) that is clogging filters.
- Visualizing a cross section of the lake, there is a gradient between cleaner water and the lake bottom in which there are suspended solids. These solids are concentrated when lake levels are lower, as they are right now, and may be sucked into the pumps.
- There is a recharge well that helps maintain the level of the lakes. We have noticed that it has been tampered with more than once. It is very important that it remains operational during the dry season to keep the lake levels high. Big Tree, Breeze and MetroPlaces are collaborating to check the recharge well regularly and ensure it is functioning.
- We will continue to analyze the situation, and we will work with Breeze and MetroPlaces to identify any potential options to improve the water quality.
- If you have any concerns, please contact Breeze and we will collaborate with them to address them.



## Brightwater Sod Fertilization Guidelines

- Using a slow-release fertilizer formulation is highly preferred, as it requires fewer applications and there is less chance of nutrients are lost to leaching
- The resident lawns at Brightwater are sodded with Floratam, a type of St. Augustine grass. Floratam should be fertilized 2 to 4 times per year:
  - *Slow-release* fertilizers should be applied less frequently but at a higher concentration of nutrients
  - *Soluble* fertilizers should be applied more frequently but at a lower concentration of nutrients
- Lawns should not be fertilized during the rainy season to prevent the leaching of nutrients into waterways
- Lee County prohibits fertilizer applications from June 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>
- Lawns should not be fertilized when they are dormant
- New sod does not need fertilizer until it has rooted; it is best to wait 30 to 60 days after planting
- Fertilizer should be applied uniformly over the desired landscape area
- No more than 0.7 lbs. of soluble Nitrogen should be applied per 1,000 square feet.
- Here is a link to a University of Florida webpage with information about the pounds of various types of fertilizers needed to achieve a rate of 0.7 lbs. per 1000 square feet:  
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/LH014> (Scroll to bottom of page and click link for Table 4.)
- All application rates and timing must be in line with local and state laws. The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences provides additional recommendations for best practices.
- Refer to the below link for additional information: Florida Turf Best Management Practices -  
[https://www.sfwmd.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fl\\_green\\_bmp.pdf](https://www.sfwmd.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fl_green_bmp.pdf)

