

# Imagine a Day Without Water Raises Awareness

By Caroline Wannall

This Thursday, Oct. 19, more than a thousand organizations nationwide will join Charlotte County to raise awareness on the 9th annual Imagine a Day Without Water. Imagine a Day Without Water is a day to raise awareness about the role water plays in our lives and the importance of investing in water and the people behind our systems. A day without water would be a public health and safety crisis, limiting the abilities of safety personnel such as firefighters and hospital staff, as well as businesses and homes, to function.

Many of you this morning showered, brushed your teeth, made your coffee and breakfast, flushed your toilet, and washed your hands. All those things would not be possible without water. What if, for one day that dependable flow of water ceased to exist? Have you considered the extensive infrastructure and treatment required to ensure water is constantly flowing from your tap? Have you thought about the dedicated people behind the systems?

Charlotte County Utilities' infrastructure includes more than 1,500 miles of water mains, 5,800 fire hydrants, 1,000 miles of wastewater mains, 317 sewer lift stations, one drinking water treatment facility, and four wastewater treatment facilities. Our 309 staff members are committed to our mission to provide safe, reliable drinking water, reclaimed water, and wastewater service for the enrichment of the community. They work around the clock and throughout emergencies to ensure the citizens of Charlotte County do not have to experience a day without water.

Water infrastructure is the lifeline of our communities. As our community grows and ages, so does the infrastructure. It must be increased to keep up with new demands, and as systems age, they must be replaced. The Utilities Department is always planning for the future of our infrastructure. We have a robust repair and replacement program to ensure our aging infrastructure is replaced when it is no longer functional. We are also in the process of upgrading two of our wastewater treatment facilities due to growth in the county's Burnt Store and Mid-County areas. We are planning to upgrade an additional wastewater treatment facility due to development in West County.

Imagine a Day Without Water is an excellent opportunity for our residents to get educated about our local water systems. We urge you to take a few steps beyond imagining the reality of going without a vital resource and learning about the systems that deliver water to your homes and businesses daily.

Join us for a tour of the Burnt Store Water Treatment and Reclamation Facility, 17430 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 19, 2023. You will get a behind-the-scenes look at the incredible work that goes into providing clean, safe water for our community and the crucial wastewater treatment process that removes contaminants from wastewater to make it safe for the environment. Tour capacity is limited, and seats must be reserved in advance on a first-served basis. To request a reservation, email [Caroline.Wannall@CharlotteCountyFL.gov](mailto:Caroline.Wannall@CharlotteCountyFL.gov) or call 941-764-4304.

To keep up with the Utilities Department's events and outreach, follow Charlotte County Utilities Facebook.

*Readers may reach Utilities Public Relations Manager Caroline Wannall at [Caroline.Wannall@CharlotteCountyFL.gov](mailto:Caroline.Wannall@CharlotteCountyFL.gov).*