

New Fertilizer Ordinance / Education & Septic Upgrade Incentive Program Update

Orange County - Emily Lawson



My Yard, My Springs Campaign

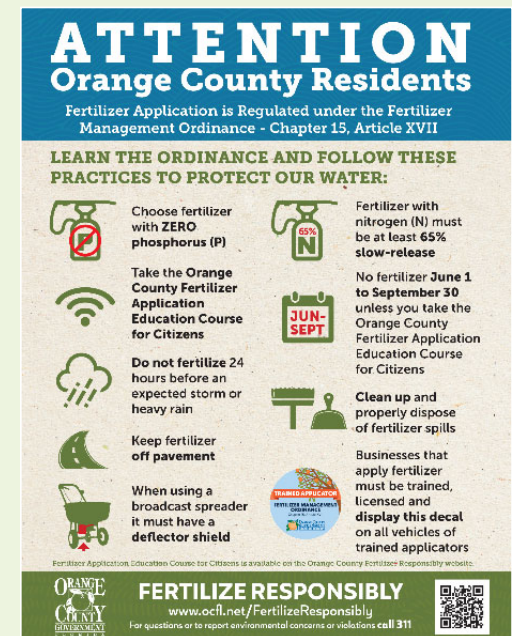
Education Grant – through September 30, 2021

Grant funded marketing firm (Marketing for Change) development of campaign materials and marketing strategy to be implemented by Orange County:

- MyYardMySprings.org Website
- Social Media
- Retail
- Billboards
- Yard-Springs Connection Infographic and Animation
- All source files

Social Media Ads: (specific zip codes) Growth Marketing Summer and Fall 2021

Public Service Announcements (PSAs): were created from Yard-Springs Animation/theme (Channels 6 and 9) and aired Summer 2021 – also on YouTube and Orange TV



My Yard, My Springs Campaign

Education Materials

Fertilize Responsibly and My Yard My Springs Websites



Multilingual Retail Signage, Kiosks, Banners and Billboards



Social Media and Logo

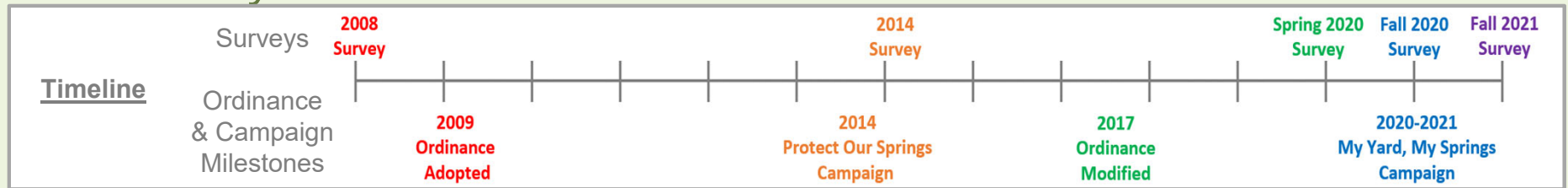


Utility Bill Inserts



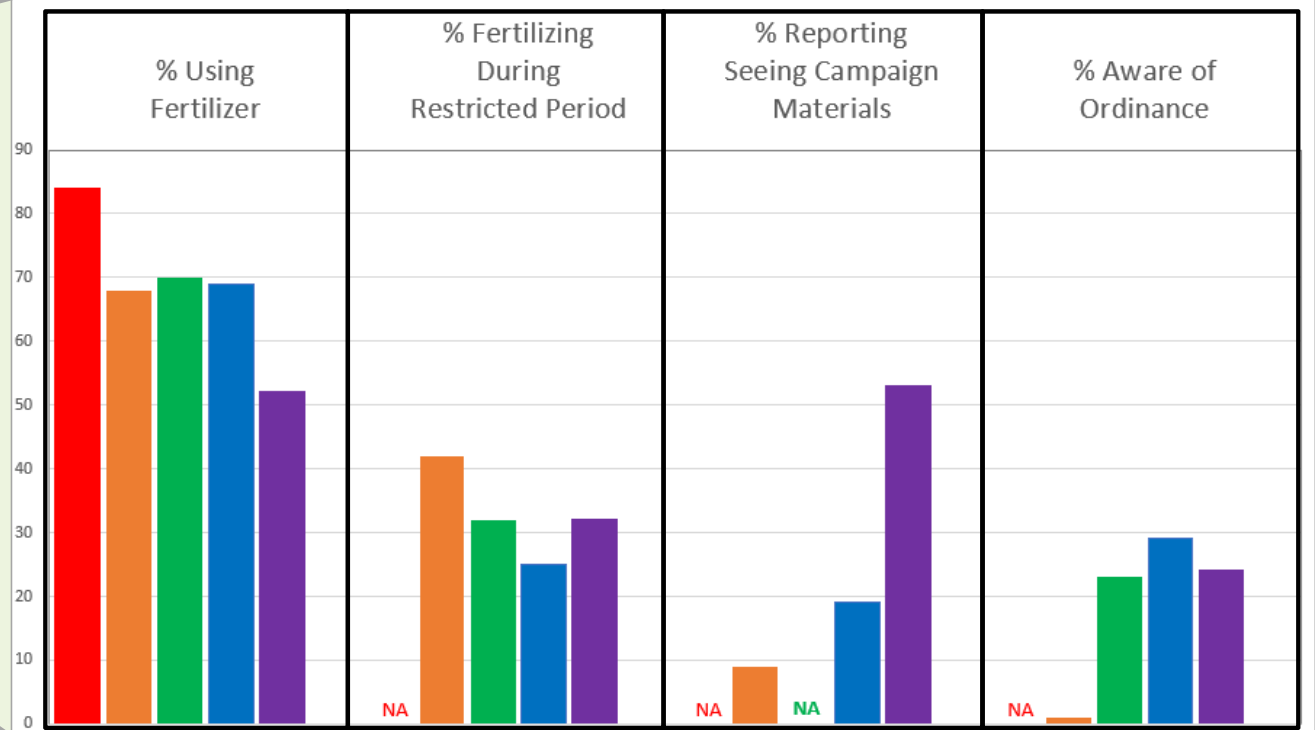
My Yard, My Springs Campaign

Metrics: Surveys



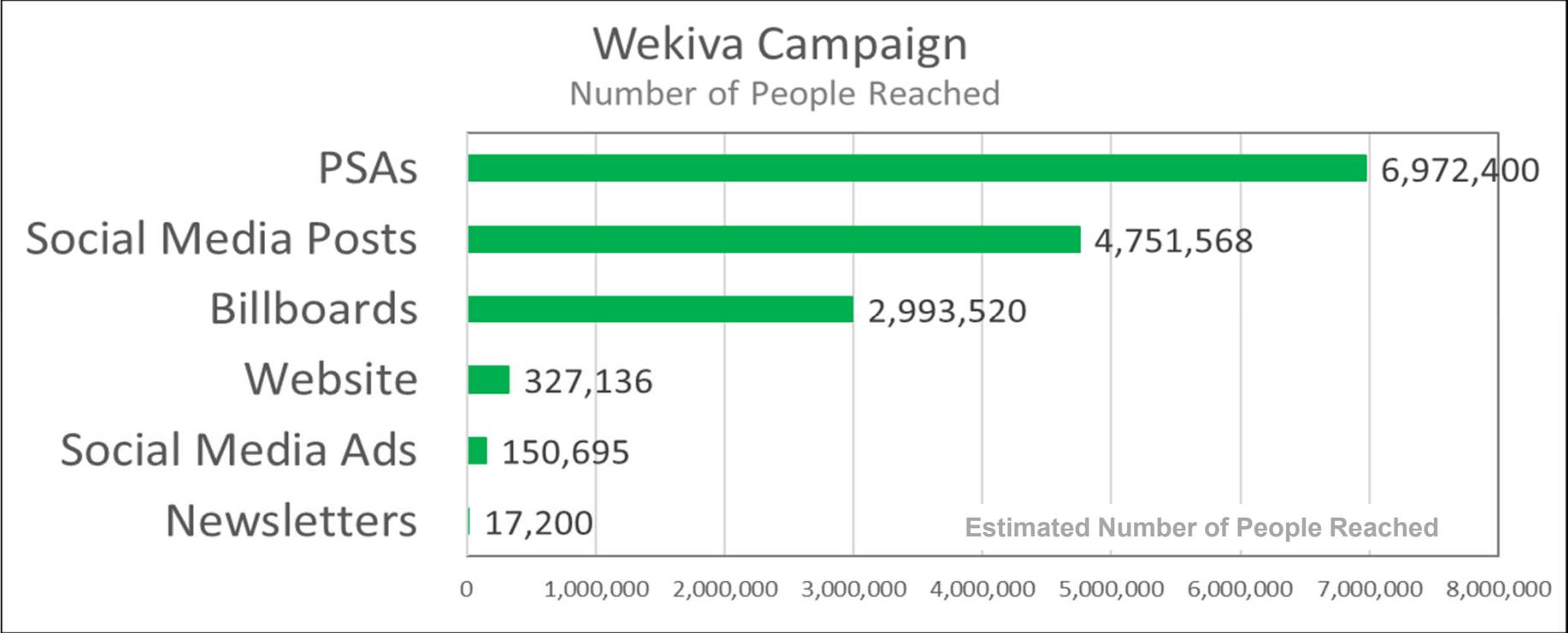
Results

Legend



My Yard, My Springs Campaign

Metrics: Reach



My Yard, My Springs Campaign

Partners

Orange County Environmental Protection Division was the lead, but we had help!

- Orange County Utilities
- Commissioners
- Orange County Library System
- Wekiva State Park
- Hope CommUnity Center
- IDEAS for Us
- Friends of the Wekiva
- Local Municipalities
- Orange County Parks
- Neighborhood Services
- University of South Florida
- Orange TV
- Orange County Communications

Partners: reviewed, hosted and distributed material

Contact: direct and deliver materials to them

Issues: Storage and tracking were potential issues, no problems

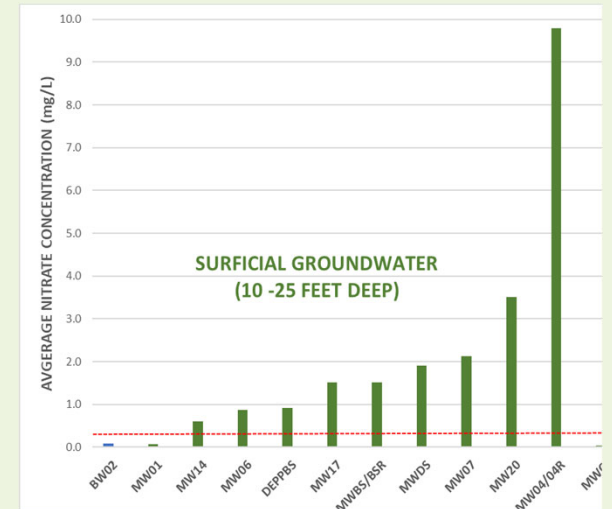


New Ordinance

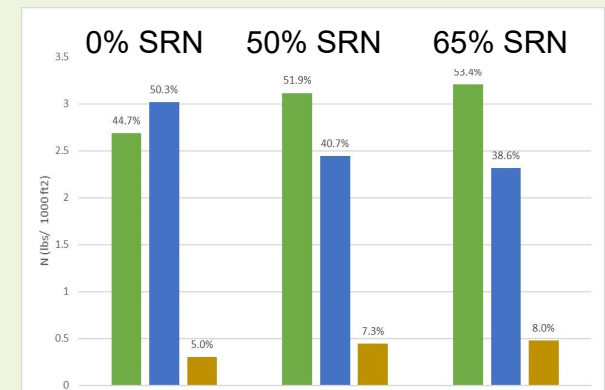
Science First

2017 Ordinance Update: BCC requested scientific studies to inform potential future changes

- confirmed fertilizer is a major source of nitrate in springshed groundwater
 - monitoring well concentration data
 - isotope data
- USDA Hydrus model supports increasing percentage of slow-release nitrogen to reduce leaching
- Increasing trend in nutrient impairments countywide
- Orange County required to remove pollutants from impaired waters
- Removing pollutants is more costly than preventing them from entering our waters



RED DASHED LINE - FDEP TMDL CONCENTRATION



BLUE BAR IS LEACHED TO GROUNDWATER

New Ordinance

Summary

Effective Date: June 1, 2022

New training requirements: institutional applicators and golf courses

	% Slow Release Nitrogen (SRN)	Fertilizer-Free Zone Next to Water Bodies (ft)	Rainy Season Restriction (June 1-Sept 30)	Maximum Application per Year per 1,000 sf	Seeding or Sodding Restrictions
2017	65%, when readily available	15 ft	allowed if trained		
New	65%	25 ft	✓	3 <u>lbs</u>	✓

Current

New Ordinance

Communication and Implementation

Scientific studies: 2017 through 2021

Code update meetings: March 2021 through February 2022

Stakeholder Involvement

- Stakeholder List: Ordinance (2009) and Ordinance Update (2017) and continue to update
- Reach out via email to provide drafts and invites to stakeholder meetings
- Email specific to fertilizer materials
- Hold public stakeholder meetings
- Meetings with stakeholders that requested (virtual and in person): Agricultural Advisory Board, Massey Services, Scotts, IFAS, Sustainability Advisory Board, Environmental Protection Committee

Updating this ordinance was an expensive and time-consuming process

Orange County now has one of the most stringent fertilizer ordinances in the state - ideas for supporting BMAP credits?



New Ordinance

Education

Institutional applicators and golf courses: new training requirements

Commercial applicators and Retail: Postcards, flyers, letters, posters with changes and important ordinance elements

Merge **Fertilize Responsibly** and **My Yard, My Springs** campaigns: new materials, but applicable countywide (lakes, rivers, and springs)

Website: information, FAQs, videos, NEW fertilizer calculator
www.ocfl.net/FertilizeResponsibly

Local municipality websites: providing updated information



New Ordinance

Education

Bus Wraps



Email Title Block Messages



Institutional Applicator Decals



Post Cards - Seasonal



If your business employs staff who apply fertilizer (not a hired contractor), you are regulated by the Orange County Fertilizer Management Ordinance that contains new requirements effective June 1, 2022. Changes to fertilizer application are necessary to help reduce excessive nutrient pollutants nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) found in our local lakes, rivers, and springs. Compliance points of the ordinance include the following:

- From June 1 to September 30, the application of fertilizer containing N and/or P is prohibited.
- From October 1 to May 31 the following applies:
 - 65% of the N in any fertilizer applied to landscapes must be slow-release type N.
 - Fertilizer with N shall not be applied before seeding or sodding a site or for (30) days after.
 - No more than 3 pounds of total N per 1,000 square feet may be applied per year.
- All Year:
 - Fertilizer with P is prohibited unless a soil test proves there is a P deficiency in that location.
 - Spilled fertilizer, grass clippings and debris must be kept off pavement and away from storm drain inlets. Collect and manage for proper disposal or reapply to landscape.
- Fertilizer must not be applied within 24 hours of a forecasted or impending storm.
- No fertilizer shall be applied within 25 feet of natural water bodies.
- All institutional applicators of fertilizer are required to take the UF/IFAS Green Industries Best Management Practices (GI-BMP).
- When applying fertilizer, including products with a combination of herbicides and/or pesticides, qualified fertilizer applicators must display proof of completed training by affixing a decal to vehicles used in application operations.

To order free decals, request training or ask questions, please call 407-836-1400 or email fertilizer@ocfl.net.

- To learn more and to view available options for taking the GI-BMP visit: <https://gibmp.ifas.ufl.edu/>



For more detailed ordinance information visit www.ocfl.net/FertilizeResponsibly

We appreciate your commitment to healthy water quality.

Septic Upgrade Incentive Program

Springs Grant

Grant is specific to Priority Focus Area within Wekiwa and Rock Springs BMAP Area

Headline banner on OC Springs website links to simple inquiry form – emails Neighborhood Services contact for address-based screening

- Address in Orange County Utilities service area
- Address not included in 5-year Utilities sewerage plan

Long form application (6 pages) provided if screening passes



Florida Springs and
Aquifer Protection Act

Headlines « || »

Live near Wekiva or Rock Springs and upgrading your septic system? You may qualify for a rebate, submit the [Septic Tank Incentive Program Inquiry form](#).



Septic Upgrade Incentive Program

Science and Regulatory

Regulatory

- Wekiwa and Rock Springs BMAP
 - require septic upgrade or sewerage
 - not currently enforcing septic upgrades for repair permits (January 4, 2024)
- Nutrient BMAPs
 - requiring Wastewater and OSTDS Plans
 - septic upgrades not efficient phosphorus reducers, may only be feasible for nitrogen BMAPs

Vulnerability Study

- Similar to Aquifer Vulnerability Assessments in Florida (FAVA) and Wekiva (WAVA)
- What areas of Orange County are vulnerable to pollution from septic systems
- Where should we perform wastewater feasibility studies



Septic Upgrade Incentive Program

Partners

Local Department of Health has been very helpful

- list of systems upgraded to advanced nitrogen treatment systems within the grant timeframe - we could reach out directly
- where are systems failing

Orange County Neighborhood Services: helping implement the application process

Orange County Utilities: providing information from the Wastewater Feasibility Study

- areas to avoid (planned for sewer in the next 5 years)
- areas to target

Other counties – working with homeowners or installers? Local DOH?



Septic Upgrade Incentive Program

Challenges

Residential Issues

- Skeptical
- Financial
- Timing
- Knowledge

Regulatory – Without regulatory driver to upgrade for repair permits, residents choose not to upgrade, stick with lower cost conventional system

Negative publicity – some advanced treatment technologies have been criticized

Utilities Wastewater Feasibility Study incomplete – unable to broadly advertise, don't want to compete with other initiatives or confuse residents



Summary

My Yard, My Springs Campaign: People remember what they see on TV

Fertilizer Ordinance:

- Engage stakeholders for stronger ordinance and greater support
- Target education of new requirements

Septic Upgrade Incentive Program: without a regulatory driver, residents are not utilizing the program so far

Resources for Septic:

- regulation requiring septic upgrades
- infographic of technologies (3 options)
- funding that is available County-wide
- FDEP plan for upgrade regulation and funding



Thank You!

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**Orange County
Environmental Protection Division**

