

# Media Advisory

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## **NO MORE WATERING RESTRICTIONS!**

Legislation moving through Tallahassee makes it possible...  
Smart irrigation technology provides the  
freedom to irrigate landscapes and conserve water resources

An amendment proposed for SB 494 and included in SB 494 includes a new alternative for water conserving landscape irrigation. The amendment calls for using a “smart controller” within conditions of each water management district and proposes to exempt users from watering restrictions.

The key thing that makes smart irrigation controllers a better bet for homeowners and water managers is that they use only the water that is needed and only when it’s needed. According to University of Florida studies, using this technology can save up to 70 percent of water used for irrigation—while still giving landscapes the water they need to be healthy and beautiful. According to studies, such systems save up to 24 percent of water during wet periods and up to 80 percent in dry periods. In short, this technology will save water and reduce homeowner aggravation all year ‘round.

Those homeowners, developers and businesses who adopt this most-efficient technology will be granted a “variance” from irrigation restrictions. Properties using the technology will have proper signage indicating that they are participating in the “Smart Irrigator” program.

Because this program is not much different than programs the water management districts already have, administration of this program will not cost more to administer. In fact, with online access to smart controllers, it will be easier for utilities and water management districts to monitor both compliance and water use. If users do not properly install and use the technology, the variance can be revoked.

“The Florida Wildlife Federation supports this because we know that smart conservation practices are critical to protecting the quality of life including the environment and the landscapes we love,” Jay Liles, Policy Consultant to the Florida Wildlife Federation.

### **SOURCE MATERIAL**

SB 494

[http://www.flsenate.gov/session/index.cfm?BI\\_Mode=ViewBillInfo&Mode=Bills&ElementID=Jum pToBox&SubMenu=1&Year=2009&billnum=494](http://www.flsenate.gov/session/index.cfm?BI_Mode=ViewBillInfo&Mode=Bills&ElementID=Jum pToBox&SubMenu=1&Year=2009&billnum=494)

SB 2530

[http://www.flsenate.gov/session/index.cfm?BI\\_Mode=ViewBillInfo&Mode=Bills&ElementID=Jum pToBox&SubMenu=1&Year=2009&billnum=2530](http://www.flsenate.gov/session/index.cfm?BI_Mode=ViewBillInfo&Mode=Bills&ElementID=Jum pToBox&SubMenu=1&Year=2009&billnum=2530)

Experts:

Michael Dukes, Ph.D. University of Florida <http://www.agen.ufl.edu/~mdukes/>

Charles Lee, Audubon of Florida

Southwest Florida Water Management District study

<http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/conservation/outdoors/irrigation.php>