

Weekly Highlights Report July 19, 2024

City Manager

- Every community, whether it's bustling or calm, thrives on order, harmony, and safety. City code compliance is crucial in shaping the unique character of Punta Gorda, ensuring that everyone, from residents to businesses, can coexist peacefully while safeguarding our local environment.

One of the primary goals of code compliance is to prioritize public safety and ensure the well-being of our residents. By enforcing regulations related to building structures, fire safety, and health standards, we aim to create safe homes and workplaces. Through regular inspections and strict adherence to these codes, we significantly reduce the risks of accidents, structural issues, and health hazards.

Our City's approach emphasizes achieving voluntary compliance with reported or identified code violations. Education plays a pivotal role in this endeavor. Many residents are unaware that specific actions, like parking without a valid tag or storing inoperable vehicles, can violate local ordinances. Awareness and understanding of these rules are essential, as most people are eager to comply once they understand the requirements. A complete listing of the Code of Ordinances is available at [Code of Ordinances | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.punta-gorda.fl.us/code-of-ordinances)

Code compliance officers conduct inspections based on complaints or direct observations. The focus is always on achieving voluntary compliance. Depending on the severity of the violation, residents typically have between 24 hours to 21 days to address the issue. In urgent cases, such as vehicles obstructing sidewalks, quicker action may be required, often within 24 hours.

In instances where voluntary compliance isn't achieved, progressive enforcement steps may be necessary. This could involve issuing a formal notice or scheduling a hearing before the Code Enforcement Board. To find out the status of a code violation, a convenient case search is available on the City's website at [Code Compliance | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.punta-gorda.fl.us/code-compliance). Code cases can be searched by case number, address, or owner name.



The City is currently seeking one alternate member for the Code Enforcement Board. The board meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 9 a.m. at the Military Heritage Museum. The board consists of seven members with two alternate members. Three-year terms - maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Financial disclosure is required. The board hears and decides alleged violations of the City Code of Ordinances. To apply visit [Code of Ordinances | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://punta-gorda.fl.us/CodeofOrdinances)

Due to Florida Statutes, a Code Enforcement Officer may not initiate enforcement proceedings for a potential violation of a duly enacted code or ordinance by way of an anonymous complaint. A person who reports a possible violation of a code or an ordinance must provide their name and address to the local government before an enforcement proceeding may occur. If you would like to report a violation, call (941) 575-3352 or visit [Code Violation | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://punta-gorda.fl.us/CodeViolation)

Residents can also report code violations via TextmyGov. Simply text hi to (941) 347-0747. You will receive a return text with instructions on reporting a violation. The system can accept pictures as well. A Code Compliance officer will then investigate the potential violation.

Property maintenance laws are designed to promote neighborhood integrity, prevent property value decline, reduce visual clutter and blight, and preserve quality of life. We appreciate the efforts of our residents and businesses to preserve and enhance Punta Gorda's identity as a vibrant waterfront community, unique in character and history, and as a desirable place to live, work and visit. *Readers may reach City Manager Greg Murray at citymgr@cityofpuntagordafl.com by calling the general office line at (941) 575-3302.*

- **Summer Break** – City Council will be on summer hiatus until Aug., 21. During this period, responses to emails and phone calls will be limited.



Human Resources

- **Open Positions** – The City of Punta Gorda offers a very generous benefit package to include medical, dental, vision, life insurance, and a defined contribution retirement plan with matching contributions [Employment Opportunities | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://punta-gorda.fl.us/EmploymentOpportunities) Currently hiring for the following professional position:
 - **Utility Engineer – Utilities.** A professional position responsible for Utilities Engineering and providing technical engineering services for City utilities construction and improvement projects.
 - **Senior Accountant – Finance** – A professional position responsible for applying the principles of accounting to analyze financial information and prepare financial reports by compiling information, preparing profit and loss statements, and utilizing appropriate accounting control procedures.
 - **Purchasing Agent I – Procurement** - A skilled paraprofessional position responsible for purchasing various commodities and services for the City in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local purchasing requirements.



- **Network Analyst – I.T.** – A highly skilled technical position that is responsible for designing and implementing information systems to support the enterprise infrastructure of an organization by ensuring that all systems are working at optimal levels and supporting the use of new technologies. This infrastructure includes core network, email, storage, wireless networks, communications, servers, public cloud, and virtual environments; and security for these systems.
- **Customer Service Representative – Billing & Collections** - An entry level customer service and clerical position that serves the public by responding to concerns expressed in person, via telephone, fax or written correspondence; and by accepting and processing utility payments.
- **Zoning Official – Urban Design** - A supervisory professional responsible for administering the City's codes as they relate to property zoning, design, and maintenance standards.

Urban Design

Upcoming Events

- Charlotte Harbor Event Center, 75 Taylor St. For additional information, visit <https://www.charlotteharborecc.com/events>
- Fishermen's Village events can be accessed at <https://www.fishville.com/events/>
- Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at <https://puntagordachamber.com/calendar-events/>
- Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at <https://business.charlottecountychamber.org/events/calendar>
- Military Heritage Museum events can be accessed at [Upcoming Events – Military Heritage Museum](#)
- Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, 2001 Shreve Street; for all community events and class information, visit <https://pgica.org/>.
- The Visual Arts Center events can be accessed at [Welcome to the Visual Arts Center of Punta Gorda, FL \(visualartcenter.org\)](#)



Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed mowing the following areas on July 13.
 - PGI (Bal Harbor Boulevard, Deborah Drive, Ryan Boulevard, Suzi Street, and Casey Key Drive).
 - PGI Bird Section (Almar Drive, Albatross Drive, Whippoorwill Boulevard, and Turtle Dove Boulevard).
 - Colony Point (Colony Point Drive, West Marion Avenue, Socorro Drive, and Coronado Drive).
 - PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Veneto, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive).
 - Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Drive, Tripoli Boulevard, Madrid Boulevard, and Macedonia Drive).
 - Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Trail, N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree).
 - Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Avenue, W. Olympia Avenue, Shreve Street, and Harvey Street)
 - The Historic District East of 41 and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Avenue, E Olympia Avenue, Narranja Street, E Henry Street, and Cooper Street).

Planning Corner

- **Vertical Oyster Gardens** — Educational signage has been installed at the Laishley Marina Day Docks to explain the Vertical Oyster Gardening (VOG) project. Urban Design staff has teamed up with the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEC) to install these water-filtering gardens around city parks. Oysters create habitat for birds, fish, and crabs and improve water quality. Each oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water a day. VOGs are made of recycled oyster shells – donated from local restaurants – that are strung along a wire in what is called an "oyster stack" and hung from underneath docks. Students at Punta Gorda Middle School made the oyster stacks that were installed at Laishley Park. Each of the VOGs are inviting places for baby oysters – called "spats" – to cling to, eventually becoming home to hundreds of oysters and filtering billions of gallons of water over their lifetime. More locations in Punta Gorda's parks are to come! For more information on vertical oyster gardens or to learn how to install one on your dock, please visit: [Vertical Oyster Gardening \(checflorida.org\)](http://checflorida.org)



Public Works

- **Canal Maintenance Production** – Maintenance crews manufactured 72 sea wall panels, filled depressions at 39 residences and condominiums. Crews also recovered two 20-foot pilings from our waterways and mowed the fields at BSI locks and Sancho Panza to aid in safe navigation.
- **Dockside Dredging** –Property owners that are listed on the Hurricane Ian Seawall Damage list will not be allowed to have dockside dredging performed adjacent to the seawall until the seawall has been repaired. Any dredging along the damaged seawall may cause damage.
- **Stabilizing Erosion** – Just a friendly reminder for property owners to regularly check the condition of their tarps or plastic that is protecting the eroded areas. Tarps and plastic tend to become brittle in the sun and may start falling apart. Utilizing plastic during a rain event will help keep the soil in place preventing further erosion.
- **Canal Maintenance Seawall Failure Update** – Construction schedules have been updated and are posted on the Canal Maintenance website for the next six months look ahead. There are 18 projects in Punta Gorda Isles under construction with 100 projects completed, and five projects under construction with 26 completed in Burnt Store Isles. [Hurricane Ian Related Seawall Failures | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://punta-gorda.fl.us)
- **Establishing sod after seawall replacement** – Placing the sod is the final phase of seawall replacement construction. As per the City ordinance, property owners are responsible for establishing the sod after it has been placed and the City will not reimburse the owners for their water usage.
- **Vessel Speeds** – Canal Maintenance is asking people to be mindful of the current situation in the canals with seawalls being damaged. City code states that the operation of vessels in the canals shall be Slow Speed Minimum Wake in the waterways within the City limits. The speed and operation in the Ponce Inlet, Pompano Inlet, Bass, and Snook Inlet are Idle Speed and No Wake. Wakes from watercraft can cause additional erosion and damage to seawalls already compromised.

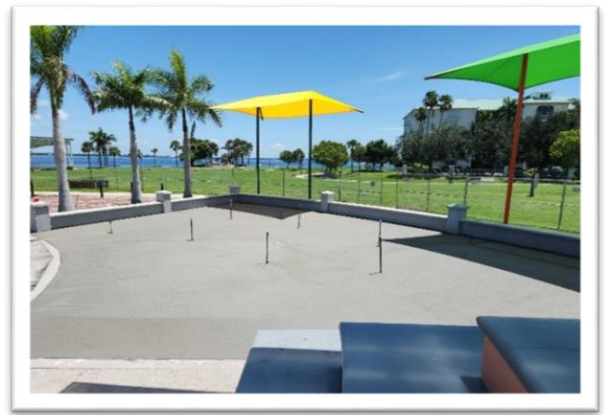
- **Dock Match Program** – The Punta Gorda and Charlotte Harbor Boaters Alliance has created a program that connects boat owners who need a temporary relocation of their boats with owners that have available dock space. This information can be found at [Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance \(boat2puntagorda.org\)](http://Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance (boat2puntagorda.org)) click on the Dock Match button for information.
- **Mangrove trimming** - Mangrove trimming has been completed in the following locations: Nature Park, PGI Perimeter, Bird Navigation, and Boat Lock.



Engineering

- **Swale Regrading** – The swale contractor has completed Don Quixote Dr., Brazilia Ct., Darin Dr., Padre Island Dr., Casey Key Dr. (SW), Ussepa Ct., Casey Key Dr. (SE) Turtle Dove Cir which have been finalized and turned over to the homeowner. The contractor will be watering the sod for the next 30 days weather permitting at Sea Horse Ct., Sea Fan Dr., and Grebe Dr. The contractor has begun to excavate Orange St., W. McKenzie St., Lemon St., and McGregor St. this week, and will be excavating approximately 12,000 SF. Once they have the grades established, new sod will be installed. The swale contractor has excavated approximately 73,000 SF this fiscal year.
- **City Hall Annex** – The contractor has begun the interior work on the third floor where the Urban Design, Code Enforcement, and Zoning offices were. The IT department has moved into the Urban Design temporarily so their office can be restored. The contractor has begun working in the IT department removing all the old flooring and prepping the walls for paint.
- **City Hall Annex Roof** – The contractor has started installing the new roof on the Annex. They have replaced the entire roof with the dry-in product and will be scheduling an inspection through the building department for approval.
- **Laishley Splash Pad** - Construction continues at the Interactive Fountain area in Laishley Park. This work includes rehabilitation and upgrades to the splash pad/play area. The concrete pad for the new interactive fountain areas has been poured.

Please use extra caution while driving or walking through the park due to construction personnel and equipment. To the highest extent possible the restroom facilities will remain open to the public. The access for the restrooms will be from the marina side of the building.

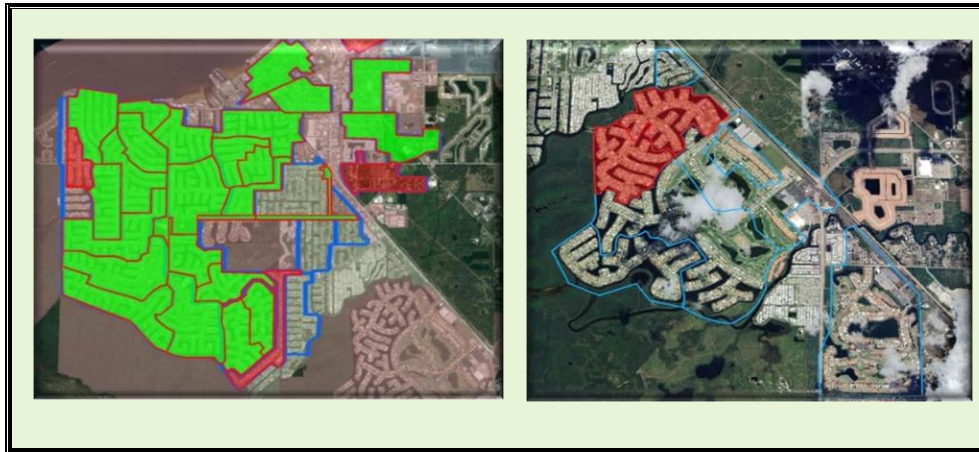


There will be periodic temporary sidewalk closures immediately adjacent to the construction area as required for public safety. The construction area will be closed to the public at all times during this period. The enhanced fountain area is scheduled to reopen in late 2024.

If you have any questions, please contact the Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 during the hours of 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- **Fiber Optic Internet Network** - The fiber optic internet provider HyperFiber has been issued permits for a portion of the construction project to install a citywide fiber optic internet network within the city right of ways. This project will be under construction during the next several months as they install the network citywide. They are currently working in the areas highlighted in red below. The green areas are where the work is completed and their permit has been inspected for final by the engineering department. Additional areas are scheduled to be final in the next several weeks. The blue areas are where installation will take place as the project progresses. Construction is beginning in the northwestern portion of Burnt Store Isles.

Initially you will see utility markings within the city right of way, followed by the directional drilling of the fiber optic conduit. Fiber optic boxes will be installed in the right of way or easement at the edge of your property. Once the installation of the underground and service points has been completed for the entire sector, crews will then return to



individual locations for the restoration of sod. This will take place at the end of construction in each sector. Please be patient and allow time for the restoration. The city engineering department will be performing spot inspections during construction as well as a final inspection when restoration is complete to ensure the contractor's restoration meets the City's requirements.

HyperFiber has provided a telephone number to call if citizens have questions or concerns about the project and installation. Please contact HyperFiber's Samantha at (941) 336-4957. Please use extra caution while driving through the project area due to construction personnel and equipment.

Right of Way

- Crews are mowing the right of ways near Burnt Store Meadows
- Work has begun on repairs to the Decorator light along the Linear Park Trail between Virginia and 41 South.
- Pouring Concrete for MLK sidewalk project will be completed early next week.
- Repaired drainage pipes at the corner of Virginia Ave and Taylor St.

Sanitation

- **Commercial Trash Guidelines** – Please follow the guidelines listed below to ensure proper service. The property owner is responsible for the removal of any items related to construction or remodeling.
 - Do not block the dumpster or dumpster enclosure with vehicles or trash.
 - Maintain a five-foot clearance around the dumpster free of trash and debris at all times.
 - All trash must be placed properly inside trash bags and the trash bags placed inside the dumpster.
 - Do not place loose trash or trash bags on the dumpster enclosure floor. The property owner is responsible for keeping the area clean. City staff is responsible for emptying the dumpster only.
 - Construction debris and hazardous waste are strictly prohibited from being placed inside a dumpster.



Police

- **Alert Punta Gorda** — With hurricane season in full swing, we wanted to take a minute to remind everyone about Alert Punta Gorda. Alert Punta Gorda is a public safety emergency alert and community notification system. This system allows the Punta Gorda Police Department and Punta Gorda Fire Department to contact the community in emergencies that require the public's immediate attention, such as:
 - **Natural Disasters** (hurricanes, floods, fires, etc.)
 - **Man-Made Disasters** (chemical spills, gas leaks, etc.)
 - **Search and Rescue Operations** (missing children, endangered adults, etc.)
 - **Public Safety Issues** (escaped criminal, bank robbery, etc.)In addition to emergency alerts, users can choose to receive non-emergency community notifications such as:
 - **Sexual Offender Notifications**
 - **Non-Emergency Missing Person Notifications**
 - **Traffic Advisories**
 - **Police Activity Notifications**
 - **Weather Alerts**You can sign up by visiting [Alert Punta Gorda | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.punta-gorda.fl.us/alert-punta-gorda) and creating an account. Once your account is created, you can choose whether to receive alerts through a home or business phone, mobile phone call, email, text message,



or the Everbridge mobile phone app (available in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store). You will automatically be signed up to receive emergency alerts, and you can choose to sign up for non-emergency alerts based on your preferences. You can change your contact information and notification preferences anytime or stop receiving alerts simply by logging into your account. **PLEASE NOTE:** If you choose to receive weather alerts that the National Weather Service issues, please only choose those alerts you wish to receive. If you select all weather alerts, you will receive a lot of notifications. Lightning alerts in Florida tend to be issued quite often. We suggest only receiving emergency weather alerts. We encourage all our residents and long-term visitors to sign up to ensure they receive essential information promptly!

OPEN POSITIONS

- **Police Officer Testing** — The Punta Gorda Police Department is currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. A virtual testing process will take place in Aug. Applications must be received by Aug., 16. The written exam will be completed online between Aug., 23 and Aug., 30, and virtual oral board exams will be conducted via Zoom on Sept., 12. The department is accepting applications from certified and non-certified candidates.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** — The police department continually conducts new hire testing to prepare for future openings. Currently, the department is accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. The exam will be held virtually between Aug., 16 and 23. Applications must be received by Aug., 9.
- **Internship Program** — The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Summer Semester of 2024. Our internship program is open to college students and high school seniors interested in gaining educational experience in law enforcement, criminal justice, and small government administration. Spots fill up quickly and the selection process can be competitive, so we encourage potential interns to apply today!
- **To apply for employment or more information, please visit [Employment Opportunities | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.punta-gorda.fl.us/employment) or contact our Employee Development Coordinator at (941) 575-5571 or by email at employeedevelopment@pgorda.us.**

Fire

- **Utility Task Vehicle (UTV)** — This week the fire department took delivery of our new 2024 Kawasaki Mule PRO FXT 1000 UTV side-by-side. Fire Chief Gibbs and Operations Chief Canfield picked up the emergency unit which will be used to staff the many city-sponsored details and events that we handle, along with the ability to respond to any type of off-road or hard-to-access areas within the city limits. This all-terrain emergency UTV will also be used during storm-related or city-declared emergencies to gain access to victims in need of our assistance. The vehicle can transport up to six people safely, transport tools & equipment, and is even equipped with a wench to help support special operations.

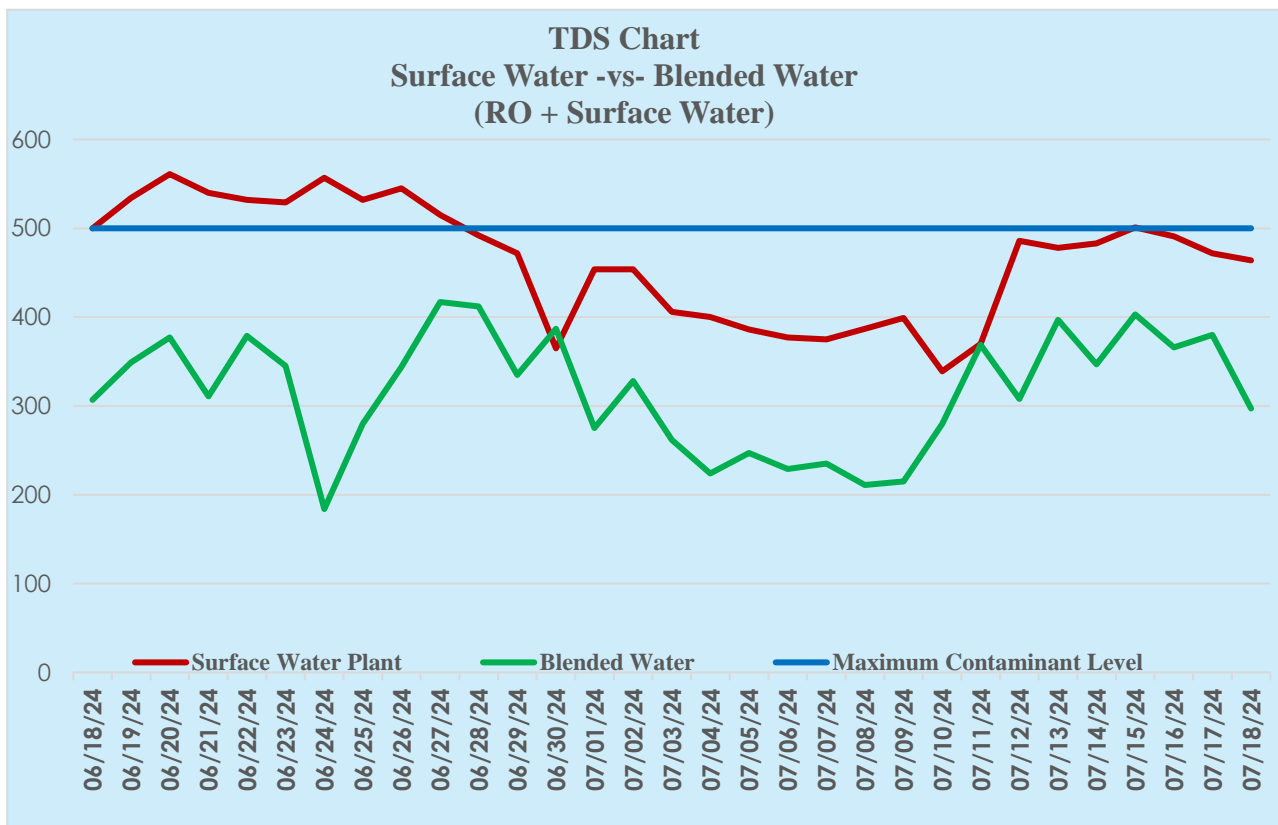


This all-terrain UTV was purchased on a generous grant that the fire department received from Firehouse Subs earlier this year. Their generosity will be used to provide needed assistance to our personnel and residents of the City for years to come. Field Training Officers will begin a UTV driver safety training program beginning in early Aug., 2024 to familiarize our personnel with the UTV, safety, maintenance procedures, and overall situational awareness when operating the vehicle in public places. The fire department is committed to and consistently looking for new and creative ways to provide and purchase the needed emergency equipment to provide excellent community service and keep our personnel safe.



Utilities

R.O. + Surface Water



Administration

- **Leaks** – If you notice a water or sewer leak outside of normal business hours please call the after-hours number (941) 575-5070 or the Water Treatment Plant at (941) 639-2057.
- **Water Treatment Plant Operations** - 47.9 MG delivered to the distribution system during the last seven days with 6.8 MG daily average.

- **Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect** – Receiving 1000 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 1000 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall July 2023 – 4.29" July 2024 – 2.99"
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "hard" – Grains of Hardness 9 –Total hardness 148 ppm
- T.D.S. July 18 – Current 297 ppm. Low – 228 ppm, High 499 ppm, 14-year average 355 ppm.
- Reservoir July 18 – Current 5.39', Record Low 5.03, Record High, 6.16' 58 Year Average 5.50'

Lawn Watering

- **Phase I Water Shortage** – The Southwest Florida Water Management District's (District) Governing Board declared a [Phase I Water Shortage](#) for the District's central and southern regions, which include Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota counties. The primary purpose for a Phase I water shortage is to alert the public that watering restrictions could be forthcoming. The order also requires local utilities to review and implement procedures for enforcing year-round water conservation measures and water shortage restrictions, including reporting enforcement activity to the District. A Phase I water shortage order does not change allowable watering schedules, however it does prohibit "wasteful and unnecessary" water use. [Water Restrictions | City of Punta Gorda, FL](#)
- Lawn Watering Schedule/Times – Lawn watering is limited to twice per week (if needed) by property address. Before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. Hand watering and micro-irrigation of plants (other than lawns) can be done on any day and at any time using a shut-off nozzle on their hose, so water isn't wasted.



Lawn Watering Schedule Table		
Addresses	Current Watering Day	May Also Water
Ending in 0 and 1	Monday	Thursday
Ending in 2 and 3	Tuesday	Friday
Ending in 4 and 5	Wednesday	Saturday
Ending in 6 and 7	Thursday	Sunday
Ending in 8 and 9	Friday	Tuesday
Addresses that end with a letter instead of a number will water on:	Friday	Tuesday

City Clerk

- **2024 Election Cycle** -The seats for Districts 1, 2, and 4 are scheduled for election this year. A general election will take place on Nov., 5, as two candidates qualified for each district. Qualified candidates are listed on the [City's website](#).
- Did you know your signature can change over the years? Ensure the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections has an up-to-date record of your signature on file for the upcoming election. Stop by their office at 226 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, Florida, 33982, to update yours during regular business hours.
- In order to vote by mail, you must have a valid request on file with the Supervisor of Elections Office. Requests for vote-by-mail ballots can be made in person, by calling (941)833-5400, or by visiting the [Supervisor of Elections website](#).

Current Board and Committee Vacancies

If you are interested in serving on a board or committee, please visit our online portal to complete an online application at [City of Punta Gorda, FL: Board Application \(granicus.com\)](#)

- **Building Board** (one consumer advocate, one contractor, and one alternate) – Meets the fourth Tues., at 9 a.m. in Council Chambers. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms – maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Reviews enforcement of all codes related to construction standards and acts as condemnation board in matters of violation of minimum standards. Hears alleged complaints against contractors.
- **Code Enforcement Board** (one alternate) – Meets the fourth Wed., at 9 a.m. in Council Chambers. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms - maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Financial disclosure required. Hears and decides alleged violations of the City Code of Ordinances.
- **Donation Review Committee** (one historic non-profit representative) – Meets at 10 a.m. in City Council Chambers on the fourth Thurs., of Jan., April, July and Oct., or needed, immediately following the meeting of the Historic Preservation Advisory Board. Charged with review of all non-monetary gift donation proposals/letters of intent received by the City, in accordance with the review process and established criteria identified in the Non-Monetary Donation Policy. Makes recommendations to the City Council for the acceptance or rejection of non-monetary gift donations.
- **Historic Preservation Advisory Board** (one alternate) – Meets the fourth Thurs., at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms - maximum of three terms OR partial term plus two more terms. Identifies for the Council historically significant structures and sites that should be considered for designation as a "Local Historic Landmark" or be nominated for listing on the Florida Master Site File and the National Register of Historic Places. Makes recommendations of the policies for the protection of historically significant structures and sites. Makes recommendations to staff with regard to certificates of appropriateness for any demolition, variance, sign, or relocation of structures. Promotes public awareness of historic archaeological preservation and its community benefits.
- **Planning Commission** (one regular) – Meets the fourth Mon., at 2 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Must be City resident. Seven-member board with two alternate members. Three-year terms – maximum of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council with regard to amending, extending or adding to the comprehensive plan for the physical development of the City, platting or subdividing land within the City and adopting and amending a zoning ordinance.

- **Utility Advisory Board** – (two regular) Meets the fourth Mon., at 9 a.m. in City Council Chambers. Seven-member board. Three-year terms – maximum of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council with regard to revisions to the utility construction standards, alleged billing discrepancies, and review of utility drawings and specifications.
- **New Businesses**

All persons, firms or corporations engaging in business or occupation within the City of Punta Gorda are required to obtain a Local Business Tax (LBT) Receipt in accordance with Chapter 12 of the Punta Gorda City Code. As part of our effort to promote economic development and vitality in our area, we offer the following list of new or transferred business within our community this week:

 - Coastal Car Wash, 2735 Tamiami Trail