



Northern Palm Beach County Improvement District
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Treatment of Bladderwort in the Shores

Palm Beach Gardens, FL – August 12, 2005 – The summertime heat felt here in South Florida is the perfect environment for the brownish-purple weed called bladderwort to thrive. This aquatic weed is a carnivorous plant whose diet consists of insects or other small organisms. When prey touches the weed, which has little “hairs” on it, a bladder expands, sucking in the insect, and then is dissolved within the bladder.

Treatment and prevention of this weed recurrence is somewhat difficult. There are only three chemicals that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved for the safe treatment and eradication of bladderwort. In addition, the South Florida Environment promotes rapid growth of the weed due to the hot temperatures and amount of rainfall it receives. In June 2005, there was daily rainfall which dilutes any of the chemicals that are sprayed to treat the weeds.

The chemicals that are used are safe and the water in the lake is not poisonous. However, many amoebas that live in the water can prove harmful if ingested. This is one reason why swimming in the lake is prohibited.

According to Northern’s Staff Biologist, Sam Payson, Northern is committed to treating the Lakes in the Shores safely and as effectively as possible. It is a challenging process in which environmental factors can play a large role in the timing and effectiveness of aquatic weed control. The stormwater management system at the Shores is divided into two sub-basins, one north of Winding Lake Drive, consisting of a lake and a slough, and the southern basin consists of six interconnected lakes, four preserves and the park on Longshore Dr. This stormwater management system was designed to provide flood protection for the shores and is treated with approved herbicides to control nuisance vegetation.

The Northern Palm Beach County Improvement District is an independent special district created by the Florida Legislature in 1959. Its role is to provide services related to water management, environmental enhancement and mitigation as well as infrastructure for properties in northern Palm Beach County.

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