



SMOKE SIGNALS

VILLAGE OF
TEQUESTA
NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2025

FIRE CHIEF TRUBE RETIRES AND NEW CHIEF JOHN MCLOUGHLIN HIRED



Your tireless dedication to fire safety and unwavering service to our residents have left an incredible legacy. Thank you for your outstanding leadership and commitment to our community — wishing you a well-deserved, happy, and fulfilling retirement!

A message from Fire Chief James Trube

On August 1st (after considerable thought), I gave my letter of intent to retire on February 3rd, 2025, to Village Manager Jeremy Allen.

For the last 36 years, I have worked in the fire service. I began my career with Stuart Fire Rescue in 1988 and have held almost every fire department position, including Firefighter, EMT, Paramedic, Driver, Lieutenant, Captain, Operations Chief, and Fire Chief.

I was blessed to be part of building Tequesta Fire Rescue when I came here as a lieutenant in 1993. It has been a terrific journey, and I have always been proud of our department. While I did not aspire to become the Fire Chief, it has been an honor and a privilege to hold that post since 2018. I am proud of what the fire department has accomplished over the last six years, and we could not have done it without the support of our community.

I am leaving Tequesta Fire Rescue in a strong position for the future. I will continue working hard until my last day and do everything possible to ensure a smooth transition. Thank you for your support of the fire rescue department. I hope you support the incoming Fire Chief like you have always supported me. I will be forever grateful. Thank You, Stay Safe, and God Bless.



We are thrilled to welcome John McLoughlin as our new Fire Chief, who will begin on February 3, 2025, following the Change of Command Ceremony. With over three decades of experience in public safety, John brings an extraordinary blend of leadership, expertise, and dedication to our community.

Chief McLoughlin's career spans roles as a firefighter, paramedic, battalion, and division chief. He has led disaster response teams in high-stakes situations, including deployments to the 2010 Haiti Earthquake and the Surfside building collapse. He's an expert in Urban Search and Rescue, active shooter response, and emergency management, collaborating with federal, state, and local agencies and the Department of Defense.

In addition to his fieldwork, Chief McLoughlin has a passion for education and innovation. He has designed and led training programs for emergency responders nationwide, emphasizing cutting-edge fire, EMS, and special operations techniques. As an instructor and consultant, his contributions have influenced public safety strategies across North America.

Beyond his impressive credentials, John is recognized by colleagues for his integrity, teamwork, and communication skills. He holds a Master of Business Administration from the University of Miami and is pursuing advanced credentialing as a Chief Fire Officer and Chief Training Officer.

John is committed to enhancing fire prevention, community outreach, and public safety programs as Fire Chief. His leadership and expertise are sure to inspire confidence and trust as we continue to safeguard our community.

Please join us in welcoming Fire Chief John McLoughlin!

HIGHLIGHT



Vice Mayor Rick Sartory

Happy New Year to the residents and businesses in the Village of Tequesta! After a hectic, enjoyable, and event-filled Holiday Season in the VOT, conventional wisdom would tell us to slow down, take a collective breath, and set our sights on the spring and summer months that are right around the corner. But as your Vice Mayor – along with Mayor Molly Young, and Councilmembers Laurie Brandon, Patrick Painter, and Jayson French – we remain actively engaged and continue to advocate on behalf of our Village, to develop and enhance our Strategic Plan, and address the many issues that are brought before Council.

During the fall of 2024, along with Mayor Young and Councilmember French, we proudly represented the Village of Tequesta on various Florida League of Cities (FLOC) Policy Committees. I was fortunate to serve on the Utilities, Natural

Resources, and Public Works (UNRPW) Policy Committee, on which we selected **"Enterprise Fund Transfers and Extraterritorial Surcharges"** as our PRIORITY issue. In short, the Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS preserving municipal authority over utility revenues and the ability to realize a reasonable rate of return on utility assets. The FLOC takes the position that proposed legislation should honor current practices, existing contracts, utility operation and maintenance costs, service territory obligations and revenues obligated for debt service and planned projects.

This position statement is of critical importance to the VOT as we operate our own highly respected and highly qualified Utility Department, serving both Village and extraterritorial (non-Village) customers. Florida statute allows the Village to surcharge an additional 25% for extraterritorial (non-Village) residents and utility hook-ups. For the past several years, legislation has been introduced – yet not passed or enacted – that would eliminate the ability for a Utility provider to impose an extraterritorial surcharge. Currently, the Village of Tequesta Utility Department serves MORE extraterritorial (non-Village) customers than Village customers. A change in our ability to impose and collect that surcharge would create a potential

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SMOKE SIGNALS

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Around the Village



K-9 Officer Scout: Fully Trained and Ready to Serve

The Tequesta Police Department is thrilled to announce that K-9 Officer Scout has completed his rigorous training and is officially certified to serve alongside his handler, Detective Mike Loney. Scout's journey has been one of dedication, hard work, and a commitment to excellence, and we're excited to share the details of his training journey.



Scout began his training in September with a focus on narcotics detection. Over several months, he worked tirelessly to master the ability to precisely identify dangerous substances. By late December, Scout completed this critical phase, demonstrating his ability to detect narcotics and assist in taking harmful drugs off the streets. This training ensures that Scout is ready to play a key role in combating illegal substances and keeping our community safe.

Scout's next challenge began in early January, with specialized tracking and scent detection training. This phase focused on honing Scout's ability to locate individuals or items using his extraordinary sense of smell. Whether tracking missing persons, locating evidence, or assisting in search-and-rescue missions, Scout's skills are now fine-tuned and ready for action. By mid-February, Scout completed this final phase, solidifying his status as a certified K-9 officer.

Now fully trained, Scout will serve alongside Detective Mike Loney, forming a dynamic partnership that will enhance the capabilities of the Tequesta Police Department. Together, they are prepared to tackle various challenges, from narcotics detection to assisting in critical investigations and emergencies.



Scout's training is a testament to the Tequesta Police Department's dedication to protecting and serving our community. His skills are a valuable asset to law enforcement and reflect the hard work and professionalism our department strives to uphold every day.

We're incredibly proud of Scout's accomplishments and grateful for the community's support throughout his training. Please join us in congratulating K-9 Officer Scout and Detective Mike Loney as they embark on this new chapter of service to the Village of Tequesta.

Explorers Post 357: Inspiring the Next Generation of Law Enforcement



Our Explorers are making incredible strides as they continue their training to deepen their understanding of serving the community. This dedicated group has provided invaluable support at local events, including the annual Run 4 the Pies, where their hard work and commitment made a significant impact.

Beyond event support and weekly training, our Explorers also gain hands-on experiences that bring their law enforcement education to life. Exciting upcoming activities include:

- A visit to the Sheriff's Office Correctional Facility for a behind-the-scenes look at jail operations.
- A tour of a Law Enforcement helicopter showcasing the tools and techniques used in aerial policing.
- And much more!

This mentorship program has already made a lasting impact. We're proud to share that one of our Explorers has taken the next step by joining the Police Academy. We look forward to watching this Explorer - and all our members—grow and succeed wherever their paths may lead.

If you know a young person between the ages of 14-20 who is interested in law enforcement, we'd love to hear from you! For more information, contact:

1. John Pruitt: (561) 768-0521 | spruitt@tequesta.org
2. Kurt Blanc: (561) 768-0533 | kblanc@tequesta.org

We are always excited to welcome new members to this impactful program!



Last Chance to Join Our Civilian Firearms Courses!

The Tequesta Police Department's popular Civilian Firearms Course is wrapping up in May, and only a few opportunities remain to participate. If you haven't signed up, now is the time to reserve your spot!

This comprehensive course is designed to provide participants with the fundamentals of gun ownership, care, and safety. Under the guidance of our highly experienced trainers, Sgt. Emir Yildiz and Ofc. John Pruitt, attendees will gain valuable knowledge and hands-on experience through:

Virtual Reality Training: Using state-of-the-art InVeris VR technology, participants will enhance their skills in a controlled, immersive environment.

CO2-Powered Firearms: Practice with CO2-powered firearms to refine techniques in a realistic but safe setting.

Live Fire Training: Finish the day with live shooting practice at the range.

Remaining Course Dates:

- March 15, 2025
- April 12, 2025
- May 10, 2025

Each class runs from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM, providing a full day of education and practice. Don't miss this opportunity to build your skills and confidence with firearms under the guidance of our expert instructors. Sign up now before spots fill up!

Registration Link: <https://form.jotform.com/233015793156153>

We look forward to seeing you in class!



Around the Village



Fire Department

CHILI COOKOFF



On November 9th, 2024, Tequesta Fire Rescue took 1st place at the 13th Annual Tequesta Chili Cook-Off! Even more exciting, this event raised \$22,750.00 for each Tequesta Chili Cook-Off Charity, bringing the total funds donated to \$761,847.00! We could not have made this happen without the help of so many great people who not only put this event on but also attended and made it such a huge success. It was a night filled with laughs, memories, and great chili!



We look forward to seeing you next year at the 14th Annual Tequesta Chili Cook-Off **on November 8th, 2025!**

Job well done, Tequesta Fire Rescue, and all teams who participated!

Tequesta Fire Rescues First Medical Director Retires

On November 13th, 2024, Tequesta Fire Rescue said goodbye to Dr. Don Tanabe, who served as our very first Medical Director for over 30 years and was responsible for developing and overseeing all medical services. He worked with our paramedics and EMTs and helped develop our Advanced Life Support program from the ground up. We would not be the department that we are now without his contributions. Thank You, Dr Tanabe, for your dedication and devotion to Tequesta Fire Rescue and its residents and visitors. Enjoy your retirement.



Santa's Enchanted Forest

December 14th, 2024, Tequesta Fire Rescue hosted a "Santa's Enchanted Forest" Christmas open house where we had many people in attendance from Tequesta and surrounding areas stop by for Breakfast to meet Sparky the Fire Dog, take a ride in the Fire Truck and visit with Santa in his very own Enchanted Forest! Our crew, administrative staff, and volunteers did amazing work putting on this event. We would like to recognize Firefighter/EMT Vanessa Allison, who created the idea of the Enchanted Forest and made the experience so incredibly special for all those who attended!



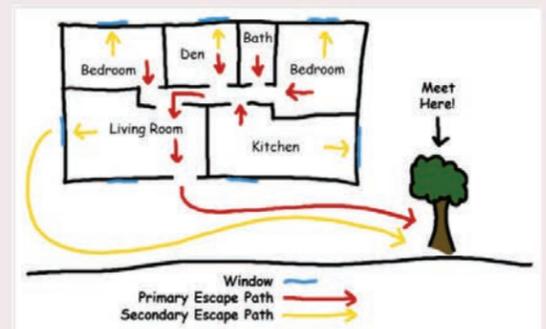
DO YOU KNOW EDITH???



- E- Exit
- D- Drills
- I-In
- T-The
- H-Home



Exit Drills In The Home can help you prepare for an emergency. Most fires occur at night when you are least prepared. Discuss the exit plans for all members in the household to be sure everyone makes it out in time in the case an emergency occurs!



Tequesta Fire Rescue Host Dive International Swiftwater Combo Class

On November 18th, 2024, Dive Rescue International traveled to Tequesta Fire Rescue to host a Swift Water Combo Class that brought together Fire and Police personnel from across Florida for specialized training. The course covered various critical topics, including hazard awareness, knots and rigging, characteristics of moving water, the human body in water, search tactics, and more. Swiftwater rescue operations are hazardous and complex, with significant risks. To help students prepare for these challenges, our experienced instructors created realistic, scenario-based training exercises, allowing participants to understand better and safely navigate the unique hazards they may encounter in the field.



Remembrance Park Bricks
contribute to a lasting legacy

COMMEMORATIVE BRICKS AVAILABLE.
PLEASE REACH OUT TO THE VILLAGE
FOR MORE DETAILS!
SPACE IS LIMITED.

Your chance to

BE A PART OF Remembrance Park

399 SEABROOK DRIVE

SPRING
2025



AS WE PREPARE FOR THE GRAND OPENING OF REMEMBRANCE PARK, THE VILLAGE OF TEQUESTA IS OFFERING A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO HONOR THEIR LOVED ONES, COMMEMORATE SPECIAL MOMENTS, AND LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY IN OUR COMMUNITY. THE VILLAGE IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE WILL BE ACCEPTING PRE-APPLICATIONS FOR PERSONALIZED REMEMBRANCE PARK BRICKS! FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE REACH OUT TO MEG WYBLE 561-768-0449. BRICK PRICING IS \$150. ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 3/31/25.

Commemorate Loved Ones with a Remembrance Park Brick

As we prepare for the grand opening of Remembrance Park this Spring, 2025, the Village of Tequesta will offer a unique opportunity for residents to honor their loved ones, commemorate special moments, and leave a lasting legacy in our community.

The Village is accepting applications for the personalized Remembrance Park bricks! These engraved bricks will be placed in the park, creating a beautiful tribute you and your family will cherish for years.

- Personalize your brick with a message, name, or dedication (18-character limit).
- Your contribution helps support the continued development and maintenance of Remembrance Park.

Whether you are celebrating the memory of a loved one, marking a special occasion, or simply leaving your mark on Tequesta's history, these bricks will provide a meaningful way to do so.



Don't miss this opportunity to be part of something truly special. For additional information, please contact Meg Wyble at 561-768-0449 or email at mwyble@tequesta.org. All applications must be received by March 31, 2025. Brick Pricing is \$150 per brick.

Council Member Rick Sortory, Continued from Page 1

financial hardship in our Utility Enterprise Fund. As a member of the UNRPW Policy Committee, I will continue to monitor and advocate AGAINST any legislation that would impair our ability to collect our current 25% surcharge on non-Village customers.

Another opportunity to advocate on behalf of the Village's legislative interests is the Annual Palm Beach County Day, held March 4-5, 2025 in Tallahassee. Coinciding with the beginning of the 60-day Legislative Session, Palm Beach County Day is an opportunity to join fellow municipal leaders, County stakeholders, and business leaders as we take Tallahassee by storm, and meet with the members of our Legislative Delegation (PBC has 13 of the 160 total members - 8% - of the Florida Legislature) to personally address what is important to our Village and Palm Beach County.

I am privileged and honored to serve as your Vice Mayor, and I will continue to fight for what is right and just for the residents and businesses of our amazing Village. Together, let's keep our Village #TrulyTequesta!

Vice Mayor *Rick Sortory*

SEA TURTLE NESTING SEASON: LET'S KEEP OUR BEACHES SAFE!



Sea turtle nesting season is just around the corner, and it's time to ensure we're doing our part to protect these incredible creatures. With our updated beach lighting ordinances in place, we're already making strides toward creating safer beaches for the turtles. Now, as the season begins, your continued effort is essential.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Sea turtles rely on the natural light of the moon and stars to navigate during critical times in their lives. Artificial lighting on beaches can cause disorientation, leading sea turtles away from the water and putting them at risk of dehydration, predation, or even death. Nesting mothers and hatchlings need our help to stay on course.

HOW YOU CAN HELP DURING NESTING SEASON:

- Replace outdoor bulbs with turtle-friendly lighting options that are low, shielded, and emit long wavelengths of light (amber or red).
- Turn off unnecessary outdoor lights, especially those visible from the beach.
- Close curtains and blinds in the evenings to reduce indoor light spillover.
- Avoid using flashlights or phone lights on the beach at night.

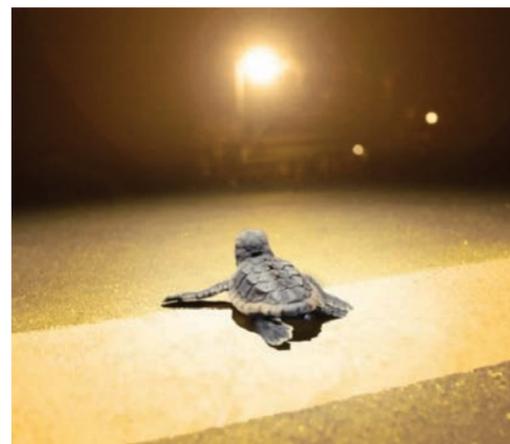
ORDINANCE HIGHLIGHTS:

Our updated ordinances require:

- Turtle-friendly lighting fixtures should be used on all properties near the beach.
- Lights visible from the beach are to be turned off or dimmed during nesting and hatching seasons.
- Property owners and businesses to install window tinting and use blackout curtains to minimize light spillover.

Together, we can ensure that nesting mothers find safe spots for their eggs and that hatchlings reach the ocean without confusion. Your small actions significantly impact the survival of these ancient mariners.

Let's all work together to protect our coastal wildlife and ensure a brighter future for sea turtles - starting with darker beaches! Remember, the season begins March 1st, so let's prepare now.



For more information and tips, visit <https://conserveturtles.org/> or contact the Building Department at 561-768-0450.

Star Veteran Recipients

VOT EMPLOYEES

Frank Ciatto	11/11/24
John Kostyo	11/11/24
John Pruitt	11/11/24
Ariel Ramirez	11/11/24
Dennis Rick	11/11/24
Emir Yildiz	11/11/24



Joining Us

Jax Boris	Police Cadet	1/13
Tracy Smith	Water CSR	1/14
Keichell Velez	Human Resources Asst.-PT	1/21

Anniversaries

David McGovern	12/02/24	20 Years
Zachary Wichert	11/12/24	10 Years



IMPORTANT FLOOD MAP UPDATE

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has released updated flood zone maps, effective December 20, 2024. Property owners in Palm Beach County should review these changes promptly. Visit [Palm Beach County Flood Zones Map](#) to find your updated flood zone. **Key Reminders for Property Owners:**

- If you are required to obtain a new flood insurance policy, don't delay - get covered as soon as possible.
- If you already have a National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policy, maintaining it is strongly recommended.

For more information, visit [FEMA.gov](#) or contact the Building Department at 561-768-0450.

UNDERSTANDING FLOOD INSURANCE

Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), also known as flood hazard maps, are essential tools for protecting lives and property. They show which areas in our community, including individual properties, are at risk for flooding and guide residents and business owners in making informed decisions about protecting their investments.

Why Flood Maps Change

Flood risks are not static—they evolve due to factors like surface erosion, land use changes, and natural events. To ensure accuracy, FEMA continually updates flood maps with the latest technology.

TEQUESTA'S FLOOD RISK AREAS

In the Village of Tequesta, there are three main types of flood zones:

- Floodways (rivers)
- Flood Fringes (riverbanks)
- Coastal Storm Surge Areas

Our community faces risks from the North and Northwest Forks of the Loxahatchee River, the Intracoastal Waterway, and the Atlantic Ocean. Areas east of Federal Highway are particularly vulnerable to hurricane storm surges, while western areas may experience riverine flooding. Tropical storms, hurricanes, or even heavy thunderstorms can cause significant flooding, resulting in costly damage.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM (NFIP)

Since 1992, Tequesta has participated in FEMA's NFIP, enabling property owners to purchase federally backed flood insurance. This coverage protects against losses not typically covered by standard homeowner, renter, or business insurance policies.

Important Details About Flood Insurance:

- There's a 30-day waiting period for new policies.
- Policies cannot be written once a storm is approaching.
- Insurance premiums fund financial recovery, not tax dollars.
- Policyholders benefit from quick claims processing, allowing them to rebuild faster.

Why It Matters: Flood insurance helps cover the cost of repairs, debris removal, and replacement of damaged belongings, reducing the need for federal disaster loans that require repayment with interest.

DISCOUNTS AND RESOURCES

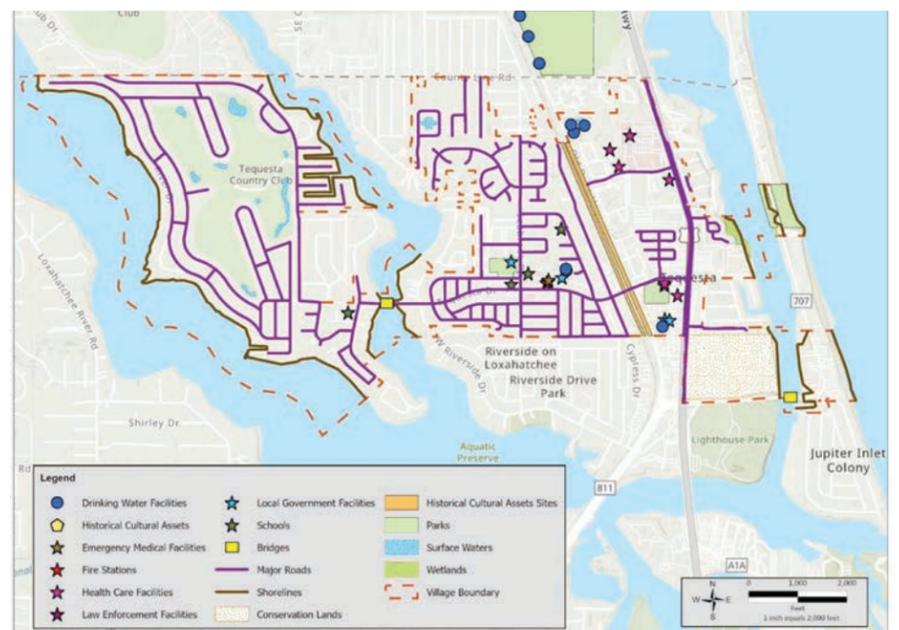
As a participant in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS), Tequesta residents receive a 20% discount on flood insurance premiums. The Village implements flood awareness and mitigation programs to maintain this discount, earning a Class 6 CRS rating.

What You Can Do:

- Check your flood zone and elevation: Contact the Building Department at 561-768-0450, visit [tequesta.org](#), or stop by Village Hall.
- Review your homeowner policy: Ensure you understand what is and isn't covered, as flood damage is often excluded.
- Explore FEMA assistance: Federal financial aid may be available pre-and post-disaster.

Taking proactive steps today can save you time, money, and stress tomorrow. Protect your property and stay informed!

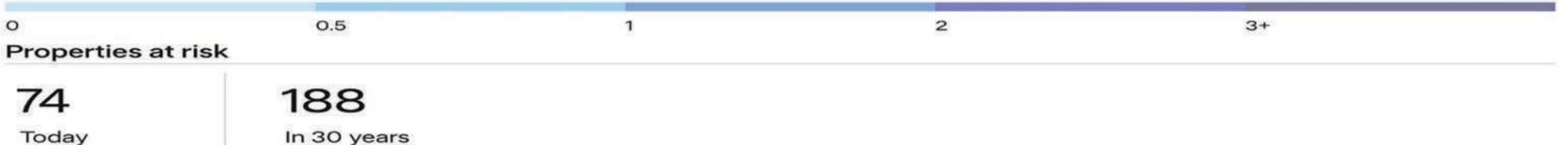
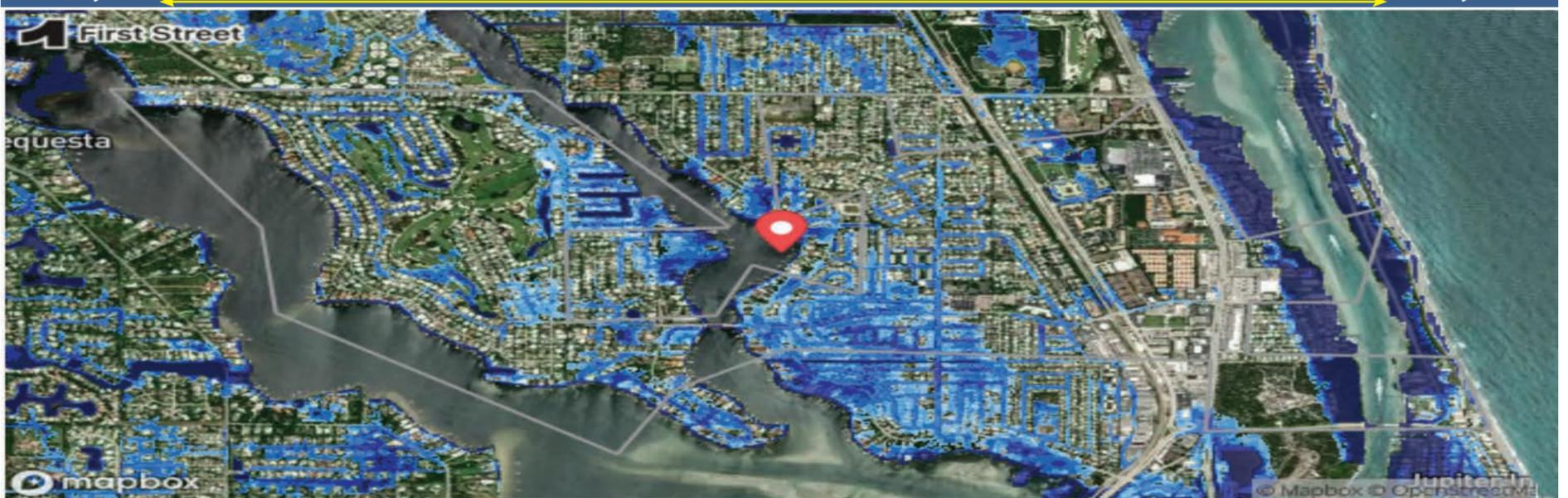
METHODOLOGY MAP



DEPTH OF FLOODING (FT.)

This year

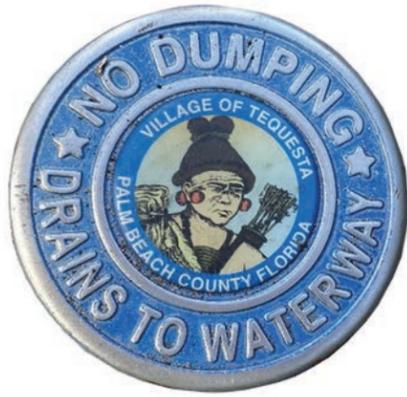
In 30 years



Stormwater Inlet Marking Program (SWIM)

The Stormwater Inlet Marking (SWIM) Program was established to prevent pollution from entering local waterways. Stormwater inlet markers bearing the "Village of Tequesta" logo and a message stating **"NO DUMPING, DRAINS TO WATERWAY"** remind citizens not to dump pollutants into storm drains.

Stormwater inlets that flow into the stormwater drainage system and other items go directly into the Loxahatchee River or Indian River Lagoon and, ultimately, the Atlantic Ocean. Unlike sewage, stormwater that flows into these drains receives no treatment. Much of the pollution comes from common, everyday materials, such as household chemicals, fertilizers, and pesticides. Dumping these into these storm drains directly pollutes our rivers and ocean.



WHY all the fuss, you ask? Here's why...

The Village of Tequesta enjoys a waterfront environment between the Loxahatchee River, Indian River, and Atlantic Ocean. Most of the year, Tequesta enjoys a sunny, near-tropical climate, but a rainy season comes – from May through October. During the rainy months, frequent thunderstorms can last from a few minutes to a few days. Heavy seasonal rains cause stormwater to flow from ("run-off") commercial and residential rooftops, yards, and streets. This stormwater normally collects in the streets and works its way toward the nearest drainage inlet and waterway.



Although ponding on streets is a temporary nuisance, the pollutants carried in the stormwater create a less visible but longer-lasting effect. These pollutants include automobile oil and grease, lawn fertilizers and pesticides, a variety of chemicals from commercial/industrial areas, and silt and floating debris from highways.

Stormwater Runoff Starts in your Backyard

Pollution can be generated by:

Littering, construction activity, use of pesticides, fertilizers, illegal dumping or discharges, improper disposal of used oil, toxins, new development, and redevelopment.



Continued pollution of Florida's coastal area has severely degraded one of our most valuable resources, our waterways. Pollution also has negatively affected the quality and clarity of our waters as well as reduced our fish and wildlife populations. Stormwater running off into the streets also wastes a valuable resource. After the rainy season comes the dry months of November through April.

The Village of Tequesta has adopted a comprehensive development plan that establishes specific goals for sustainable growth and development without compromising the biodiversity and intrinsic value of its natural resources. To achieve these goals and to begin reversing the current negative trends, we must significantly reduce the potential pollution from new development and redevelopment.

Our current Stormwater Management Practices Manual establishes guidelines for the safe management and disposal of stormwater runoff from developed areas. The Stormwater Management Practices Manual is applicable to all development and requires that all applications for building permits that increase impervious area contain stormwater management plan.

The guidelines and recommendations in this Residential Stormwater Guidelines Brochure are designed to help you address stormwater management for your residential lot. Sample engineering calculations supporting the guidelines of the Brochure are available in the current version of the Village's Stormwater Management Practices Manual.

Water that flows into our storm water drainage inlet system, goes **directly** into the Loxahatchee River, Indian River Lagoon, and the Atlantic Ocean

