

# SUSTAINABILITY

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”



Call us at 1.800.421.4162  
or visit us at  
[OnTopoftheWorld.com](http://OnTopoftheWorld.com)

8447 SW 99th St. Rd., Ocala, Florida 34481

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## Preservation of nature is key to the preservation of ones perfect lifestyle

At On Top of the World Communities, we understand the importance of preservation. We strive for environmentally friendly development and participate in many programs to do just that. Because of our deep commitment to the land, our homes and amenities are purposefully built to maintain our beautiful Florida habitats for generations to come, as well as bring residents years of comfort and pleasure. For over 70 years, this vision of stewardship and responsible management of our 13,000-acre community has guided us, and even resulted in a 2012 Environmental Stewardship Award as well as a 2015 Community of Excellence Award. We have also won the Golf Course Superintendent Association of America Environmental Leaders in Golf Award sponsored by Golf Digest twice, 2014 and 2017. Sustainability - it isn't only good for nature, it's good for all of us.





## Environmental Conservation

There are approximately 60 species of wildlife on Florida's endangered and threatened species list, due in no small part to rapid and relentless development. From the beginning, we've carefully developed the ranch lands that are a part of our community with the intent of providing a safe haven for displaced wildlife, consulting with wildlife biologists to ensure a balance between our working landscape and nature. As a result:

- We have over 418 acres of State recognized conservation areas, exceeding Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) guidelines.
- We provide and preserve prairie, scrub, hardwood and sandhill micro habitats to attract species to their natural environments and protect them.
- Endangered Gopher Tortoises have over 400 acres of habitat, and we've successfully relocated over 100 tortoises during our latest development phase.
- Endangered Florida Scrub Jays have a place here too. We follow a plan to provide habitat needs for three banded and marked groups, and are attracting non-banded birds to the habitat.
- Florida Burrowing Owls have 50 acres of designated conservation area, planned to ensure that their nesting areas are not disturbed during land development. We build artificial burrows to give them alternate nesting sites when we start new developments.
- Southeastern Kestrels, a threatened species, also live here. We provide nesting boxes to promote population growth. We've found at least six active nesting sites so far.
- The Eastern Indigo Snake (also called gopher snake) is the longest non-venomous snake native to North America. It is harmless, eats venomous snakes, and is a protected species.
- We have installed a bat house on the Links golf course.
- We have several acres of wildflowers for pollinator protection and habitat.
- We have several other notable species living in our community, such as fox squirrels, coyotes, turkeys, red cockaded woodpeckers and a Bald Eagle.

We are passionate about environmental conservation, so much so that it's common practice for us to reduce density in our development plans to ensure local flora and fauna live and thrive in harmony with our residents. Through careful planning and a conscious eye on the future, we will continue to develop in a manner that ensures wide open green spaces and natural habitats are plentiful, not just for ourselves, but for the numerous species of wildlife that also call On Top of the World home.

## Golf Course Water Quality

Keeping 54 holes of golf on three different courses attractive, healthy, and ready for play, requires constant maintenance and water. Our commitment to the environment through attention to golf course water quality is evidenced by the following:

- We follow the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Best Management Practices and Site Specific Management Plan.
- Six of our golf course employees are certified by the FDEP and the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).
- We pursue very extensive recycling practices for all waste and scrap materials.
- We use recycled treated sewage sludge (biosolids) on the rough, on all golf courses.
- We return clippings to the soil to send nutrients back to plants and reduce fertilizer outlays.
- We use pine and leaf straw debris mulch instead of artificial or dyed wood products to retain moisture on plantings.
- We only use controlled release nitrogen fertilizing sources to prevent leaching to groundwater.

Because 90% of Floridians rely on groundwater resources for drinking water, we do everything we can to control the quality of runoff on our golf courses to keep our springs, streams and lakes clean. We're concerned not only for the health of our own residents, but for all Floridians.

## Golf Course Water Conservation

Just as homeowners can choose to be green in their use of water, we practice water conservation on the commercial and common areas of our community. Golf courses, in particular, present their own challenges to water conservation. We go the extra mile to conserve water on our courses by:

- Following all FDEP Best Management Practices and a site specific Golf Course Management plan for water conservation.
- Using reclaimed water as our primary irrigation source for three courses.
- No overseeding to supplement turf growth or swapping of seasonal turf (which requires additional watering).
- Utilizing data collected from our on-site weather stations (We have 3).
- Regularly monitoring evapotranspiration (ET) rates, using soil moisture meters along with visually and physically conducting inspections, we are sure to water only when the courses actually need it.
- Recycling water we use to clean our golf course equipment.
- Using only Florida friendly or native plant materials that require less irrigation.
- Using composted material for moisture retention to further reduce irrigation needs.
- Following a turfgrass reduction program to reduce maintenance and irrigation needs.
- Conducting regularly scheduled, thorough irrigation system audits to identify areas for improvement that increases system efficiency.
- Installed a new, state of the art irrigation system on the Links golf course that allows pinpoint precision during water applications. This system actually irrigates more acreage while using less water compared to the old system.
- All three courses utilize computer controlled technology during irrigation system operation to provide for the most efficient utilization of our most precious resource, water.
- We employ three full-time irrigation technicians trained to keep the system operating at peak efficiency through monitoring, repairing or adjusting components on a daily basis.

At On Top of the World Communities, we pride ourselves on utilizing successful "best management practices" to ensure water conservation on each of our golf courses. We define this as the combination of proper plant selection and cultural maintenance procedures that supports suitable turf quality while still minimizing water use. By following these best management practices, we are able to reduce water consumption while still providing our residents and guests with well-maintained courses so they can enjoy rounds of golf all year.

## Florida Friendly Landscaping™

At On Top of the World Communities, we have a variety of beautiful neighborhoods, each with its own personality and features. Some are maintenance-free, and some are self-maintained. Regardless, we provide or encourage the use of ecologically sound landscaping practices as outlined by the University of Florida's Florida Yards & Neighborhoods (FYN) Program, which helps homeowners reduce water pollution and conserve water resources through the use of nine principles:

- Right plant, right place – select plants to suit a specific site and that will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizers, and pesticides.
- Water efficiently – irrigate only when needed. Efficient watering is the key to a healthy Florida yard and water conservation. SolarSync™ irrigation controllers on new or upgraded irrigation systems can be used to set watering times for optimal irrigation.
- Fertilize appropriately – less is usually better. Overuse of fertilizers can be hazardous to yards and the environment. Use of slow release fertilizers reduce the chance of unintended contamination of ground water with nitrates.
- Mulch – maintain a 3-inch layer of mulch to help retain soil moisture, prevent erosion and suppress weeds.
- Attract wildlife – include plants in your yard that provide food, water and shelter to attract Florida's diverse wildlife.
- Manage yard pests responsibly – unwise use of pesticides can harm people, pets, beneficial organisms, and the environment.
- Recycle – grass clippings and leaves provide nutrients to the soil and reduce waste disposal when reused as compost or mulch.
- Reduce storm water runoff – when water runs off of landscaping it can carry pollutants such as soil, debris, fertilizer, gasoline, and pesticides that can adversely impact water quality.
- Protect the waterfront – whether on a river, stream, pond, bay or beach. Waterfront property is ecologically fragile and should be carefully protected to maintain freshwater and marine ecosystems.

We believe the smart way to grow is to create environmentally sound landscape practices that ensure a sustainable future for ourselves and future generations. By cultivating native landscapes that boast the natural beauty of our community, we aren't just providing good-looking backdrops for our homes, we are protecting our natural resources while preserving our region's unique beauty.

## Florida Water Star<sup>SM</sup>

We participate in the Florida Water Star<sup>SM</sup> certification program, which addresses water conservation needs specific to Florida. This voluntary certification program is designed to increase water efficiency in our landscapes, irrigation systems and indoors. We choose to follow Florida Water Star<sup>SM</sup> criteria when developing residential and community areas to conserve water and protect our environment. The program benefits the community by:

- Providing water-efficient options for homes and landscapes.
- Saving homeowners money on monthly utility bills.
- Saving homeowners energy by conserving water with the use of approved fixtures and appliances.
- Reducing monthly landscaping costs.
- Increasing property appeal by adding resale or leasing value.
- Easily integrating with other "green" certification and recognition programs we participate in, such as ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup>.

We aren't required to be certified by the Florida Water Star<sup>SM</sup> program, but we believe in proactively taking part in programs that will directly benefit our residents when making construction and development decisions. The program also aligns with the Florida Green Building Coalition's green standard and the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program, which we take into consideration in our new designs.



## Community Water Conservation

Bay Laurel Center  
CDD

At On Top of the World Communities, we work closely with Bay Laurel Center Community Development District (BLCCDD), our local water and wastewater utilities provider, to ensure that their goals for reclaimed water services and water conservation are met. The BLCCDD uses reclaimed water on golf courses and common areas, saving precious groundwater resources. The BLCCDD also offers useful conservation tips and tools for residential customers to help keep utility bills down and conserve water, such as:

- Smart water meters that log water use data and detect leaks, alerting residents of a suspected leak.
- Compliance with Marion County watering restrictions, allowing irrigation only before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. on a rotating day schedule.
- Indoor and outdoor water conservation guides, available at [blccdd.com/conservation](http://blccdd.com/conservation).

We follow the BLCCDD Uniform Service and Uniform Extension Policies, which include:

- Rules for new irrigation standards that call for reduced pressure irrigation heads and drip irrigation or low volume emitters for shrubs.
- Use of hydro-zoned irrigation systems that match rainfall rates for maximum efficiency.
- Setting a maximum of 13 gallons per minute water usage in all irrigation zones.

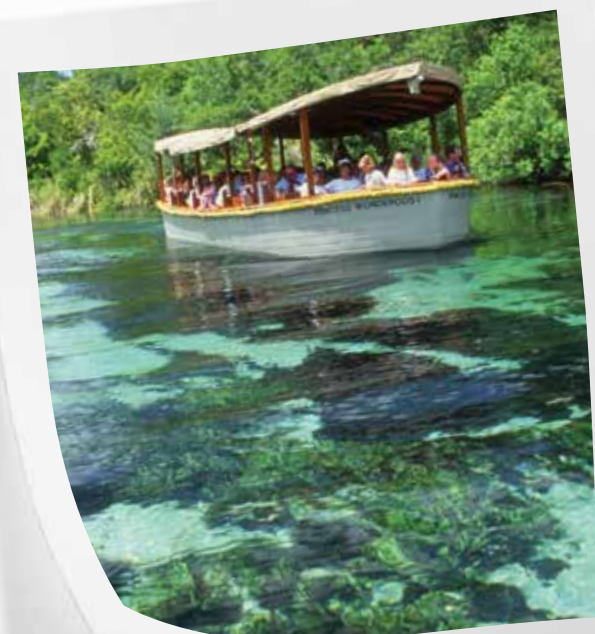
We set an example by supporting BLCCDD in our responsible use of water in residential, common, and recreational areas, and we encourage our residents to do the same by taking a free water facility tour to learn more about the importance of water conservation.

## Energy Conservation

We install high efficiency appliances within our homes and community buildings to ensure we are reducing energy usage. Our homes are constructed to prevent energy loss through the escape of conditioned air to the exterior of the home, reduced heat transfer by utilizing vinyl window frames compared to aluminum, and insulating the interior side of each exterior wall. As a company, we strive to continually upgrade existing light fixtures to light emitting diodes (LED), incorporate the use of high efficiency variable frequency drive motors along with the utilization of photo cells and timers to reduce unnecessary energy usage throughout the community. This in turn keeps energy usage low resulting in reduced expenses for our residents.

## Best Management Practices

We follow all of the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Best Management Practices (BMPs) in both our landscape and golf course management operations. In fact, we have several employees that are Green Industry and Golf Industry BMP Certified and licensed fertilizer applicators by the Florida Department of Agriculture. BMPs are environmentally safe landscaping practices that help conserve and protect Florida's ground and surface waters. They can also save the Florida homeowner money, time, and effort; increase the beauty of the home landscape; and protect the health of your family, pets, and the environment.



## Solar Energy

At our Golf Maintenance Building, Arbor Activity Center, Golf Pro Shop, Recreation Center and Hobby Building, we employ the latest technology with solar roof panels to harness energy for our facilities. Our "home-made" electricity replaces power that would otherwise be generated at a plant burning fossil fuel. Generating our own power from solar energy has so many advantages, in fact we have switched to electric vehicles on half of our maintenance fleet and we are exploring the use of electric mowers. We employ solar technology because it is:

- One of the cleanest energy sources available.
- Environmentally friendly, leaving behind no ecological footprint.
- An infinitely renewable resource.
- Extremely reliable, especially here in sunny Ocala, FL.
- Free power, after the initial investment.
- Increasing our energy self-reliance.
- Reducing our utility costs, helping us to keep costs and fees to residents in check.

Energy conservation is unquestionably of great importance to all of us, so we put a tremendous amount of "energy" into ways to reduce consumption in our homes and throughout our community. At On Top of the World Communities, we embrace energy conservation by making small changes that will lead to significant differences in our overall energy usage, not only to save money, but to enhance your life, the lives of future generations, and our environment.