



JUL - SEPT 2022 | 4TH QUARTER

# THE QUARTERLY FOCUS

The Florida Association of Special Districts' Official Newsletter

CHECK OUT WHAT'S  
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## 4TH QUARTER RECAP

**Written by FASD Staff**

This quarter we focused on updating and improving our membership renewal process. As you may recall, earlier this year in March we rolled out a new membership database system that functions in a smoother, more seamless way than the previous membership database.

With this year's renewal process already beginning, our hope is our members find it easier to renew electronically without the need to reinvent the wheel by supplying all your district membership information again.

As an added bonus to renewing, your district will receive a complimentary 30-day trial membership to Employers Association Forum. You will receive more information on this new member benefit in your renewal request email.

If you have any questions on membership renewal, please contact FASD Membership Coordinator Katherine Hughes at (850) 224-7775.

**We have begun using Constant Contact to email members regarding new opportunities and events. Please make sure you check spam folders to ensure you're receiving our important messages.**





# UPCOMING FASD EVENTS

## 2022 FALL EVENTS

OCT 17 - 20 - CDM PROGRAM,  
FT. LAUDERDALE : **CANCELLED**

OCT 20 - 21 - QUARTERLY MEETING,  
FT. LAUDERDALE : **CANCELLED**

**Need CEUs?**  
Check our website for  
available hours at upcoming  
Quarterly Meetings.

## 2023 EVENTS

JAN 19 - 20 - QUARTERLY MEETING,  
JACKSONVILLE

MAR 6 - 10 - CDM PROGRAM,  
TALLAHASSEE

MAR 8 - 9 - LEGISLATIVE FORUM,  
TALLAHASSEE

JUN 12 - 15 - ANNUAL CONFERENCE,  
ROSEN PLAZA HOTEL

## FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF SPECIAL DISTRICTS

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INFO@FASD.COM | WWW.FASD.COM

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**President: Jim Millican,**  
Lealman Special Fire Control  
District

**President Elect / VP: Kevin  
Hart,** South Broward Drainage  
District

**Secretary: Nate Spera,** St. Lucie  
County Fire Control District

**Treasurer: Tanya Quickel,**  
ACME Improvement  
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**Tommy Strowd,** Lake Worth  
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River Improvement District

**Jim King,** Database Financial  
Services



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Written by Jim Millican**

I can't believe the year has passed so quickly! We are already in the Fall, with Thanksgiving and Christmas just around the corner. I am looking forward to seeing everyone in Ft. Lauderdale for the October General Membership Meeting. As promised, we have been expanding our General Membership Meetings to include more training and CEUs. Our goal is to bring you more opportunities to network with other members and meet with our Associate Members.

A special thank you to Chief Nate Spera from the St. Lucie County Fire District for hosting the August General Membership Meeting and bringing in the Secret Service to present on Cybersecurity. He also secured his local Florida House of Representatives Legislator Dana Trabulsy to speak at the Legislative Toolbox. Chief Spera has a great relationship with his local delegation members, as we all should.

October also marks the one-year anniversary of our new Executive Director David Ramba. He and Rachel have been doing a remarkable job of moving FASD forward and expanding our membership.

We unfortunately had to cancel our October Quarterly Meeting due to the destruction of Hurricane Ian. We will, however, have a very exciting education line up for the January meeting in Jacksonville: Streamline, a new Premier member, is hosting a session with Liz Nunez from Village of Wellington/ACME Improvement District on website accessibility and PIO topics. Plus more!

Chief Dave Cambareri, our Legislative Committee Chair, and I attended the National Special Districts Coalition (NSDC) meeting along with the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Conference in August. The NSDC is moving forward with a lot of good work to improve funding to special districts across the country. We brought back several new ideas from the CSDA conference to implement at our own Annual Conference next year. To top it off, we brought back several new associate members to FASD.

Dave Cambareri and Michael Choate attended the Special Districts week in Washington DC in September to represent Florida Special Districts. They will be sharing that information with all of us during the Membership Meeting in January.

A special thank you to all our committee chairs and members for working hard to strengthen our membership and for bringing more to our members. We all have full time jobs that keep us occupied, but these folks go the extra mile to make room in their busy schedules to work on committee issues.

I hope everyone stays safe and I am look forward to seeing you soon!



# FL ASSOCIATION OF SPECIAL DISTRICTS

# CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

**Our goal is to provide ongoing classes and presentations that are of interest and value for all our members and staff.**

**Submission Deadline **October 28, 2022****

### SAMPLE TOPICS

- ✓ Cybersecurity Trends & Updates
- ✓ Remote Workforce Best Practices
- ✓ Risk Management
- ✓ Financial Management, Budget, Analysis
- ✓ Professional Development
- ✓ UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) Proficiencies for Special Districts
- ✓ Public Outreach Initiatives and Programs
- ✓ Green Infrastructure Initiatives
- ✓ Using Social Media
- ✓ Effective Measures of Conflict Resolution
- ✓ Resiliency & Adaptation for dealing with Climate Change
- ✓ Dealing with Press/Crisis Management
- ✓ Preparing an Emergency Ops Plan
- ✓ Assesst Management Software
- ✓ Introductory Course for "New Supervisors/Managers"
- ✓ Writing and Implementing a Safety Manual
- ✓ Lobbying 101

### IMPORTANT DATES

1. OCTOBER 28, 2022  
Submissions Due
2. DECEMBER 2022  
Speakers Notified
3. JANUARY 2023  
Quarterly Meeting
4. MARCH 8 - 9, 2023  
Legislative Forum
5. JUNE 12 - 15, 2023  
FASD Annual Conference
6. SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023  
Quarterly Meeting
7. JAN - DEC 2023  
over 6 webinars offered

**Info & Submission**  
[www.fasd.com/call-for-presentations](http://www.fasd.com/call-for-presentations)

### Contact Us

📞 850-999-1937

120 S Monroe St, Tallahassee, FL 32301





# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Written by David E. Ramba**

It seems not long ago that I was writing a letter of introduction in our rebranded *The Quarterly Focus* newsletter. Now, one of the most exciting by-products of our tremendous evolution in the last year has been the growth in our membership and ability to convey information about our association with greater frequency and regularity. Thus, it is my pleasure to present to you an overview of the last year, which proved to be a banner year for Florida Association of Special Districts, as well as our numerous partners.



In examining the last several years of FASD's history, one might reasonably conclude that every year is a "banner year," marked by growth and/or a dynamic slate of accomplishments. With that said, 2021-2022 produced some major changes, firsts, and exciting experiences for our members.

In the beginning of 2022, we rolled out a new membership management software program that houses our membership database, FASD website, and supports content management. This new program allows membership renewals to be managed online for a more streamlined experience. I hope you have found this process to be easier than in years passed.

The most important update for this last year has been the redesign of the FASD website. We hope you have taken the time to peruse the pages and see what it has to offer: a regularly updated calendar of events, the popular FASD Job Board, Community Forum, the ability to see your accrued CEUs, and many more features our members have requested.

We continued with our mission to bring value to FASD members by increasing the amount of member benefits we have to offer. This year alone we partnered with a national cooperative procurement organization NPPGov, a credit card partnership through US Bank, a surplus marketplace company GovDeals, and the newest HR compliance powerhouse, Employers Association Forum. This next year we are focusing on the ability to potentially offer medical benefits. This is a large job and we are up to the task.

As always, we are continuing to offer quality educational programming to our members, and non-members, to assist in staying up to date with current trends on how to best manage your special district. In a people-centered space, it goes without saying that our people are FASD's greatest assets.

While many things change every year, what will never change is our deep appreciation for our members and our seemingly infinite supporters and advocates. We look forward to building many more accomplishments together with our special district community.

2023  
Membership  
Renewal



Florida  
Association  
of Special  
Districts

A hand is shown holding a grey sign with the word 'RENEW' written in large, bold, red capital letters. A yellow horizontal line is positioned below the word. Three blue arrows point downwards towards the sign. The background is a blurred image of a person in a white shirt.

**RENEW**

## Join or Renew Today!

Memberships Expired September 30

Ways we are working for you:

- Trusted Network of Peers
- Premium Education
- Relevant Resources
- FASD Education Foundation

**RENEW  
NOW**

Click  
Here

\*\*Before October 31, 2022 - Membership levels change November 1



# FASD MEMBER BENEFITS



**EAF**  
Employers Association Forum

**Your People Experts...**  
Advice & Research  
People Development  
Connections

## Value of Membership

### A \$4,500 Value



#### HOTLINE CONSULTATION (FREE)

- HR, Legal, Safety & Cyber Security
- No Fees or Caps
- Answers from Certified Professionals or Attorneys
- Same day or 24 to 48 hour call back

#### CCH HR COMPLIANCE LIBRARY & INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE TOOLS (FREE)

- FMLA-ADA Advisor
- White Collar Exemption Advisor
- State Employment Law Comparison Chart
- Job Description Writer
- Performance Review Writer
- News & Trends and much more...

### A \$4,000 Value



### A \$3,500 Value



#### PUBLICATIONS & SURVEYS (FREE)

- Newsletters (including 2 for employees)
- Surveys (Policies, Benefits & Wage)
- HR Records, Reports & Retention Guide
- HR Self-Audit
- Sample Handbook, Forms & Policies
- Toolkits
- Compensation Data - PayScale
- Poster—Laminated All-In-One Employment Law State/Federal (First Year)

#### TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT (FREE)

- 10 Online HR Business & Safety Courses
- 25 Training Kits
- 40+ Webinars
- Briefings
- \$100 Bonus Credit—toward discounted Webinars/Seminars or National Surveys

### A \$6,000 Value



**An \$18,000 Value included in the annual membership fee!**  
*Corporate Annual Dues Range from \$475 to \$3,150/Year*

*The examples shown are based on calculation of the FREE EAF member services. If you also take advantage of our member-discounted seminars, webinars, onsite training and consulting or insurance programs, you are realizing tremendous returns. If you need assistance calculating your actual ROI, contact EAF at 407.260.6556.*

#### NEW MEMBER PROMO

**10% OFF**

JOIN NOW

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PROMOCODE: FASD10

READ OUR BLOGS AT...  
[www.eafinc.org/blog/](http://www.eafinc.org/blog/)





# QUARTERLY MEETINGS



## AUGUST

Thank you to St. Lucie County Fire District for hosting the August Quarterly Meeting. This meeting featured Legislative Toolbox which was presented by David Ramba and Chris Lyon, with special guest Rep. Trabulsy. Attendees also heard from Secret Service Agent Frederick Sanks on Cybersecurity and how to protect your district against online threats and the steps to take if hackers succeeded.

## JANUARY

We are in the beginning stages of planning this quarterly meeting as the October meeting was cancelled. Rest assured your registration fees will carry over to this meeting.

The January Quarterly Meeting is scheduled for January 19 - 20, 2023, in Jacksonville.



## LEGISLATIVE FORUM

This March we are planning a tremendous Legislative Forum for you. We will need all the district equipment we can get in Tallahassee. We have scheduled Special District Days in the Capitol Courtyard on Thursday, March 9. Contact Rachel at [rachel@fasd.com](mailto:rachel@fasd.com) to reserve your spot today!

Legislative Forum March 8 - 9, 2023





FLORIDA ASSOCIATION  
OF SPECIAL DISTRICTS  
EVENTS



## OCTOBER QUARTERLY MEETING

### **Important Update: October Quarterly Membership Meeting in Ft. Lauderdale is Canceled**

This morning we made the decision to cancel our upcoming in-person October Quarterly Membership Meeting, scheduled for Oct. 20 - 21 in Ft. Lauderdale. We are also canceling the October CDM Program, scheduled for Oct. 17 - 20 in Ft. Lauderdale.

We've all seen the devastation and destruction Hurricane Ian brought to our fellow members in Southwest Florida. As always, our members' health and safety is FASD's top priority; we hope this cancellation provides sufficient time for members to focus their efforts on their districts.

First and foremost, our thoughts are with residents and members of the FASD community throughout Florida who are most affected by this hurricane. We encourage you to do everything you can to keep yourselves, your loved ones, and your districts safe during the aftermath.

As for us, we are completely devastated to make this announcement. We deeply appreciate the sponsors and presenters who were lined up to lead us expertly through each session.

This community is marked by its resilience and ability to overcome every challenge, and we know this time will be no different. To that end, action steps are already underway to plan our next quarterly meeting in January. October attendees will have registration fee credits applied toward the January Quarterly Meeting. If instead you would prefer a refund, please contact Katherine Hughes at [khughes@cmc-associates.com](mailto:khughes@cmc-associates.com) to begin that process.

If you are a CDM Program candidate, you are eligible to attend the CDM Program we are offering during the Legislative Forum, scheduled March 6 - 10 in Tallahassee. If you cannot attend that date, please contact Rachel at [rachel@fasd.com](mailto:rachel@fasd.com) to obtain a refund.

For now, our sincerest thanks, again, to everyone who had already done their part or was imminently poised to make their mark on October's gathering. We share your disappointment, but look forward to connecting again in January.







# FASD MEMBER BENEFITS

## Helping you help the community.

As part of the Florida Association of Special Districts, your organization is eligible for a special credit card offer through U.S. Bank.

The U.S. Bank Visa® Community Card is designed just for nonprofit organizations like yours to help you earn rewards without paying an annual fee or needing a personal guarantor.

### NO PERSONAL GUARANTOR

Feel comfortable knowing the organization holds responsibility, not you as an individual.

### NO ANNUAL FEE\*

Get rewards without paying an annual fee – available only through the association.

### REWARDS

Earn 1% cash back on purchases.<sup>1</sup>

### FREE EMPLOYEE CARDS

Skip the reimbursement process and streamline business spending with employee and volunteer cards – available with different credit limits.



When you use the U.S. Bank Visa® Community Card, you can also take advantage of Visa® benefits.

- Zero fraud liability<sup>2</sup>
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- ID Navigator powered by NortonLifeLock
- Roadside Dispatch®



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\* This is a pay in full product, all charges made on this card are due and payable by the payment due date shown on your periodic statement. Cash Advance fee: 4% of each advance amount, \$10 minimum. Convenience Check fee: 4% of each check amount, \$10 minimum. Cash Equivalent fee: 4% of each cash amount, \$20 minimum. Balance Transfer fee: 4% of each transfer amount, \$10 minimum. The annual fee is \$0. Foreign Transaction fee: None. We may change fees, and other Account terms in the future based on your experience with U.S. Bank National Association and its affiliates as provided under the Cardmember Agreement and applicable law.

<sup>1</sup> Account must be open and in good standing to earn and redeem rewards and benefits. Upon approval, refer to your Cardmember Agreement for additional information. Cash back can be redeemed as a deposit into your U.S. Bank deposit account (checking, savings or money market) or as a statement credit, or as a U.S. Bank Rewards Visa® Card. \$25 minimum redemption required. Please refer to your Rewards Program Rules for additional information. Rewards are earned on eligible net purchases. Net purchases are purchases minus credits and returns. Not all transactions are eligible to earn rewards, such as Advances, Balance Transfers and Convenience Checks. You may not redeem Points, and you will immediately lose all of your Points, if your Account is closed to future transactions (including, but not limited to, due to Program misuse, failure to pay, bankruptcy or death). Points may be redeemed for cash back in the form of a statement credit or deposit to a U.S. Bank checking or savings account only. Points expire five years from the end of the quarter in which they are earned. Upon approval, see your Cardmember Agreement for details. Certain terms, conditions and exclusions apply. Subject to credit approval.

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# LEGISLATIVE FORUM 2023



## FASD LEGISLATIVE FORUM

March 8 - 9, 2023  
Tallahassee, FL

### SAVE THE DATE!

We have begun to make preparations for the upcoming Legislative Forum to take place March 8 - 9, 2023, in Tallahassee. One of the highlights will be "Special Districts Day," all day on Thursday, March 9, in the Capitol Complex Courtyard. We have reserved the entire Courtyard to showcase how special districts provide services to just about every citizen in this state. In addition to showcasing your equipment, we are planning on offering free food to entice visitors to stop by and ask questions.

### THIS IS WHERE WE NEED YOUR HELP

We are asking every type of special district to volunteer to bring equipment to Tallahassee that you use in your day-to-day operations and to showcase what you do! Every district has something important to showcase, whether it's a vehicle or items of use for educational purposes. We need to remind the public what you do so they better understand special districts.

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Contact Rachel at [rachel@fasd.com](mailto:rachel@fasd.com) today to reserve your spot.



## AROUND THE DISTRICTS



### DESTIN FIREFIGHTER DOES CROSSING FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS PADDLE CHALLENGE

**Written by Tina Harbuck from The Destin Log**

As if it wasn't challenging enough to make the 80-mile crossing on open water from the Bahamas to Florida on a paddleboard, Destin's Holly Heidenreich decided to do it with no paddle. Heidenreich, a 25-year-old Destin firefighter, along with teammate Megan Scully of Palm Beach County, competed in the Crossing for Cystic Fibrosis.

The Crossing is a long-distance endurance paddle challenge and international championship race that takes paddlers 80 miles across the Gulf Stream from Bimini in the Bahamas back to the Florida mainland, according to The Crossing website. Heidenreich and her teammate decided to do The Crossing on a prone board. "A lot of people in this race do standup, but we wanted to challenge ourselves, so we did it prone," Heidenreich said. She described the prone board as being similar to a lifeguard rescue board where you lay on your stomach or your knees and use your arms to get you to move. "We really wanted to challenge ourselves for some reason," she laughed. People in the past have competed prone, but this year, the two girls were the only ones to do it on a prone board. They used an 18-foot Bark board.

For The Crossing, all styles of paddling vessels are welcomed from stand-up paddleboards from 12 to 14 feet, stand-up surf boards, inflatable boards, prone stock, kayaks to a two-person dory boat. "The Crossing makes it open, so many different styles can do it. It's like one of the longest races in the world," she said. "A lot of people do teams ... and a lot of guys do it separately, individually, and they are total bad asses that do it, because that's a lot of mileage."

Heidenreich participated in the race in 2019 as part of a four-person standup paddle team. But this time around it was all about the challenge and doing something different, plus helping people at the same time.

"I got wrapped in because it's a good mental, physical challenge, plus it benefits a lot of families ... so many people," she said. Fundraising minimum for each paddler is \$1,500. "We raised like three grand to be a part of it," Heidenreich said, noting the money went for a good cause, cystic fibrosis. She started fundraising in January, calling on family, friends and locals around the community to help the cause.

**THE CROSSING IS A LONG-DISTANCE ENDURANCE PADDLE CHALLENGE AND INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE THAT TAKES PADDLERS 80 MILES ACROSS THE GULF STREAM FROM BIMINI IN THE BAHAMAS BACK TO THE FLORIDA MAINLAND.**



# AROUND THE DISTRICTS

(...continued from previous page)

## The Crossing

The actual 80-mile crossing of the Gulf Stream took place on June 26. Heidenreich said they launched at midnight on June 26 from Bimini and made it to Lake Worth, Florida, just south of West Palm Beach, around 3:45 p.m. the same day.

Working as a two-person team, the two took turns on the board. They had a captain aboard a boat that followed alongside that kept them on track. "He was doing the GPS and coordinates and tracking and making sure we were going the right direction ... and for safety," she said.

They took 45-minute shifts on the board to start, then went to 30, then at midday they went closer to 20 minutes, so as to not get over heated or too tired.

While one was on the board, the other was on the boat. "When she was paddling, I was able to hop on the boat, shake out my shoulders, get some water and electrolytes ... and go again," she said. "It was pitch black out there ... it was like can't see much," Heidenreich said at night.

When they made the board changes in the dark, "It was always like a weird feeling jumping in ... like 2,000 feet ... and you don't know what's below," she said. However, Heidenreich said she has done shark dives before and spends a lot of time on the water, so she was pretty comfortable making the exchange.

Nevertheless, she said, "It was an eerie feeling. It was foggy when we left. You couldn't see the moon and stars."

First light for The Crossing was at about 5:30 a.m. "It was beautiful for that," she said.

The girls got their first sight of the coast of Florida about 6 o'clock. "You're like, 'I'm so close,' but no, you still got 60-million miles to go ... oh no. You could see Florida for a long time, but not the part of Florida you wanted to see," she laughed.

Every time one of the girls got on the boat, it was water, electrolytes and sunscreen. Heidenreich said they averaged about five miles per hour on the board and the water conditions were "like glass ... ideal for this race."

"I guess we were going pretty fast for a prone board ... you are using your arms. We felt like we were doing pretty good. We're proud of ourselves. It was challenging," she said, noting they did it 15 ½ hours.

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**TENZINGA DELIVERS**

- Continuous Improvement
- Communication
- Collaboration



## AROUND THE DISTRICTS

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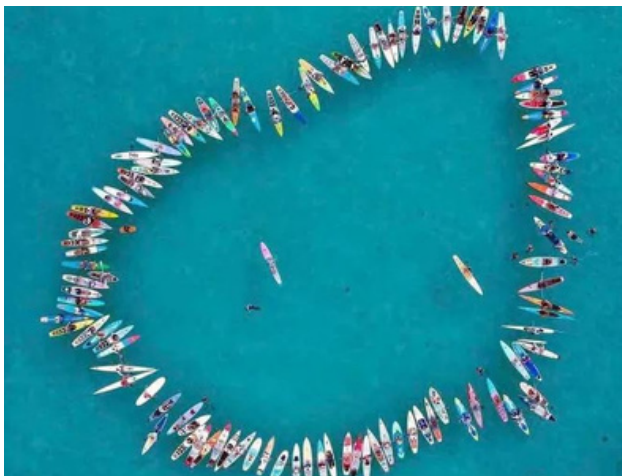
### The Training

Because Heidenreich had done the race on a standup paddle board in the past she decided to challenge herself and do a whole new board style – the prone board.

After she signed up for The Crossing in November of 2021, she started fundraising and training for the event in January. And due to the cold weather in January and February she got a wet suit and got on the board.

“The Destin beach safety lifeguards helped me a lot (with training),” she said. Heidenreich said she spent a lot of hours in the gym working on back muscles and stamina. “Cardio was really important and I did a lot of swimming,” she said. So, for a couple of hours every day, she was paddling, swimming and weightlifting. “I did it pretty much every day ... it was a lot,” she said.

She trained on her 12-foot board as well as her 10-foot board. “It’s hard to train for an 80-mile paddle,” she said, noting she did some long paddles prior to The Crossing. The prone board they actually used was an 18-footer. “On the longer board, you’re able to go further and faster,” she said.



The 80-mile Crossing was not only a physical challenge but mental as well.

“It’s more of a mental challenge, after about a few hours is when you start mentally breaking down. You start asking what am I doing? I don’t want to do this anymore ... you like overcome that. You’re going to be on this boat so you might as well keep going,” she said.

As for her teammate, Scully, Heidenreich met her through a mutual friend, but never in person until she picked her up at the airport right before the race.

But they were both up for the challenge. “We won’t let each other down for the paddle,” Heidenreich said they told each other.

### NEXT

When asked if she’d do the event again, Heidenreich paused a second or so, then said, “yes.”

“I did the standup first and now I’ve done prone. I really enjoyed it and it’s for a really good cause and the people who participate are so awesome,” Heidenreich said. “Everyone has a reason and a story about why they are doing it. I could be talked into doing it again next year ... pretty easily.”



# FOUNDATION INVESTORS

Investments in the FASD Education Foundation support professional development scholarships, quality educational opportunities, and Foundation initiatives to improve the special district community.



## President's Club



## Silver Level Sponsors

Rita Greenberg



## How can you support the FASD Education Foundation?



Make a one-time contribution



Make a monthly pledge of an amount you choose

Learn more: [www.fasd.com/about-the-foundation](http://www.fasd.com/about-the-foundation)



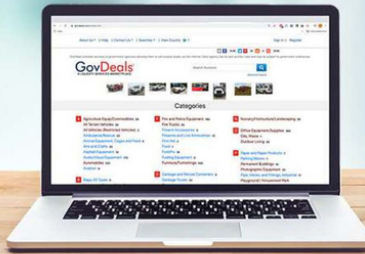




# FASD MEMBER BENEFITS

**Your Simple, Fast, And Profitable Solution To Surplus Disposition.**

**GovDeals**



## THREE EASY STEPS

### STEP ONE



#### List any equipment or inventory, in any condition.

Quickly create your auction listing with our easy tools. All you need is an item description and a few photos. Our Account Managers will teach you how to create listings that will maximize your return on investment.

### STEP TWO



#### Sell to 3.6+ million registered buyers.

We actively promote your item listings to our global buyer base through complimentary marketing campaigns targeting active and relevant buyers for your specific items.

### STEP THREE



#### Higher returns on your surplus disposition!

Don't worry about paperwork! We'll invoice, collect, and manage the entire closing process for you. When the transaction is complete, we will send the proceeds directly to your bank account.

## The Smartest, Fastest Way to Sell Your Assets



### Take control

Sell your used equipment how, when, and wherever you need through our global platform.



### Speed to market

No need to wait for someone else's schedule. Complete sales in days by listing your items straight to our platform as soon as they are declared surplus.



### Partnership and support

Whether you are selling specialized niche assets or general surplus, our dedicated account managers can offer expert advice to ensure your success.



### Keep more of your money

We have eliminated transportation costs, storage fees, preparation fees, listing fees, and high commission rates. You take home more money.

### All the tools. All in one place.

From online payment collection and electronic proceeds remittance to asset specific marketing and real-time customizable reporting tools, GovDeals is a complete surplus disposition program. Contact us today to learn more about our back-office suite features and digital marketplace benefits.

**CONTACT US**



## Palm Harbor Fire Rescue Lt. Craig "Sluggo" Rogers Retires After 37 Years of Service

BY PALM HARBOR FIRE RESCUE

Please join us in congratulating Lt. Craig (Sluggo) Rogers on his retirement! Lt. Rogers served for 37 years within Pinellas County Fire and EMS, responding to thousands of calls for service as both a volunteer and a professional firefighter. While in high school Craig began his public service career as a volunteer dispatcher for the Tarpon Springs ambulance company, he was a lifeguard for 3 years at Honeymoon Island, and an ambulance EMT for 2 years. He was a volunteer for PHFR for two years prior to being hired as a career firefighter in 1987. His fire service dedication is not limited to PHFR, as he fought the Volusia County wildland fires in 1998 and went to NY, in September 2001, to participate in funerals of fallen firefighters at ground zero. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in 2000.




In 2003, he was named PHFR Firefighter of the Year and in 2004 he was recognized as Firefighter of the Year for the State of Florida. Lt Rogers was recognized for his heroic actions after rescuing a trapped person in a burning structure and secondly, while off duty, he performed the Heimlich-maneuver on a patient in a restaurant. Additionally, he was nominated by the Pinellas County Council of Firefighters and received the Commissioner John M. Morroni Emergency Service Award. Lt. Rogers is an avid outdoorsman and enjoys hunting and fishing. Being on the waters of the Gulf of Mexico has made him an asset on the water when assigned to working on Fire Boat 68. His peers describe him as a true mentor with a knack in the kitchen to cook up a great meal for a table of hungry firefighters.



Each year, when working his birthday (October 31st) crews were guaranteed a fire of some sort during their shift, making his birthdays memorable. Sluggo is always the life of any get together with friends and a great father and friend to all. We will miss you, Sluggo, and hope you enjoy your retirement and all the hunting and fishing in the days to come!



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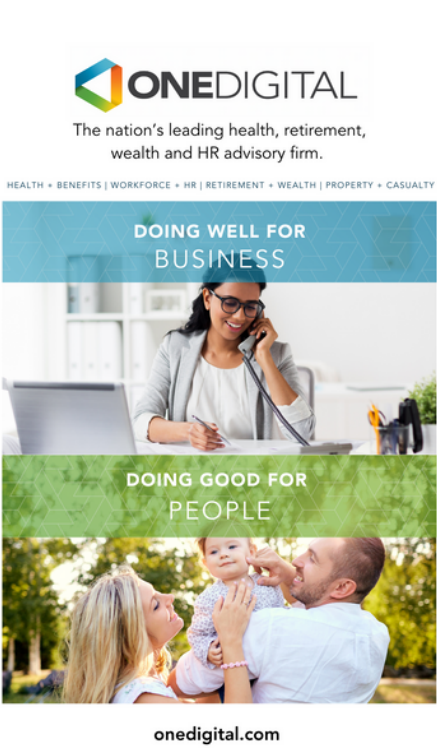
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-  Wheel Loaders





# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## Three Districts Getting Community Engagement Right

By Annelise Spargo, Streamline

As a special district, how do you combat the often-heard sentiment, "They just don't do that much..."? While your district may not be directly competing with anyone, keeping your community informed ensures everyone knows the value you are providing.

There are many ways to engage your community, and the good news is, technology has made it so much easier! So we found a couple of districts that are getting community engagement right. Check them out below!

### Mt. View Sanitary District

#### *The Mt. View Monitor Quarterly Newsletter*

Mt. View Sanitary uses an online newsletter to quickly and easily keep their community updated about projects, volunteer opportunities, staff updates, and fun tips.

#### What we love:

- The newsletter arrives in residents' email inboxes reliably every quarter
- Consistent look and feel for every issue
- Email newsletter that is also posted directly on their website with the option to subscribe to future newsletters

[Check it out >](#)

### El Dorado County Fire Protection District

#### *Weekly email & social media updates*

As a fire protection district, the EDCFPD team is often visible in the community, working a call, educating community members, or training for a variety of scenarios. Using their website, email, and social media, EDCFPD ensures their community always knows what they are up to.

#### What we love:

- Updates are shared to all channels at least weekly. Consistency is key!
- Incident follow-up emails and social media posts use stunning, real photos of their team
- They make a point to share photos and a few words when participating in community events
- Information from all channels can always be found in one easy place, their website's "News" page

[Check it out >](#)





# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

(...continued from previous page)

## San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

### *The "Bite Back" awareness campaign*

The SGV Mosquito and Vector Control District recognizes that the community does not always understand the importance of mosquito and vector control. But their outreach goes beyond education and asks for the community's help in their abatement efforts.

#### What we love:

- Campaign designed to create awareness about mosquitos' potential dangers and activate the community in the fight against mosquitos, encouraging residents to "bite back." How clever!
- A website page for community members to sign up as a "Bite Back" advocate
- The use of a variety of media - website updates, social media videos, email, and weekly educational webinars
- A campaign logo gives consistency to the look and feel of all campaign elements

We are so impressed with the creativity of this campaign and the use of technology to engage the community in a fun way! And we love how SGV Mosquito makes a sometimes complex subject easily digestible for their community.

We highly recommend checking out their website and Facebook page for inspiration.

[Check it out >](#)



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# FASD MEMBER BENEFITS

## Well, What Now?

### BY DATABASE FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.

It just seems like a year or so ago when you started, but now your retirement is looking right at you. Now it's time to make one of the biggest decisions of your career. What retirement option do you choose?

If you're in a defined benefit plan is the full option right or one of the survivor benefit options. If you're in a Investment type plan (401, 457, 403) where is the best place for your funds that works for you and your family. There is only one way to accomplish this, Education! Yes, simple knowledge of how your plan works can make a big difference in how your retirement years are going to be.

In a traditional defined benefit plan (FRS, 175 Or 185 plans) the choice you make in the Personnel Department that day can have far reaching effects for years to come. For instance, the difference between a life only and life plus spouse can mean a change in retirement income from between \$100,000 to over \$300,000 over the course of a typical retirement life span.

If you're in a Investment Plan can you afford to take on risk to achieve your desired income. Or can you use one of the new generations of investment products that will protect your funds from downside market volatility.

The way to find out what is best for you and yours is to fully understand the Plan and the alternatives available. Plus, the earlier you choose which path is right for you, the easier and sometimes cheaper it is to achieve. In a traditional plan is the self-insured option the right one for you. If so, can you start it early and cover your current needs while also putting your retirement option in place at a much lower cost than waiting.

If you're in an Investment type plan, how much income do you need upon retirement? How do you plan to get to that figure? What's your risk tolerance now and how might it change in the future? As you can see, like I always say, retiring isn't all that easy. But you can make it easier with the proper planning and education. Take some time to reach out to a financial professional and get the knowledge you need to make the decision. When choosing the type of education you need, make sure that the individual(s) hosting or giving the information are knowledgeable with Government employee plans. Unfortunately, most are not.

If we at Database Financial can be of any assistance to you or your District, please give us a holler.

You have worked hard your entire career, make sure that your retirement plan is going to be there working for you. It just takes a little education.



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## AROUND THE DISTRICTS

# Storm Readiness Includes Landscaping

**Submitted by Lake Worth Drainage District**

Many residents work hard creating beautiful yards but living in Florida means we live with hurricanes. There is no way to completely protect your landscape from the effects of a severe storm, but there are some things you can do to minimize potential damage.

Do not prune trees and leave debris on site if a storm is imminent. It is better to take a chance and leave the tree intact if you cannot get the debris off site before the storm.

Remove coconuts from coconut palm trees and harvest fruits from other trees that are mature enough to be picked. These items can become dangerous projectiles during high winds. If you have waited until the last minute, store debris in your garage or another safe place away from the wind.

Support small trees and tall plants with sturdy stakes driven at least 8-inches into the ground. You can also lay arches and trellises on the ground and anchor them with a rope. Masses of heavy vines growing on fences can pull fencing over in high winds. If the vines are extensive you may want to trim or remove them altogether.

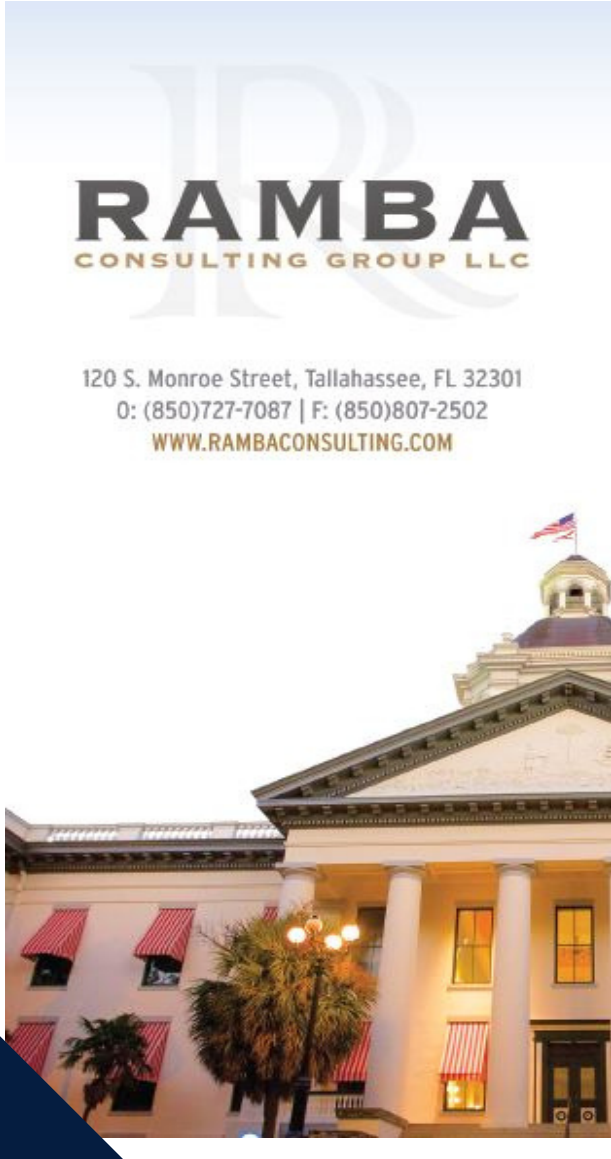
In addition to wind damage, you may be faced with flooded areas of your yard for several days or weeks. Flooded conditions can seriously impact water-intolerant plants leading to fruit drop, wilting and root rot. Saturated soil coupled with high winds lead to uprooted trees, especially trees with shallow root systems. Do not add to the flooding. Turn your sprinkler system off. This includes irrigation systems with a rain shut-off device. You can reset your system to automatic when the soil dries out.

Clear house gutters of debris to ensure water from heavy rains has free flow. Make sure gutters are firmly attached and directing water away from the home. If there are no gutters and the water pours off the roof in a concentrated area, consider placing pavers or rocks in the runoff area to reduce soil erosion. Residents adjacent to a drainage canal should also be sure that gutters are directing water away from canals to avoid washouts and bank failure.

Before the storm arrives, check surrounding areas to ensure there are no blockages that may prevent drainage. Clear debris from areas where water will flow toward, like storm drains and swale areas. After the storm, check these areas again for possible blockages. Making landscaping a part of your hurricane readiness plan is a great way to help protect your property and landscaping investment.




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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

# Accident Investigation: A Critical Part of Effective Safety

Written by Ryan Rupnarain, Egis Insurance & Risk Advisors

When workplace accidents happen, it's important to respond appropriately including getting the employee the proper care along with timely accident reporting. An often-overlooked but critical component of the response process for a district's loss control program is accident investigation. Accident investigation allows districts to uncover causes of error and/or deficiencies so that similar accidents can be prevented. Making the effort to investigate the accident also shows employees that the district prioritizes their safety, boosting overall staff morale.

### Defining Workplace Health and Safety Accidents

Workplace accidents are typically defined by either of the following two scenarios:

1. A workplace condition or event resulted in an illness, injury, fatality or property damage to an employee (or volunteer).
2. A workplace condition or event resulted in a "near miss"—which means that no illness, injury, fatality or property damage took place, but likely could have.

It's important to investigate every accident regardless of severity or circumstance. After all, no matter how small or seemingly minor the accident was, taking the time to investigate what happened and implement workplace health and safety improvements can make all the difference in preventing further (and potentially more severe) accidents in the future..



### The Accident Investigation Process

Accident investigations should ideally follow a systems approach—meaning that the cause(s) of the accident should be traced back to failures or gaps within district health and safety programs or procedures vs. employee behaviors. In other words, solely attributing the accident to human error or placing all of the blame on the employee(s) involved may inhibit your district from fully understanding the underlying cause(s) of the accident.



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

*(...continued from previous page)*

Determining who is responsible for carrying out the investigation depends on the nature of the accident and unique characteristics of your district. However, districts typically designate immediate supervisors to take on this responsibility because they will most likely have the best understanding of the area, task and any employee(s) involved in the accident. Immediate supervisors will also likely be in charge of enforcing any workplace health and safety adjustments that arise from the accident.

Supervisors should also seek support from any employee(s) involved, senior leadership, safety managers or coordinators, the district safety committee and the human resources department throughout the investigation process to ensure a well-rounded, team effort.

In any case, workplace accident investigations should follow this five-step process:

**1. Document the scene.** First, make sure that anyone involved in the accident has received or is currently receiving proper care—especially if a serious injury took place. Then, it's important to preserve the scene of the accident as much as possible. This may require pausing operations or temporarily relocating any employees near the accident area. From there, be sure to document any relevant information regarding the accident—including witnesses (e.g., someone who saw the affected person before the accident, someone who does the same job or tasks as the affected person and the first person

on the scene after the accident took place), any workplace equipment involved and the environmental conditions of the scene. Try to take photos of the scene as well.

**2. Collect important information.** Next, you will want to collect the following valuable information:

- Witness accounts of what happened, making sure to gather these accounts as soon as possible to ensure the most accurate, detailed information
- Equipment manuals and maintenance records
- Employee training documentation
- District health and safety policies and procedures

**3. Determine the root cause(s).** By analyzing the information gathered, you should be able to identify the root cause(s). Root causes are the underlying issues or failures that lead to workplace accidents. Such causes differ from immediate causes, which are the more direct, obvious factors that result in workplace accidents. Root causes should not focus on human error or behaviors, but rather on issues related to safety program concerns, poor workplace designs or other operational shortcomings.

To help determine the root cause(s) of the accident, utilize a root cause analysis tool. One of the most common tools is the “five whys” method—named for the number of “why” questions you should typically ask in the wake of a workplace accident. To use this method, follow these steps:





# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

(...continued from previous page)

- Ask yourself a simple “why” question regarding the accident (e.g., why did the employee slip and fall?).
- Review the answer to the question (e.g., there was a water spill on the floor).
- Respond to that answer with another “why” question (e.g., why was there a water spill on the floor?).
- Repeat this process—generally, at least five times—until you reach a final answer that sheds light on the root cause of the accident (e.g., the spill stemmed from a water leak in piping, which resulted due to a lacking pipe maintenance program).

**4. Implement corrective measures.** After analyzing and understanding the root cause(s) of the accident, it’s finally time to implement corrective measures. These measures should be specific, realistic and clearly communicated, as well as help reduce overall workplace risks. Be sure to consult accident documentation and employees across departments to help determine effective corrective measures.

**5. Conduct routine follow-ups.** Once you have implemented corrective measures, it’s important to conduct routine follow-ups with supervisors and employees to evaluate the effectiveness of these measures. Make additional adjustments as needed.

## The Importance of an Investigation Policy

In order to ensure a smooth workplace accident investigation process, it’s important to have a policy in place. Implementing an investigation policy provides employees with written, easy-to-follow guidelines regarding the investigation process, including:

- How and when to report an accident
- Who to notify regarding the accident
- Who will conduct the investigation and what training is necessary to do so
- The time frame for completing an investigation
- Who is responsible for implementing and enforcing corrective measures following an accident

Your investigation policy should encourage collaboration between employees, management and various departments to identify the root cause of the accident and implement adequate corrective measures in a timely manner. Be sure to routinely review your investigation policy for effectiveness and make updates as needed.

For additional health and safety resources, contact us at [riskservices@egisadvisors.com](mailto:riskservices@egisadvisors.com)



# SAFETY REMINDERS

Provided by Lake Worth Drainage District

## Recognizing Tree Risk

Learn to identify common tree defects that may indicate tree risk and understand how tree risk can be managed.



Trees are an important part of our world and offer a wide range of benefits. However, trees can also be liabilities. While there is no such thing as a completely safe tree, the benefits of trees far outweigh the risks. All trees have the potential to fall, but only a small number actually hit something or someone.

By understanding and addressing the risks associated with trees, you can make your property safer and prolong the lives of your trees.

It is a tree owner's responsibility to ensure the safety of others when around trees on their property. This brochure provides some tips for identifying and managing common defects associated with tree risk. However, evaluating the seriousness of these defects is best done by a professional arborist. Regular tree care performed by an ISA Certified Arborist® will provide an opportunity to identify trees that have defects and unacceptable risk levels. Once the risk is identified, steps may be taken to reduce the likelihood of an incident or damage.



### Tree Risk Checklist

Consider these questions when assessing a tree:

- Are there large dead branches?
- Are there detached, hanging branches?
- Have any branches fallen from the tree?
- Is there loose bark on the trunk?
- Are there cracks or splits in the trunk or where branches are attached?
- Has the trunk developed unusually?
- Are there cavities or rotten wood along the trunk or in major branches?
- Are mushrooms present at the base of or under the tree?
- Has the area recently been altered by construction, changes in soil level, or installations of lawns or pavement?
- Have the leaves developed an unusual yellow color or do they seem smaller in size?
- Has the tree been topped or heavily pruned?

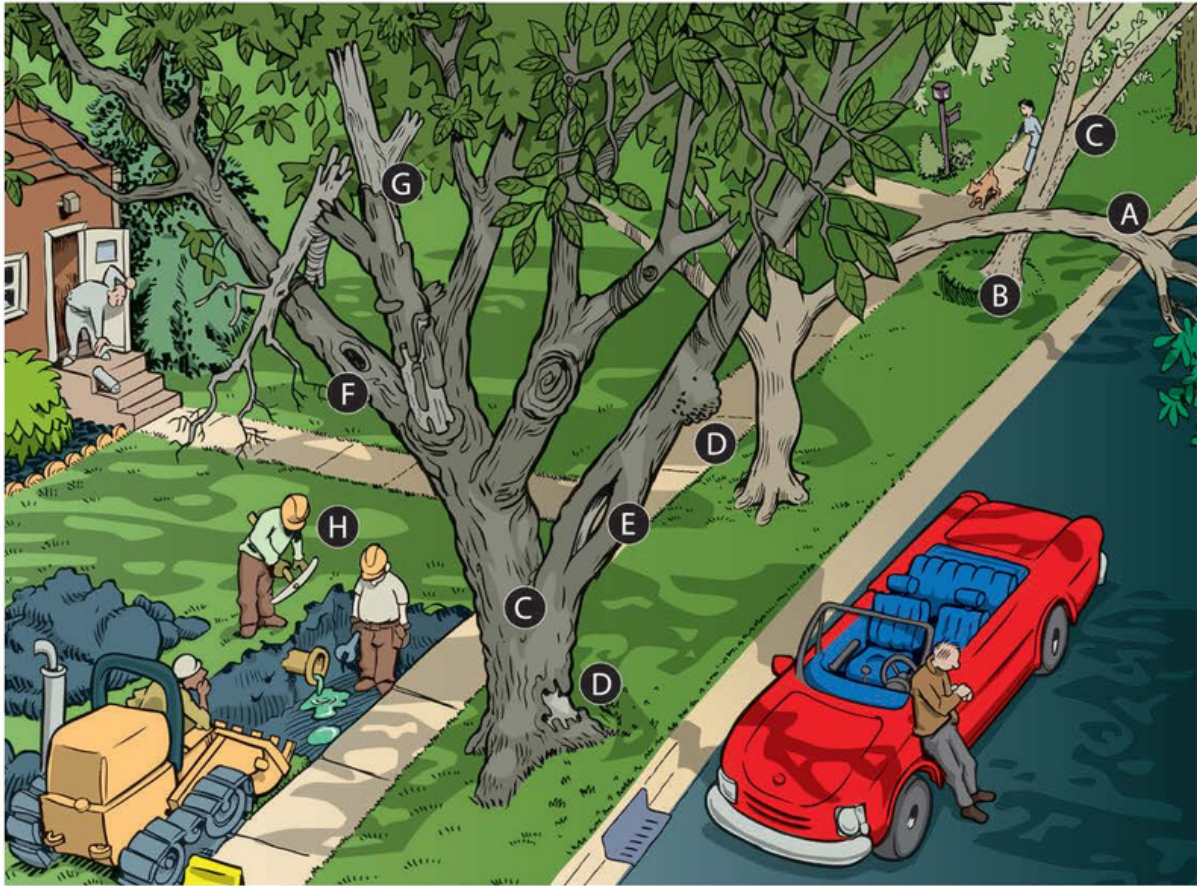
### Trees and Utility Lines

Additional consequences can result from trees that fall onto utility lines. Not only can these trees injure people or property near the lines, but they can also hit a conductor and cause power outages or surges, fires, and other damage.

A tree with potential to fall into a utility line presents a very serious situation. Never attempt to remove branches or any tree part from or near power lines, and never go near downed power lines! These lines are especially dangerous, as they could still be conducting electricity. If you see tree parts in contact with utility lines, call your local electricity provider.



# SAFETY REMINDERS



## Defects in Urban Trees

The following are defects or signs of possible defects in urban trees (see figure):

### A: Poor taper:

Branches or stems with their weight concentrated near the end are more prone to failure.

### B: Root failure:

Cracks or separations in the soil may indicate soil heaving from excessive movement of the roots. This can be a warning sign for failure, especially if the tree is leaning.

### C: Codominant stems (split trunk):

Can often be failure points. Multiple branch attachments at one point on a stem can also be considered a defect.

### D: Externally visible defects:

Includes cankers and wounds. Each could be minor or the start of a significant problem; further investigation may be warranted.

### E: Cracks or splits:

Watch for longitudinal cracks or splits on the trunk, major branches, or branch unions.

### F: External signs of decay:

Asymmetric shapes may be caused by the tree's formation of reaction wood and may be an indication of an internal problem. Other, more obvious signs of decay include the presence of fungal fruiting bodies and cavities.

### G: Dead branches:

Dead branches within the canopy of a tree are probably the most obvious potential hazards. The risk of damage or injury depends on the size of the dead branch and distance from any potential targets.

### H: Human-caused defects:

Wounds, weak or damaged limbs, root loss, and decay may be the result of construction, grade changes, soil compaction, poor pruning, or other misguided practices.

## Ensuring Quality Care

Trees are assets to your home and the community, and they deserve the best possible care. If you answered "yes" to any of the questions in the tree risk checklist on the previous page or see any of the defects depicted in this brochure, your tree should be examined by an ISA Certified Arborist.

# SAFETY REMINDERS

## Managing Tree Risk

An ISA Certified Arborist can help homeowners manage trees and provide treatments that may help reduce the risk associated with certain trees.

An arborist familiar with tree risk assessment may suggest one or more of the following:

- Prune the tree and remove the defective branches. Inappropriate pruning may weaken the tree. Pruning work is best done by an ISA Certified Arborist.
- Cable and brace the tree. Provide physical support for weak branches and stems to increase their strength and stability. Such supports are not guarantees against failure.
- Provide routine care. Mature trees need routine care in the form of water, nutrients (in some cases), mulch, pruning, and, in some cases, nutrients, as dictated by their structure and the season.
- Remove the tree. Some trees with unacceptable levels of risk are best removed. If possible, plant an appropriate new tree as a replacement.

Recognizing and reducing tree risk not only increases the safety of your property and that of your neighbors, but also improves trees' health and may increase their longevity.



## What Is a Certified Arborist?

ISA Certified Arborists® are individuals who have proven a level of knowledge in the art and science of tree care through experience and by passing a comprehensive examination developed by some of the nation's leading experts on tree care. ISA Certified Arborists must also continue their education to maintain their certification. Therefore, they are more likely to be up to date on the latest techniques in arboriculture.

## Finding an Arborist

Visit [TreesAreGood.org](http://TreesAreGood.org) for free tools:

- The "Find an Arborist" tool can help you locate an arborist in your area.
- The "Verify a Credential" tool enables you to confirm whether an arborist has an ISA credential.

## Be an Informed Consumer

One of the best methods to use in choosing an arborist is to educate yourself about some of the basic principles of tree care. Visit [TreesAreGood.org](http://TreesAreGood.org) to read and download all brochures in this series.



[www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com) • [www.treesaregood.org](http://www.treesaregood.org)

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Through research, technology, and education, the International Society of Arboriculture promotes the professional practice of arboriculture and fosters a greater worldwide awareness of the benefits of trees.





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### Questions or Concerns?

Contact NPPGov at 877.329.8847 or [customerservice@nppgov.com](mailto:customerservice@nppgov.com).

Membership with NPPGov is only available to Government entities, including Public Safety & Education.

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# ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

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Persson, Cohen, Mooney, Fernandez & Jackson, PA, focuses their practice on helping government entities, community associations and private citizens navigate the problems and pressures that we are faced with today. They do that as both general and special counsel, helping their clients cost-effectively address needs ranging from specific assignments to matters of general counsel responsibility.



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

# Special District Financials

By Inframark

Florida law states that a Special District is "... a unit of local government created for a special purpose, as opposed to a general-purpose, which has jurisdiction to operate within a limited geographic boundary and is created by general law, special act, local ordinance, or by the rule of the Governor and Cabinet" (Section 189.012(6), Florida Statutes) (2022). While that may be the official explanation, the easiest way to note the value of a Special District is that it provides governance to a targeted area for a specific reason. As a result, District Managers need to deliver, organize, and manage a special District, making it critical that a District Manager understands as much as possible about the respective Statutes, such as Florida Statute 190. Alongside the knowledge of the Florida Statutes, they have to be able to maintain the District's financials, and those financials take a special kind of expertise.

Accountancy can be found in many forms, but maintaining and managing the financials of special governments, Special Districts take another form of expertise and experience. If a company's management can most adversely or positively impacted on one element, than it would be the company's ability to provide effective financials. These financials have to come from accountants that are skilled in District accountancy, or fund accounting. This is a unique type of accountancy that takes time and experience to master effectively. Inframark focuses on having accountants that are experienced and tenured in not only accountancy but fund accounting.

Inframark's community management division appoints an accountant to each Special District, so that they can be the ones to focus, grow knowledge, and build rapport with that individual District. It also assures the Special District that the accountant is familiar with their financials. Another unique element that sets Special Districts apart from other non-profit organizations, is that since Special Districts are collected through assessments if the owners do not pay their assessments, tax certificate sales will inevitably collect the overdue funds. This is a guaranteed method to collect the necessary dues each year as opposed to a Homeowner's Association which may go to litigation.



When a Special District is looking for a management company to manage them, while there are many elements a Special District will look for, none will be as notable as financial management. Inframark strives to demonstrate more than simply keeping a District in compliance; it seeks to always keep the district's finances and funds in a proactive capacity. That means budgets will be produced before they are required and evaluated well before the deadlines. It also means that District Managers and Board Members have the reassurance of working with accountants who understand that when working with Inframark, they will be able to remain financially healthy and stable.



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As an insurance firm whose singular focus is in the insurance and risk management needs of special districts, Egis understands the difficult budget-making decisions that each district must make. Therefore, they dedicate their resources to ensure cost-effective outcomes.

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Associate Members have prime real estate for their advertisements in our newly redesigned quarterly newsletter. Contact [rachel@fasd.com](mailto:rachel@fasd.com) for more information.

Premier District Management is a Florida-based professional management firm with a primary mission to provide creative, cost-effective management solutions throughout the daily operations of special districts. Their experience in working with elected Boards is a particular strength that they excel in.

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## ABOUT SOUTH FLORIDA EMERGENCY VEHICLES

Owner David Stonitsch founded South Florida Emergency Vehicles in 2001 with a simple mission: Provide first responders of Florida with the finest apparatus and service. In the last ten years, SFEV has grown to become one of the top Sutphen dealers in the country. SFEV is also the Florida dealer for KME Fire Apparatus, SVI, PL Custom Ambulances, and SFEV Brushtrucks.

## ABOUT SPECIAL DISTRICT SERVICES, INC.

Special District Services, Inc., creates and manages special taxing districts throughout the State of Florida. SDS was organized to meet the growing demand for urban services and provide a public financing vehicle to serve community infrastructure and service needs in a timely and cost-effective manner.



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