

**Subject:** Water Quality and Hi Hat CPA 2019-D  
**From:** Mike Hutchinson <mph\_04@verizon.net>  
**Date:** 3/11/2021, 1:58 PM  
**To:** ncdetert@scgov.net

Dear Commissioner Detert,

Subject: Water Quality

Hi Hat (CPA-2019-D) is requesting to get an exception to the normal procedure of capping and plugging wells that are no longer used. I understand that should help water quantity in the areas around Hi Hat. My concern is water quality!

Hi Hat maintains they want to keep these wells for a backup for lawn irrigation. They plan to first use reclaimed water and back that up with lakes and stormwater ponds. The wells will be used last.

1. Sarasota County has long understood the need to cap and plug unused wells. In fact, to protect other wells, Sarasota County has a program to cap and plug abandoned unused wells!
2. The importance of plugging a well is fully understood by SWFWMD. It's Quality of Water Improvement Program (QWIP) provides funding assistance to properly plug wells.
3. The requirement to cap unused wells is to prevent contamination from the ground. Plugging is used to prevent water moving within the well column from deeper or shallower aquifers contaminating the drinking water aquifer. An email by Becky Ayech to County Staff on 02/07/2021 covers this in detail. It includes supporting information from SWFWMD and Sarasota Health Dept.
4. Sarasota has a surplus of reclaimed water! Per the Herald Tribune Apr. 24, 2019, "more than 800 million gallons of reuse water" has been dumped into our waterways since 2013. See the settlements with the State of Florida and with the Water Keepers.
5. Because of that lawsuit, the Bee Ridge Facility has a \$170 million upgrade underway that includes improvements to store even more reclaimed water including two aquifer recharge wells.
6. The reclaimed water generated by Hi Hat in conjunction with the surplus reclaimed water that the County now is attempting to handle should easily handle the needs of Hi Hat.

With the additional reclaimed water from Hi Hat, the excess reclaimed water the County has dumped in our waterways and with backup lakes/ponds there should be plenty of water for lawn irrigation!

To allow old wells to be uncapped and unplugged, jeopardizing drinking water wells for north east Sarasota, just to provide "backup for lawn irrigation" makes no sense!

Deny the exception requested by Hi Hat!

Thanks,

Mike Hutchinson