

Water Quality Advisory

WATER WOES

There are currently two marine water quality issues facing Floridians:

KARENIA BREVIS

(Aka) Red Tide is an annual, naturally occurring saltwater algal bloom that often collects on the shoreline. It occurs when colonies of marine algae overgrow. Red Tide events have been present in waters across the globe for several centuries. When it reaches a heightened level of severity, Red Tide can produce toxic or harmful effects on animals and humans up to one mile from the beach.

CYANOBACTERIA

This blue-green freshwater algal bloom is present in Lee and Charlotte Counties and is a result of recent Lake Okeechobee discharges through the Caloosahatchee River. The timed discharges keep lake levels manageable to avoid floods and property damage. Large cyanobacteria blooms have accumulated in backwater canals and lagoons near residential areas.

Both blooms are exacerbated this year because of high levels of nutrient runoff.



As the voice of REALTORS® in the Naples area, NABOR® has and will always advocate for action to reduce or eliminate any manmade or environmental threats to homeownership, property values and the living standards in Florida.

FIXING FLORIDA'S WATER QUALITY ISSUES

Recent media attention on water quality issues impacting Florida's marine and intercoastal areas is shining a bright light on a very important topic.

There are many factors at play, which is why it requires collaborative efforts from several groups including the Department of Environmental Protection, Army Corps of Engineers, scientists at Florida marine labs, local water management districts, and elected state and federal officials.

NABOR® has been working actively for many years to encourage restorative solutions to our waterways and will continue to meet with legislators who are working on remedies that protect homeowners and the environment.

This informative newsletter was created by NABOR®'s new **Water Quality Advisory Task Force**, led by President-elect Jeff Jones, and board members Adam Vellano and Corey McCloskey. Future issues will keep members aware of water quality issues and the work accomplished to reduce human activity and behaviors that worsen the situation.

NABOR® is on the Water's Edge

While there have been no reports of cyanobacteria blooms in Collier County, the source of the problem is a concern that is on NABOR's radar. As such, an emergency water quality status meeting was organized by members of your board during the Florida Realtors annual conference. Over 100 REALTORS from around the state attended and were given an update on proposed solutions and existing projects currently underway.

Image credit: kinetico.com/blog





SMART ACTIONS

Keeping Naples a premier tourism and coastal living destination requires NABOR® to advocate

for water quality on behalf of members. Our promise is to continue to elevate our concerns to the local, state and federal levels.

For many years, NABOR® representatives have attended meetings across the state to assess and discuss proposed actions or ongoing work to address water quality issues. Our voice and support has helped pass laws to fund repairs, scientific studies, and new initiatives to restore Florida's natural water flows.

Policy Positives

Over the last six years, the Florida Legislature has allocated nearly **\$1.1 billion on Everglades restoration projects**. More recently, the state allocated \$100 million to rehabilitate the Herbert Hoover Dike surrounding Lake Okeechobee. An additional \$200 million allocation will focus efforts to mitigate the amount of flow through the Kissimmee River, thereby restoring more than 12,000 acres of wetlands. These projects will gradually improve the situation and reduce nutrient levels and temperature variations in our rivers.

In fact, a bipartisan agreement resulted in a recently approved \$8 million state grant to fund Mote Marine Laboratory research to combat red tide using an ozone treatment system it developed. Collier County also issued a new Friendly Fertilizer Ordinance, which is intended to reduce nutrients in our waterways by targeting specific watershed activity.

Changing Behaviors

These blooms are examples of **eutrophication**, an excessive growth of algae or nuisance plants in a body of water, and is caused by nutrient enrichment. Nutrients naturally occur in small concentrations, but excessive amounts lead to excessive growth of algae. Florida's eutrophication issues are exacerbated by man-made sources like sewage and fertilizer-laden runoff. You can do your part by making sure your septic system is operating properly, and you review the County's guidelines for fertilizer application.

With your support of NABOR®'s RPAC, we can continue to advocate for smart water quality solutions that are designed to protect Naples home values. Look for future **Water Quality Advisory** newsletters as new information becomes available.

RESOURCES

The Water Quality Advisory Task Force recommends that NABOR® members seek water quality information from reputable and trustworthy sources only and refrain from sharing commentary that is speculative.

A new webpage created by the Naples, Marco Island, Everglades Convention and Visitors Bureau is a great resource as it provides information on daily water quality conditions in Collier County. Find it [HERE](#).

Collier County Pollution Control posted a nearly 30-minute video on YouTube that beautifully explains red tide and its effects on humans and the environment. Watch and share it with colleagues and clients to fully understand the topic so misinformation is avoided. Find it [HERE](#).

[Collier County Watershed Management Plan](#)

[Florida Department of Environmental Protection](#)

JOIN US SEPT 18th

The new Water Quality Advisory Task Force encourages NABOR® members to attend the September 18th Member Business Meeting where Congressmen Francis Rooney and Mario Diaz-Balart will discuss all current efforts being made by the government to solve the Florida's water quality issues.

Seating is limited, so sign up early [HERE](#).