

RESILIENCE!

SUMMER 2022

COMMUTING IN STYLE

Broward Employees Explain How
Making Small Lifestyle Changes
Can Make a Huge Difference

NEWSLETTER OF THE
BROWARD COUNTY
RESILIENT ENVIRONMENT
DEPARTMENT



BROWARD
COUNTY
FLORIDA

RESILIENT
ENVIRONMENT

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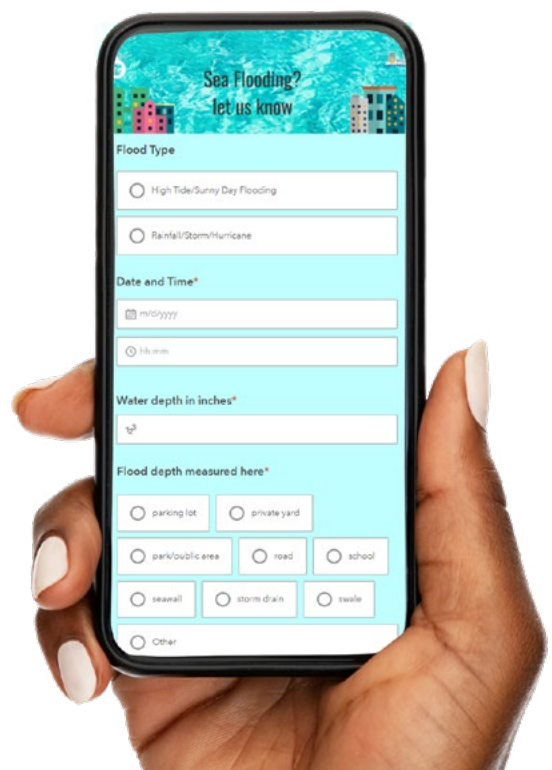
Broward County Public Communications' Gregory Meyer recently switched his daily commute to a much brighter one.

• It's Flash Flood Season

• A tropical storm system pounded Southern Florida with rain during the first week of June, triggering flash flooding warnings for the Miami and Broward areas.

• Almost 15 inches of rain were measured in gauges in Fort Lauderdale on Saturday, June 4. The downpour flooded roads and created dangerous conditions for motorists, and flash flood warnings were issued for parts of Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties as we were under a Tropical Storm alert.

• To help identify these trouble-spots we are once again encouraging the public to upload flood photos to document the frequency and extent of flooding from either heavy rainfall or high tides throughout Broward County. Visit flooding.broward.org





“This is about trying to get ahead of the amount of waste going into the waste stream and the environment. The amount of plastic expected to be used is phenomenal. The real crux here is to reduce litter, including the amount of plastics. It may not make a huge dent, but this is a change in mindset”

COMMISSIONER
BEAM FURR

BROWARD'S FOAM AND SINGLE-USE PLASTICS RESOLUTION

Polystyrene foam products, single-use plastic straws and beverage stirrers, balloons, and confetti are now banned on Broward County properties. County Commissioners passed a resolution in April with the overall goal of reducing litter and better protecting the environment, wildlife, and marine life.

The resolution, which amended the County's Administrative Code, states that expanded polystyrene products (often called “Styrofoam”) such as food containers, plates, cups, coolers, ice chests, and packing materials, as well as single-use plastic straws and beverage stirrers, may not be purchased by the County or used by individuals on County property, used or provided by temporary vendors on County property, or used or provided by entities engaged in a contractual relationship with the County for the provision of goods or services on County property. The resolution also bans the use of balloons, confetti, and sky lanterns in outdoor areas of County property.

“We have been working on this months and months. The focus of what this is supposed to be is that these products are not recyclable or biodegradable here. This is about litter and the environment. We need to get started. This is our planet!” COMMISSIONER NAN RICH

CHANGING UP TO A VEGAN LIFESTYLE

AMBER HARPER,
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR
FOR BROWARD COUNTY'S
REGIONAL EMERGENCY
SERVICES, SHARES HOW SHE
STARTED HER JOURNEY TO
VEGANISM



What inspired you to become a vegan?

I grew up near Augusta, GA, and wasn't born vegan as most of us were not. After seeing my dog get hit by a car I was devastated and spent that weekend thinking, why do we eat animals anyway and thus began research.

My family was not that supportive in the beginning, but my dad stated to a friend's family once, that he was initially worried about me not eating, but he saw that when I eat, I eat. In other words, I was not trying to starve myself.

Next, there were a lot of articles coming out about plastic. "Each human has ingested about a credit card of plastic" and I thought to myself. "Well an apple doesn't have plastic in it." I also began meditating with a mentor and she helped me undo some of my past conditioning and I changed all the products including cleaning supplies, make-up in my home to vegan and/or cruelty free and eliminate any product that contains cancer causing chemicals. I also watched documentaries about mass production and realized it's mostly profit over people. Finally, in October of 2019, it was easy for me to make the switch.

How has veganism impacted your life?

I definitely do not go out as much to restaurants. I am constantly changing things up. For me, it is about variety. In 2021, I had a subscription to Greenchef and I had 3 meals for 2 people delivered every week for almost 6 months and that really opened my eyes to how as a vegan I should eat. To me it is not a diet, it is a lifestyle. There are overweight vegans, but we all have one ideal as we are against animal cruelty. This year I obtained a Costco membership, and there are constantly new products coming out. All grocery stores have different items, so when I am in Aldi, Walmart, or Sprouts, etc., they all have options. I just bought a juicer and now I am juicing.

What gives you inspiration?

(documentaries, books, websites, cookbooks, etc?) I follow a lot of people on Instagram including *soflovegans* who inform me about new vegan restaurants; *bigboxvegan* for what new products are coming out and where; *targetvegan*, *publixvegan*, *traderjoesvegan*, and most importantly *peta* so I can remind myself why I decided to go on this journey.

THE VEGAN FOOD PYRAMID



What is your best advice for those thinking about going Vegan? I have received a lot of people saying they are interested. You really have to want to do it. It is only you that can make the change so if you want to do it, you will. I started with trying to find products that I normally eat and look for the vegan alternatives. This is also true with recipes. Find your favorite recipe and veganize it. I made a vegan chicken pot pie and it was super delicious, and I was

craving a key lime pie, and I found a recipe for that. I usually just Google it.

It is said that people could stop climate change in 50 years or so if everyone became a vegan or vegetarian? What are your thoughts on this? I believe it would help for sure. I don't have faith in everyone changing, but I feel we are getting closer everyday. People are starting to open their eyes.



COMMUTING IN STYLE

**BROWARD COUNTY OFFICE
OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
GREGORY MEYER EXPLAINS
WHY HE CHOSE TO PARK THE
CAR AND TAKE THE TRAIN.**



Last Christmas my wife bought me 40 train passes. At the time they had a BOGO to encourage people to come back to Brightline. My wife persuaded me to park the car and start taking the train to work. After the first ride, I was sold.

Last February I rode Brightline for the first time. The commuter rail service operates between West Palm Beach and Miami. The service was first introduced in 2019, then suspended in 2020 due to COVID-19, and resumed in late 2021.

My daily commute from West Palm Beach to Fort Lauderdale had become unbearable. Heavy traffic on Interstate 95, aggressive and dangerous drivers, and way too much time behind the wheel.

The Brightline experience is hard to describe but I'll try. The trains are clean and comfortable. The stations are impeccable, and the people who work at Brightline are polite, friendly, and professional.

Hospitality is engrained in their training, and it shows. I also sense they choose their employees because of their attitudes and personality. There is Bobby who manages the car rides, Cheri Anne on the morning train ride,



“The trains are clean and comfortable. The stations are impeccable and the people who work at Brightline are polite, friendly and professional.”



COMMUTING IN STYLE



■ Greg Meyer with a fellow passenger and a Brightline train attendant.

Joy or Cathy on the evening ride home. Coby, a manager at the Lauderdale station, Ben, Monica and Paula in the lounge at the station. I could go on but my point is they all make the guests feel like we are part of their family.

I used to fill up my car two to three times a week. Today I fill up once every two weeks. It is a huge cost savings, even more so now with \$5 a gallon fuel. Less wear and tear on the car and a reduction in carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. An average passenger car in operation can emit about 5 U.S. tons (approximately 4.6 metric tons) of carbon dioxide per year*, meaning a significant amount of greenhouse gas is going into the environment.

On the train, passengers breathe clean filtered air, you can work, check email or watch a movie during the 35-to-40-

minute ride. You can buy a monthly pass for as little as \$199 and get a free ride to and from the station in an electric car or van if your destination is within five miles. I have heard that they will start charging for that service, but it has not happened yet.

Until recently I drove a Toyota Avalon to and from work. Two months ago, I traded it in at the peak of the used car market since I no longer needed it. Less insurance, less maintenance and less emissions. I still drive my other car to the station, about six miles but it's so much nicer than driving I-95 in rush hour. Soon Brightline will be adding stations in Boca Raton, Aventura and Orlando. Long range plans indicate Tampa is in their sights too.

Even the trains are environmentally friendly. They run on clean biodiesel burning about two gallons a mile but carrying up to 239 passengers each trip. As demand expands more cars can be added. If you drive an electric car, FPL has charging stations for you in the Brightline garages, further lessening your environmental impact.

For me, the change made sense. If you travel to work near the FEC railway corridor, do yourself a favor and park the car. Try the train and relax to and from work or a special event. It's a game changer.

**source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

"It is hard to imagine I used to drive more than 100 miles every day. I would spend between one and three hours in traffic for my work commute for the last fifteen years."

GREGORY MEYER, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, BROWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

BROWARD COUNTY IS EXPANDING EMPLOYEE ELECTRONIC VEHICLE CHARGE PORTS

Broward County is working to support more EV ownership amongst employees by expanding charging stations at County sites.



The County is committed to climate action and recently adopted a net zero emissions goal. Electric vehicles (EVs) are an important part of this plan – whether within the County fleet or as part of employee commutes.

Broward County employees will soon be able to access some of these EV charging stations - at no charge. You can find more info here: broward.org/NaturalResources/Sustainability/Pages/browardEV.aspx

OUR SOLAR EXPANSION

Broward County is making major strides towards a clean energy future, with multiple renewable energy projects and initiatives underway organizationally and across county sites.

With 14 projects completed to date, Broward County has achieved an installed solar capacity of 3.1 Megawatts (MW). An additional 3 projects are under contract, which will provide another 0.4 MW in installed capacity.

These solar projects are in addition to the 132 MW of solar energy that offsets the County’s operations via participation in FP&L’s *SolarTogether* Program. Visit broward.org/Climate/Pages/Solar.aspx

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	4,181	4,504	5,071	4,346	2,785	5,379	4,618	4,534	2,240	5,705	2,958	4,984	5,279	6,922	6,695	6,801	7,385	5,928	4,442	4,402	3,548	3,452	7,922	5,128	3,489	4,656	4,487	7,458	8,213	7,877	
2	5,651	6,980	6,841	6,823	5,729	5,919	5,971	4,667	3,990	7,856	5,396	7,167	2,962	8,601	5,054	5,512	5,760	6,448	5,692	5,847	7,021	7,157	7,601	7,249	7,042	7,714	7,390	8,194			
3	6,509	3,611	7,600	8,561	8,116	7,610	5,974	7,638	8,677	4,965	8,756	6,695	8,482	4,135	3,733	5,742	5,083	8,653	8,988	7,093	8,452	7,975	7,419	6,590	7,243	10,526	10,377	9,948	10,275	9,250	7,564
4	5,755	7,659	6,877	4,852	8,647	7,785	6,613	9,569	9,299	9,868	9,174	9,033	8,716	8,446	5,826	8,575	9,358	8,383	9,586	8,860	9,044	8,401	8,684	9,335	8,142	9,971	8,701	6,939	6,920	5,063	
5	9,124	8,647	5,485	8,659	9,756	8,471	7,744	8,211	8,561	10,189	8,625	8,434	8,330	8,599	7,868	6,732	8,895	10,548	10,578	3,811	8,135	8,707	9,212	9,648	9,342	10,875	9,969	9,204	5,304	8,110	7,443

A 'heatmap' of each day of the month showing the total kWh produced by Broward County's solar installations on a given day, formatted to show high values in green, low values in red.



UPGRADES & PUBLIC ART AT EVERGLADES HOLIDAY PARK

Broward County Parks and Recreation Division has completed a \$15.8 million renovation at Everglades Holiday Park, significantly upgrading the infrastructure. The South Florida Water Management District contributed \$1.2 million toward funding.

The space was redesigned, giving fishermen one dock, one for airboat loading and three boat ramps on the west end. All of it was raised higher to avoid flooding.

In addition, the park is home to a new Public Art and Design project funded by Broward County Cultural Division. The \$190,000 art project, by artists Jeffrey Reed and Jennifer Madden, includes a stainless-steel sculpture of a half-

“One of the things we did was raise the site level, the elevation site, almost 2 feet. Prior to the renovation, during a major storm, much of the park would flood when water was pumped out of nearby neighborhoods to protect homes. We put in a \$1.5 million levee wall, which is protecting the shoreline as well as the area behind the levee.”

**SENIOR PARK MANAGER
SHAWN DAVIS**

ton, 12-foot-tall great egret called *Flight Path*. The sculpture glistens in the sun against a backdrop of the Everglades’ river of grass.

Embedded in the pathway adjacent to the sculpture are more than 20 flat sculptures depicting a variety of birds that can be found in the Everglades. The nearby identification key encourages park visitors to challenge themselves to identify each one displayed.

Visit [Broward.org/Arts/PublicArt/](https://www.broward.org/Arts/PublicArt/)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND UPDATES



NACO AWARDS

Broward County Resilient Environment received two Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for innovative and effective government programs.

1. **Broward County Resilience Dashboard** is an online tool designed to create a single source of information for resilience tools, programs and

communications County-wide, showcasing planning needs and highlighting investments.

Find our more: resiliencedashboard.broward.org/

2. The County established a suite of **Clean Energy and Vehicle Initiatives** as part of its efforts to take an ambitious, proactive and approach to minimize carbon emissions and mitigate the harmful impacts of climate change. Find our more at broward.org/Awards/

OPPORTUNITIES AT BROWARD RESILIENCE

Two key positions are currently available at the Broward County Resilient Environment Department.

1. An **Assistant Chief Resilience Officer** to aid the Deputy Director/ Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) in administering the resilience efforts of the organization, working in direct coordination with the CRO in the ongoing development and advancement of Department efforts and County initiatives.

2. An **Environmental Program Supervisor** will engage with the County's Climate Change Task Force and support the County's efforts as a partner in the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact. The preferred candidate will have experience in scenario-based planning and the use of sea level rise projections and/or other climate-related data sets.

Visit beacons.ai/resilience



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Florida's state House in March passed a measure to create a state climate resilience office.

The bill requires the state to develop a resilience

strategy for its highways as well as a list of other resilience projects, with a list of priorities and cost estimates. It will also create a central database of sites such as hospitals, utility headquarters and airports at direct risk from rising sea levels.

REGISTRATION FOR THE CLIMATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT OPENS IN AUGUST

Broward County invites businesses and organizations to sponsor the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact's Fourteenth Annual Climate Leadership Summit.

Hosted by Broward County Resilient Environment, the summit will be held December 8-9, 2022, at the Broward County Convention Center in Fort Lauderdale.

The Summit brings together innovative thinkers and leaders from business, government, higher education, and nonprofits to exchange ideas and dialogue at panel discussions and networking breaks. Previous Summits have attracted 750 attendees, dozens of exhibitors, and highlighted major regional projects and cutting-edge tools.




This year's theme, "CONNECT. COMMIT. ACT.", focuses on the collaboration, shared goals, and significant efforts needed to develop climate and energy solutions, adapt to climate impacts, and build broad-based resilience across our communities.



Attendees and sponsors will enjoy an opportunity to network with leaders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.


If you are interested in sponsorship, please email 2022CompactSummit@broward.org.


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