

FDOT Newsletter

February 2024
Volume 94



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

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- Creating a Business Plan
- Website Building
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Governor Ron DeSantis Attends Ribbon Cutting for EAA Reservoir Stormwater Treatment Area

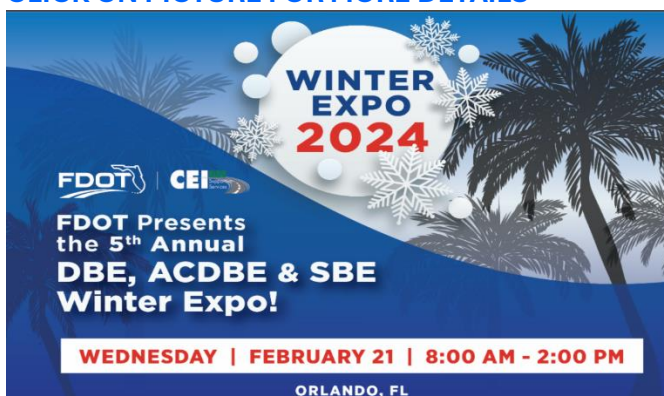
TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Today, Governor Ron DeSantis attended a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the filling of the first cell of the 6,500-acre Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Stormwater Treatment Area, which will store and clean water flowing from Lake Okeechobee before it is sent south. The EAA Reservoir is the crown jewel of Everglades restoration, and will help move water south which nourishes the Everglades, replenishes Florida's aquifers and supports the Florida Bay. Additionally, the reservoir will help to reduce harmful discharges to the St. Lucie River, the Caloosahatchee River and the Lake Worth Lagoon.

"The EAA Reservoir is the crown jewel of Everglades restoration, ensuring that we are sending water south and reducing harmful discharges into our waterways," **said Governor Ron DeSantis.** "The opening of this stormwater treatment cell is a key milestone in the EAA Reservoir project and will help ensure the health of the Everglades for generations to come."

"The EAA Reservoir is a critical component of Everglades restoration and Governor DeSantis has led the charge on getting this project done," **said Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Shawn Hamilton.** "Restoring America's Everglades is one of the most ambitious hydrological restoration projects ever undertaken and will restore the natural flow of clean water south to where it's needed most."

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OSHA Is Not Backing Down

Even if you did not directly experience last summer's heat, you probably read or heard about it. Historically high temperatures scorched the country from coast to coast, and there are no signs that this heat will abate anytime soon. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 436 people have died due to workplace heat exposure since 2011. In the same time period, there were an additional 2,700 cases of heat-related illnesses among workers. Now — quite literally more than ever — it is critical for employers to take steps to ensure their workers are protected from extreme heat.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) does not provide a standard specific to this issue. However, OSHA's General Duty Clause requires all employers to provide a safe workplace for employees, and OSHA believes protecting employees against heat hazards falls under that duty. It recently emphasized the importance of employers taking steps to reduce the risks that extreme heat poses to employees. OSHA has initiated a National Emphasis Program (NEP) on heat, which intensifies its efforts to address heat-related occupational hazards. The program particularly homes in on at-risk geographic areas and industries, including construction and agriculture.

Last year's extreme heat even prompted action from the White House. On July 27, 2023, President Joe Biden issued a statement noting that the U.S. Department of Labor will continue ramping up its crackdown on heat-related safety violations, including increasing inspections — both programmed and unprogrammed — in the high-risk industries mentioned above. Biden also specifically asked the DOL to issue its first-ever Hazard Alert for extreme heat. OSHA thereafter released this alert, which reminds employers of their "legal and moral responsibility" not to assign work in hot conditions without adequate protection for workers. The alert lists the following guidance to employers:

- Provide adequate water, rest breaks and shade or a cool rest area for employees.
- Give new or returning employees the chance to gradually acclimate to working in hot temperatures, train and plan for emergencies, and monitor for heat signs and symptoms.
- Train employees on heat illness prevention, signs of heat illness and how to act immediately if they or another employee appears to be suffering from a heat-related illness.

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About The FDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on FDOT contracts and facilitate the opportunity for DBEs to obtain contracts. The services are designed to:

- Assist established construction firms to move them from bidding as a subcontractor to bidding as a Prime Contractor to produce sound bids.
- Provide access to training increases DBE expertise in handling of daily business operations.



CEI DBE Supportive Services
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2/8/2024 to 2/9/2024

When: February 8-9, 2024

Where: Signia Orlando Bonnet Creek
14100 Bonnet Creek Resort Lan
Orlando, Florida 32821
United States