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## Pace to reclaim water for school irrigation

### System to help irrigate lawns

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Pace Water System plans to install an irrigation system using reclaimed water at several Pace schools if the Florida Department of Environmental Protection approves.

Reclaimed water is treated wastewater.

"The water is safe," said Steve Ratliff, assistant superintendent for administrative services. "Pace Water System already sprays reuse water on golf courses."

School Board members approved the irrigation system being placed in the nonirrigated areas at S.S. Dixon Intermediate and Sims Middle schools, covering about 25 acres. They also agreed to the installation of a reclaimed water supply line and booster pump at Pace High School if money is available. The cost for both projects is nearly \$160,000.

"The board will not be responsible for any capital costs," said Damon Boutwell, assistant manager for Pace Water System. "The only costs the board will incur are operating costs."

The project is the result of a DEP enforcement action on Pace Water System's wastewater treatment plant discharge permit, Boutwell said.

"Our limits for copper and zinc are less than the allowable concentrations in drinking water," he said. "But years ago, those limits were above the permitted allowances."

To offset penalties, Boutwell said they can do in-kind projects to benefit the community.

The irrigation system at Sims and S.S. Dixon will mean green grass for students to play on, Ratliff said. The areas around the schools are irrigated, and S.S. Dixon is already using reclaimed water.

"We've never been able to irrigate the area between those schools, which is used for physical education and other activities," he said. "With this project, the grass will grow profusely, and there will be no more erosion problems."

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