

# South Florida Sun-Sentinel

Broward County Edition

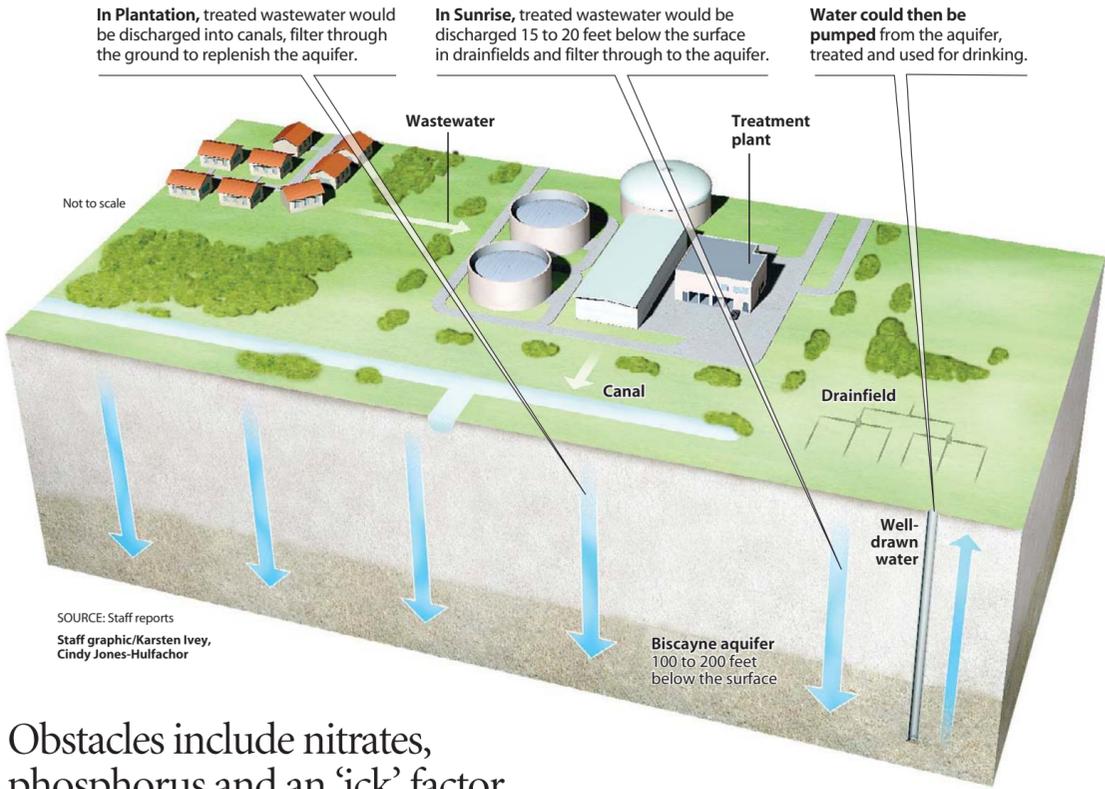
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2007

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## COMING TO A TAP NEAR YOU?

Plantation and Sunrise are two of the cities conducting pilot studies on ways to use treated wastewater to boost drinking water supplies



### Obstacles include nitrates, phosphorus and an 'ick' factor

BY LUIS F. PEREZ  
STAFF WRITER

Sunrise and Plantation need more water. And rather than pray for rain, they see redemption in plants that shoot out millions of gallons of treated wastewater daily. Most treated wastewater now goes to irrigation, so-called "reclaimed water," but millions of gallons in South Florida are dumped into the ocean or

injected deep into the ground daily. So water managers in Sunrise and Plantation and elsewhere wonder: Why not turn that into an alternative drinking water source? But it comes with an "ick" factor: The thought of drinking recycled sewage water. In Plantation and Sunrise, they're conducting pilot studies on just that. West Palm Beach mixed its reclaimed

water with drinking water in an emergency at the height of dry season. Around the same time, Boca Raton wanted to pump reclaimed water into canals to protect its wells from salt water. Those efforts provide a glimpse of the region's drinking water future. The record-breaking dry spell and project-

**YOUR THOUGHTS**  
What's your take on recycled water? Sound off in our poll at [Sun-Sentinel.com/recycledwater](http://Sun-Sentinel.com/recycledwater)

■ WATER CONTINUES ON 20A

## Simple hygiene's your best defense

### Officials try to ease fears about MRSA infections

BY HEMMY SO  
STAFF WRITER

Local school and health officials have launched a campaign to ease anxiety over a contagious, drug-resistant infection that has been confirmed in at least two cases in South Florida, and is suspected in three more. Officials emphasize there is no outbreak of the so-called "super bug" — a message written into letters sent home to parents, relayed over busy health department phone lines and announced at a news conference. "Basically the whole [news] conference was to try to calm the public down and get rid of the hysteria that's been associated with this supposed ... outbreak," said Dr. Vincent Conte of the Miami-Dade County Health Department. He joined Health Department and Miami-Dade public school officials Tuesday to provide the public with more information about MRSA, or methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, a strain of bacteria that causes

■ MRSA CONTINUES ON 6A

### ONLINE

Read a letter sent to parents by the Broward School Board about MRSA at [Sun-Sentinel.com/mrsa](http://Sun-Sentinel.com/mrsa)

### A LOOK AT MRSA

**What it is:** MRSA, short for methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, is a strain of the common bacterium that causes thousands of harmless "staph" infections in Florida each year. Most such infections are easily treated with antibiotics. MRSA strains are more drug resistant. Overuse of antibiotics is thought to contribute to the rise of resistant germs.

**How it is spread, treated:** MRSA is spread by skin-to-skin contact or by touching contaminated surfaces. It may appear on the skin as a red, swollen pimple or boil that may be painful or have pus. It can often be treated by lancing and draining sores that develop after infection and administering other antibiotics, such as bactrim.

### HOW TO AVOID IT

**Good hygiene is the key:**  
**Keep hands clean** by washing thoroughly with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand cleaner.  
**Keep cuts and scrapes clean** and covered with a bandage until healed.  
**Avoid contact** with other people's wounds or bandages.  
**Avoid sharing** personal items such as towels or razors.  
**If you suspect** you or your child has MRSA, contact your physician. For more information, go to [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov).

SOURCE: THE FEDERAL CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

## Embattled county administrator quits

### Deal with commissioners includes 6 months' severance pay

BY SCOTT WYMAN  
STAFF WRITER

Pam Brangaccio's rocky tenure at the helm of Broward County government ended Tuesday just 16 months after it started, doomed by a lack of trust among her bosses on the County Commission. Brangaccio will receive almost \$150,000 in severance pay under a deal she worked out with Mayor Josephus Eggleston. Commissioners

were scheduled to give Brangaccio her first performance review, and her decision to quit saved her from brutal public criticism and the prospect of being fired. Brangaccio, 51, struggled to adapt

to running the \$3.6 billion operation with 6,000 employees. Although she delivered record budget cuts to pay for state-mandated property tax relief, she was plagued by management problems at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport. In the end, commissioners agreed, by a 6-3 vote, to accept her resignation and pay her the six months of severance pay.



**Pam Brangaccio** will leave her job running the county's \$3.6 billion operations Nov. 1.

■ BROWARD CONTINUES ON 7A

**DAILY DIGEST** | SUN-SENTINEL WEATHER | Today, 86 | Tonight, 75 | Tomorrow, 84 | Complete weather on back page of **LOCAL**

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COMMUNITY NEWS ROUNDUP, 4B-5B | Halloween fun in Deerfield Beach, Cooper City • Tamarac considers hotel plan • Weston offers homestead exemption help

**LOCAL**

**Condo buyers backing out**  
After the condo market plunged, an increasing number of buyers filed lawsuits to get out of their contracts. **1B**

**Storm center chief search**  
There are at least two applicants to become head of the National Hurricane Center. History says the center's acting deputy director has the inside track. **2B**

**WORLD**

**President to pressure Cuba**  
Bush plans to urge Cuba to provide Internet access to students and allow them to receive computers, in a speech meant to build pressure for change. **14A**

**NATION**

**1 million flee fires**  
A helicopter prepares to drop water over Escondido as wildfires spark a mass exodus in Southern California. More than 1,600 homes have been destroyed. **3A**  
AP photo/Denis Poroy

**BUSINESS**

**Lender to modify loans**  
Countrywide Financial Corp., the nation's largest mortgage lender, is going to offer refinancing or loan modifications to many consumers. **1D**

**SPORTS**

**Mustangs swim to regional**  
After seven winless seasons, and sparse turnouts, McArthur High is enjoying its first winning swim season. **7C**

**ONLINE**

**OK, everyone: Say 'Boo!'**  
Upload pictures of your children in their spookiest and cutest Halloween costumes at [Sun-Sentinel.com](http://Sun-Sentinel.com)

**LIFESTYLE**

**Teen vies for MTV fame**  
MTV is *Making Menudo*, and Weston teen Carlos Pena is among the finalists to join a new edition of the famous boy band as the reality TV show begins. **1E** **MTV photo**

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