



WOMAN GETS WINDPIPE

Surgeons put a new windpipe in Linda De Croock's arm after removing it from a dead man. **FRONT PAGE 2**

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NFL **TOP OFFENSIVE PLAYER**

Tennessee Titans RB Chris Johnson is voted AP's top offensive player for 2009.



State officials fear EPA limit

By **GREG MARTIN**
STAFF WRITER

Whether Florida or the U.S. government sets the limit for nutrient pollution seeping into lakes, streams and rivers, everyone will be required to change the way certain activities are conducted to bring their pollution within the limit, according to Jerry Brooks, a Florida Department of Environmental Protection program director.

EPA numbers or you take the DEP numbers for in stream protections, both are going to require significant reductions on the part of the public that are going to cost money, whether we're talking about domestic wastewater sewage plants or industrial operations," Brooks said. "These (allowable pollution) numbers are going to, without question, require some significant investments to achieve."

Brooks fears, however, that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposed system for mandating specific nutrient loads will result in pollution standards for particular state waters that will be unnecessary and nearly impossible for some industries to meet. The EPA's potential limit for nitrogen pollution, in particular, may prove the most difficult to meet for sewage plants, agricultural operations and other

industries that discharge nitrate or nitrite in their effluent, he said. "At least in terms of the preliminary numbers that they shared with us, those (nitrogen) concentrations are what we believe to be well below natural concentrations," he said. The EPA is to release its proposed nutrient numeric criteria today. The EPA will adopt a final rule in October.



Water drains through a culvert from the Shell Creek Grove into Shell Creek upstream from Punta Gorda's water supply. Growers are concerned the EPA may set arbitrary limits for fertilizer discharge.

EPA | P4 SUN PHOTO BY GREG MARTIN, gmartin@sun-herald.com

Local groups to help Haiti

By **JOSH SALMAN**
STAFF WRITER

PORT CHARLOTTE — Samuel Valcin hasn't slept in nearly two days.

INSIDE

- **Waiting for word:** Haitian-Americans desperately try to get word from loved ones. **FRONT 3**
- **How to help:** Where to send donations and supplies locally. **FRONT 4**
- **Rescuers rush aid to Haiti:** Obama sends troops by air and sea to Haiti. **FRONT 5**

The native Haitian and Port Charlotte resident can almost hear his mother's soft voice, telling him that she's OK. He has visions of his brothers running to safety, avoiding the tragic earthquake that

took its toll on thousands Tuesday.

There's just one problem: Valcin hasn't been able to reach his family, still living in the poverty-stricken Caribbean nation.

"We don't know how, but God will help us and show us the way," Valcin said. "Haiti has been faced with a terrible situation, and right now, there's nothing we can do but pray and hope for the best."

A magnitude-7.0 earthquake battered Haiti's capitol, Port-au-Prince, Tuesday, with dozens of aftershocks following in its wake. The country's largest-recorded earthquake damaged hospitals, collapsed buildings and left the country in shambles.

Valcin spent all day Wednesday joining dozens

HELP | P4

Haiti's hour of need



Residents wander along Delmas Road the day after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Wednesday.



AP PHOTOS

Left: Debris lies in the streets of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Wednesday. Right: People search for survivors under the rubble of a collapsed building in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Panic, looting, triage take over

By **JONATHAN M. KATZ**
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Dazed survivors wandered past dead bodies in rubble-strewn streets Wednesday, crying for loved ones, and rescuers searched collapsed buildings as officials feared the death toll from Haiti's devastating earthquake could reach into the tens of thousands.

The first cargo planes with

food, water, medical supplies, shelter and sniffer dogs headed to the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation a day after the magnitude-7 quake flattened much of the capital of 2 million people.

Tuesday's earthquake brought down buildings great and small — from shacks in shantytowns to President Rene Preval's gleaming white National Palace, where a dome tilted ominously

above the manicured grounds.

Hospitals, schools and the main prison collapsed. The capital's Roman Catholic archbishop was killed when his office and the main cathedral fell. The head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission was missing in the ruins of the organization's multistory headquarters.

At a triage center improvised

NEED | P4

Man's fiancée missing in Haiti

By **ELAINE ALLEN-EMRICH**
NORTH PORT COMMUNITY NEWS EDITOR

NORTH PORT — Edgar Saint Amand is broken.

In December, after his fiancée delivered twin boys prematurely in Haiti, the babies needed to be in a warm environment and monitored by a doctor. Instead, they were sent with their mother by taxi to three hospitals. At the third facility, both infants died.



SAINT AMAND

Despite his tragic loss, Saint Amand was looking forward to seeing his fiancée, Guerline Juste, who was supposed to fly from Haiti to Miami on Friday. However, after a massive earthquake rocked Haiti on Tuesday afternoon, Saint Amand hasn't been able to get in touch with her.

"She is supposed to have an appointment at the Haitian consulate (today) to finish up her paperwork for her visa," he said Wednesday. "Now, there are no roads and nothing is the way it was in Haiti. There is so much damage everywhere."

Haitian-born Saint Amand, 53, who has lived in the United States for 33 years, became an American citizen 12 years ago. He works in the city of North Port's Public Works Department.

MISSING | P4

Commission rejects FPL's 12.5 percent rate increase

By **KEITH LAING**
THE NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE — The Florida Public Service Commission rejected on Wednesday the profit margin requested by the state's largest power company as part of its \$1.25 billion rate increase proposal.

Florida Power & Light, which provides electricity to South Florida and most of the Atlantic Coast, had asked for a

return on equity — the minimum profit margin the company is guaranteed — of 12.5 percent, but the PSC unanimously ignored not only that, but also a staff recommendation of a 10.75 percent margin and approved a far lower ratio of 10 percent. The lowered profit rate would only increase FPL's operational revenue by \$261 million.

The immediate result is likely to be suspension of capital projects such as a

new nuclear generator, and maybe even layoffs, FPL's president said.

If the staff recommended return on equity for FPL had been followed, FPL's operating revenue would have increased by \$357 million, still far below the amount requested by the company.

Even before the PSC slashed the company's proposed profit margin, the commission appeared skeptical about the FPL rate increase. One

commissioner, Nathan Skop, said the company had failed to make the case that the increase was necessary.

"This rate case seems to be more about improving cash flow from operations and discretionary expenditures rather than substance," Skop said. "That's clearly illustrated by the substantial adjustments that the staff has made...from the company's request. Before the commission has made

any cuts, staff has substantially cut a majority of (FPL's request)."

The PSC, which was reshuffled last fall by Gov. Charlie Crist after a conflict-of-interest scandal rocked the panel, also voted down a separate rate increase request from Progress Energy Florida earlier this week. With that decision as a backdrop, the panel had been widely expected to be

tough on FPL's request. The PSC obliged, also rejecting a staff recommendation to allow FPL a \$50 million storm reserve on a 3-2 vote.

Commissioners debated lowering the reserve amount to \$25 million before settling on rejecting the measure. FPL and Progress Energy have both long raised the credit risk of adverse PSC decisions, but the commission was not swayed.



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CHARLIE SAYS...
Wait a minute, how are you supposed to breathe through your arm?