

City of Winter Park
Lakes (~~General~~)
(~~Lake Virginia~~)
(Save our
Lakes)

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Winter Park putting drain traps in lake

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OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

WINTER PARK — Six drainage traps are being built in Lake Virginia to reduce the amount of leaves and other debris being washed into the lake.

The traps are only one aspect of a stepped-up program the city is embarking on as part of its Save Our Lakes program, public works director James Williams told the city commission this week.

The city has been putting money in the Save Our Lakes account for several years and using it to pay for such things as a study of the lakes by Rollins College and the purchase of a new vacuum street sweeper.

Rollins professors James Small and David Richard began intensive studies of the Winter Park chain of lakes in October 1984 and their reports to the city have noted the lakes are filling with debris at an alarming rate. They recommended the traps be installed to catch street debris.

The measures are initially being used on Lake Virginia. Depending on the results similar efforts could be used to help other lakes in the chain.

There are 10 drains into Lake Virginia and 148 into lakes citywide, said Williams. Two of the traps, made with chain-link fencing, have already been installed and the cost for each has ranged from \$400 to \$1,000, depending on the size.

"We set a goal to finish the six traps by this time next year. The smaller traps can take a week to build while the larger ones take several weeks each. The size will depend on the size of the drainage pipe," Williams said.

In addition to the traps, the city is increasing its street sweeper fleet from three to four and one more person has been added to the streets division to operate the sweeper.

Those additions have enabled the department to increase its street sweeping capabilities, Williams said. The increase is expected to reduce the amount of debris being carried into the lakes through the storm drains.

The city has established three sweeper routes so all city streets can be swept twice weekly from May through December, when the least amount of leaves are falling from the trees. From January through April, when most of the leaves are falling, four routes will be operated so the streets can be cleaned weekly.

Also, stormwater drains on the streets will be cleaned 30 hours per week from January through April by adding 15 hours of overtime.

"We are restructuring things to make for a better operation. For example, we are restructuring the lakes division to have its personnel help build the traps and keep them clean," Williams said.

Besides these actions, Williams said he is checking the cost of having a private contractor vacuum debris from the bottom of Lake Virginia. The expense of the project will determine whether the vacuuming is done, he said.