

SANIBEL TO MOVE FORWARD WITH APPLICATION FOR PERMANENT PERMIT

The Sanibel City Council agreed Oct. 2 that the City should begin the process of submitting an application for a permanent permit regarding algae management on island beaches.

The City of Sanibel already has a temporary permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) that allows the City to implement a pilot Algae Management Program to pick up algae from Sanibel beaches. The Council agreed Sept. 25 that no tests would be done until there was enough algae on area beaches to ensure financially feasible and successful testing.

Beaches are not experiencing any algae problems at this time. The Council agreed at its last meeting to leave the decision regarding when to test up to City staff.

However, Council said, beginning work on the application for the permanent permit would help expedite the process of continuing algae management beyond the pilot program, should that become

Council members also agreed that it would be premature to decide on a "trigger point" for mechanical removal of algae from beaches since there has not yet been any testing conducted.

The Council also received copies of a letter from the South Florida Water Management District regarding potential funding for the pilot program. In response to a letter from the City, SWFMD Executive Director Carol Ann Wehle thanked the City for its efforts to improve water quality in the region. However, Wehle said that it was unable to provide funding at this time due to efforts in other areas.