

Florida Clean Water Network files notice of intent to sue Cape Coral

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(Photo: Special to The News-Press)

An environmental group filed a notice of intent to sue the City of Cape Coral over federal [Clean Water Act](#) violations they say are polluting Matlacha Pass.

The Florida [Clean Water Network](#) says the city is violating permit requirements set by the [Florida Department of Environmental Protection](#), and they want a development moratorium until the issue is remedied.

"When you have an impairment (measured pollution) you cannot allow development to continue," said Linda Young, director of the Clean Water Network.

Excess storm water is causing high levels of nitrogen in Matlacha Pass. That nutrient feeds various types of plant growth, including toxic algae that can lead to fish and marine mammal kills.

Matlacha Pass is west of Cape Coral. The pass is part of the Pine Island Sound Matlacha Pass Watershed. The new bridge connecting the mainland to Matlacha goes over the pass.

Cape Coral Mayor Marni Sawicki said she had not heard of the possible suit from city staff nor seen the notice of intent herself.

"Until I see what they're filing and why, I'm not going to comment," Sawicki said.

Connie Barron, public affairs manager for the city, said the city attorney's office had recently received the notice.

"Just got the notice, they are in the process of reviewing the information contained within the letter and the notice of intent," Barron said.

A person or organization is required by law to file a notice of intent before it can sue.

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