

Neighbors in the Know

April 2026

NIK



letter.

WELCOME TO NEIGHBORS IN THE KNOW

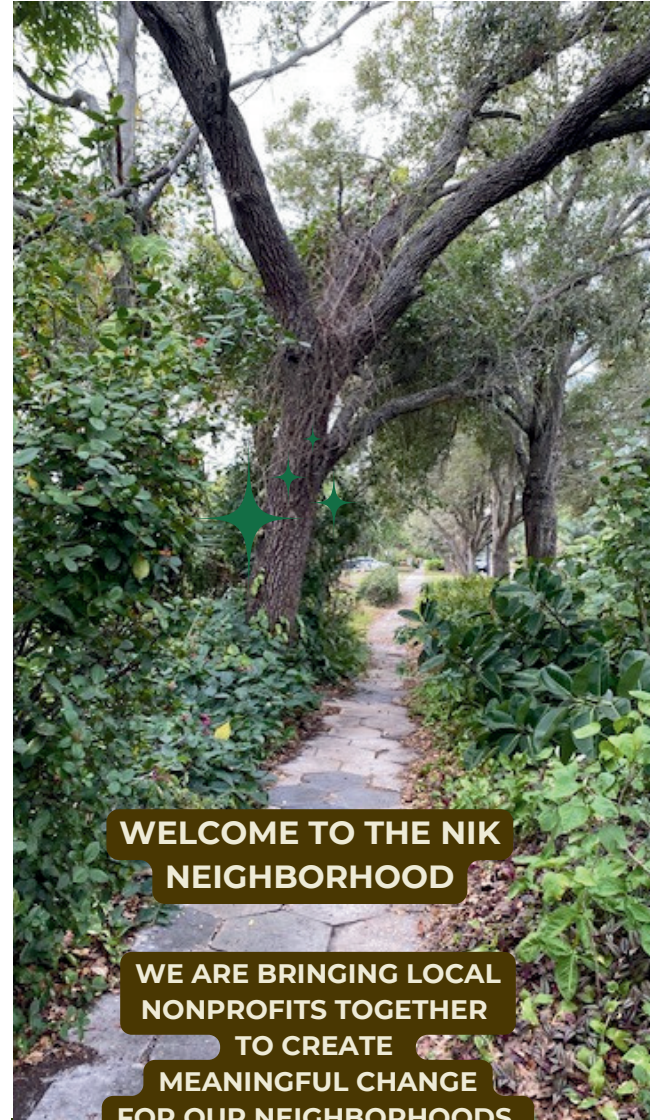
Our purpose is to make it easier to be a knowledgeable voter & connect you to environmental news that affects your neighborhoods.

We believe that we all care about preserving our natural environment, clean air and clean water.

Inside you will find:

- News of Florida's latest environmental bills that are becoming law, and how our local elected officials voted on them.
- Request to urge the Florida Legislature to fund the Florida Forever Program.
- Contact information for local & state officials.
- Environmental events and volunteering opportunities around Pinellas County.
- Info on St. Pete's Composting and Toilet Rebate Programs.
- Neighborhood Ambassador Program info.

**WANT MORE INFO?
THE QR CODE TAKES YOU
TO ALL OF THE LISTINGS &
DEEPER DIVES
INTO THIS
NEWSLETTER'S
INFORMATION.**



**WELCOME TO THE NIK
NEIGHBORHOOD**

**WE ARE BRINGING LOCAL
NONPROFITS TOGETHER
TO CREATE
MEANINGFUL CHANGE
FOR OUR NEIGHBORHOODS.**

**WANT TO BE A
NEIGHBORHOOD
ENVIRONMENTAL
AMBASSADOR? SEE PAGE 4**

Neighbors in the Know is a neighborhood focused environmental resource platform. Contact us at info@seaurise.org

Florida's Legislative Actions

ENVIRONMENT RELATED BILLS PASSED IN THE FL LEGISLATURE 2026

Prohibited Governmental Policies Regulating Greenhouse Gas Emissions - HB 1217

Sponsored by local State Rep Berny Jacques. Prohibits governmental entities from adopting most net zero policies. **Local preemption.**

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, DiCeglie, Hooper, Jacques
Nay: Rouson, Cross*

Florida Farm Bill - SB 290

Prohibiting counties from enacting or enforcing any law that restricts or prohibits the use of gasoline-powered farm/landscape equipment. Enables the state to sell public conservation land to agricultural companies.

Local preemption.

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, DiCeglie, Hooper, Jacques,
Rouson Nay: Cross*

AI/Data Centers - SB 484

Prohibits proposed data centers from using public utilities in a way that impacts residential rates. Shields data center proposals from the public.

*Yea: Anderson, Cross, DiCeglie, Hooper, Jacques
Nay: Berfield*

Coastal Resiliency - SB 302

Prohibits any dredging or filling of submerged lands at the Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve. Also requires the Department of Environmental Protection, by a specified date, to develop guidelines and standards for nature-based methods to address coastal resiliency.

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, Cross, DiCeglie, Hooper,
Jacques, Rouson*

Department of Environmental Protection - HB 1417

Catchall bill for the DEP, including removing the Environmental Regulation Commission. This bill increases oversight on construction of solar facilities. The bill specifies that coastal resiliency projects qualify for public-private partnerships.

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, Cross, DiCeglie, Hooper,
Jacques, Rouson*

Conservation Lands - HB 441

This bill is designed to increase transparency and public oversight regarding the sale, exchange, or management of state-owned conservation lands.

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, Cross, DiCeglie, Hooper,
Jacques, Rouson*

Agricultural Enclaves - Senate Bill 686

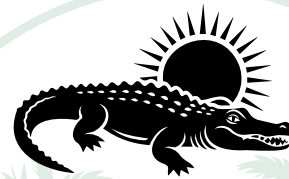
Makes it easier for homebuilders to build residential subdivisions on farmland next to properties that have already been developed or that are zoned for future development. **Local Preemption.**

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, DiCeglie, Hooper, Jacques,
Rouson Nay: Cross*

Utility Services - House Bill 1451

Squashes a referendum approved by voters in Gainesville intended to restore local control of the city-owned electric company, GRU. **Local preemption.**

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, DiCeglie, Hooper, Jacques,
Rouson Nay: Cross*



Contact your state representatives & senators for the upcoming special session. Tell them to continue funding the Florida Forever program instead of giving the money to large land owners to preserve land, still barring it from the public. Usually the program is funded at \$300M to protect valuable Florida land. Right now there is NO funding in the budget.

Areas of Critical State Concern - House Bill 755

Extends a ban on drilling for oil and gas around Apalachicola River in the Panhandle.

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, Cross, DiCeglie, Hooper,
Jacques, Rouson*

Former Phosphate Mining Lands - House Bill 167

Makes it more difficult to sue mining-and-fertilizer giant Mosaic Co. over claims related to radiation exposure on former phosphate mines that have been redeveloped for housing or other uses.

*Yea: Anderson, Berfield, DiCeglie, Hooper, Jacques,
Rouson Nay: Cross*

All of the information in this newsletter is also available (with links) on our website through the QR code on the front page.

St. Pete News

Do you know that the City of St. Pete has a composting program?

Get your free composting bin! Attendees at the composting workshops will receive their free composting bin to take home after the workshop.

Sign up for a required Composting Workshop on the City's website. Workshops are offered monthly at recreation center locations all over St. Pete. Class size is limited and class sign-up will be locked 5 business days prior to each compost class, so plan ahead! Reminder, you must be a resident of incorporated St. Pete and residing in a single-family home.

Composting Workshop Schedule

May 20, 2026 from 6 - 7 p.m.
Shore Acres Recreation Center

June 27, 2026 from 10 - 11 a.m.
Childs Park Recreation Center

July 22, 2026 from 6 - 7 p.m.
Lake Vista Recreation Center

\$200 Toilet Rebate

Did you know you can get up to \$200 for a toilet rebate? If you replace a toilet made in 1993 or before with a water efficient one, the Tampa Bay Water Wise program will send you a check. If you replace a newer toilet, you can still get a \$40-100 rebate.



St. Pete City Council

District 1: Copley Gerdes (Chair)

copley.gerdes@stpete.org

District 2: Brandi Gabbard

brandi.gabbard@stpete.org

District 3: Mike Harting

mike.harting@stpete.org

District 4: Lisset Hanewicz (Vice-Chair)

lisset.hanewicz@stpete.org

District 5: Deborah Figgs-Sanders

deborah.figgs-sanders@stpete.org

District 6: Gina Driscoll

gina.driscoll@stpete.org

District 7: Corey Givens Jr.

corey.givens@stpete.org

District 8: Richie Floyd

richie.floyd@stpete.org

CELEBRATING ST. PETE PARKS



Dell Holmes Park

Pinellas State Representatives

District 57 (Pinellas): **Adam Anderson** (R)
Adam.Anderson@flhouse.gov

District 58 (Pinellas): **Kimberly Berfield** (R)
kim.berfield@myfloridahouse.gov

District 59 (Pinellas): **Berny Jacques** (R)
Berny.Jacques@flhouse.gov

District 60 (Pinellas): **Lindsay Cross** (D)
lindsay.cross@flhouse.gov

Pinellas State Senators

District 18 (Pinellas): **Nick DiCeglie** (R)
diceglie.nick.web@flsenate.gov

District 21 (Pasco/Pinellas): **Ed Hooper** (R)
hooper.ed.web@flsenate.gov

District 16 (Pinellas/Hillsborough): **Darryl Rouson** (D)
rouson.darryl.web@flsenate.gov

Pinellas County Commission

District 1: **Chris Scherer**: cscherer@pinellas.gov

District 2: **Brian Scott**: brscott@pinellas.gov

District 3: **Vince Nowicki**: vnowicki@pinellas.gov

District 4: **Dave Eggers** (Chair): deggers@pinellas.gov

District 5: **Chris Latvala** (Vice Chair): clatvala@pinellas.gov

District 6: **Kathleen Peters**: kpeters@pinellas.gov

District 7: **René Flowers**: rflowers@pinellas.gov

Pinellas County School Board

District 1: **Laura Hine**: hinel@pcsb.org

District 2: **Lisa N. Cane**: canel@pcsb.org

District 3: **Dawn M. Peters**: Vice Chairperson,
petersdawn@pcsb.org

District 4: **Eileen M. Long**: board@pcsb.org

District 5: **Katie Blaxberg**: KatieBlaxberg@gmail.com

District 6: **Stephanie Meyer**: meyerstep@pcsb.org

District 7: **Caprice Edmond**: Chairperson, Single Member
edmondc@pcsb.org

What is a Neighborhood Ambassador?

We are building a hyper-local program through

Neighbors in the Know (NiK) with 2 goals:

Get information to our neighbors about environmental events, issues, and matters which will affect all of our lives through this quarterly newsletter; and

Share what our elected officials in Florida are doing related to natural Florida, energy, and the environment.

Neighborhood ambassadors share this newsletter, and act as liaisons between NiK's many environmental nonprofits and the neighborhood.

After training, the NiK ambassador will spend about 4-8 hours a month chatting with neighbors, attending the neighborhood association meeting, and logging environmental issues. **Contact us: info@seausrise.org**

Green Events

Green Thumb Festival

Saturday, April 25 & Sunday, April 26, 2026

Walter Fuller Park, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

7891 26th Ave. N. St. Petersburg, FL 33710

Business Electronics & Chemical Collection Event

Every 2nd Wednesday, 9 am - 4 pm

2855 109th Avenue N. St. Petersburg,

Trash Pirate's Madeira Beach Cleanup

Saturday, May 3. Sign in at Caddy's or John's Pass belltower, 14080 Gulf Boulevard. 8-11 a.m.

St Pete Eco Club Monthly Meeting

Meets every First Thursday of the Month

Next meeting May 3, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Outcast Brewing Company, St. Petersburg, FL
St. Pete Eco Club meets monthly at Outcast Brewing to connect locals in eco-action and community sustainability.

3rd Annual OSE / VFW Day of Service Cleanup

Saturday, May 3, 9 - 11 a.m., Lassing Park.

2042 Beach Dr SE, St. Petersburg, FL 33705

All of the information in this newsletter is also available (with links) on our website through the QR code on the front page.



KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES OF TAMPA BAY

- **Stormwater runoff into the bay**
- **Over development**
- **Food waste**
- **Drought**
- **Flooding**
- **Coastal vulnerability**

What do YOU think should be on this list? Email us at info@seausrise.org

Sea Us Rise/NiK @ USFSP's Science Fest



Dean Johanesen led students in writing songs for the planet at **USFSP's Science in the Sun Fest** in February. **Sea Us Rise & Neighbors in the Know** were sponsors, ensuring everyone got sustainably made organic cotton t-shirts. Dean worked with 7 or 8 schools to write a song on the school day (Friday), and then performed it on Saturday on the Main Stage. He also wrote a Sea Us Rise theme song (listen on our website)!