



SMOKE SIGNALS

VILLAGE OF
TEQUESTA
NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2026

SEA TURTLE NESTING SEASON: LET'S KEEP OUR BEACHES SAFE!



Sea turtle nesting season begins **March 1**, and the Village of Tequesta is reminding residents and businesses of the importance of protecting these remarkable animals. With beach lighting ordinances in place (Village of Tequesta Code of Ordinances, Article III), our community is already taking positive steps to create a safer environment for nesting sea turtles and their hatchlings.

Why this matters

Sea turtles depend on natural light from the moon and stars to navigate the beach. Artificial lighting can disorient nesting mothers and hatchlings, causing them to move away from the ocean and into danger. Simple changes in lighting can make a significant difference in keeping turtles on the right path.



How You Can Help During Nesting Season:

- Replace outdoor bulbs with turtle-friendly lighting options that are low, shielded, and emit long-wavelength light (amber or red).
- Turn off unnecessary outdoor lights, especially those visible from the beach.
- Close curtains and blinds in the evenings to reduce indoor light spillover.
- Avoid using flashlights or phone lights on the beach at night.

Ordinance Highlight Reminders:

- The use of turtle-friendly lighting fixtures on all properties near the beach.
- Lights visible from the beach are to be turned off or dimmed during nesting and hatching seasons.
- Property owners and businesses are to install window tinting and use blackout curtains to minimize light spillover.

Together, we can ensure that nesting mothers find safe spots for their eggs and that hatchlings reach the ocean without confusion. Your small actions have a big impact on the survival of these ancient mariners.

Let's all work together to protect our coastal wildlife and ensure a brighter future for sea turtles - starting with darker beaches! Remember, the season starts March 1st, so let's get prepared now.

For more information and additional tips, visit <https://conserveturtles.org/> or contact the Building Department at 561-768-0450.

HIGHLIGHT



**Council Member
Patrick Painter**

Spring also brings back many of the community moments we value most. Residents are out supporting local businesses, enjoying our parks, and gathering at seasonal events. These moments, both planned and spontaneous, help strengthen the sense of connection that defines Tequesta. As a Council Member, it's especially meaningful to see how simple interactions between neighbors reflect the pride we all share in our village.

For me, spring is also a time to reflect on the work we've done and the work that lies ahead. My focus remains on protecting the character of our village, improving the amenities and services residents rely on, and ensuring Tequesta continues to be a safe, thriving, and family-friendly community for years to come. I'm grateful for the residents who stay engaged, share their ideas, and care deeply about Tequesta's future. Your input helps guide our decisions and strengthens our community.

As we enjoy the season ahead, I hope you take time to appreciate the small moments that make spring in Tequesta so special, from evenings by the river to the friendly spirit that defines our neighborhoods. It is truly an honor to serve you, and I look forward to all that this spring will bring.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful season in the Village of Tequesta.

Patrick Painter
Council Member

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SMOKE SIGNALS

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Around the Village



Police Department

Officer Jax Boris Begins Patrol Duties in Tequesta



Officer Boris began his journey with the Tequesta Police Department as a Police Explorer in September 2024. In a short time, he distinguished himself through his initiative, positive attitude, and consistent willingness to help wherever needed. His dedication and professionalism earned high praise from officers and community members alike.

In February 2025, Officer Boris entered the Police Academy, where he continued to excel—graduating in September 2025 at the top of his class. Following graduation, he joined the Tequesta Police Department as a Police Officer and successfully completed his training. Under the guidance of experienced Field Training Officers, he demonstrated strong decision-making, officer safety awareness, and a steady commitment to service. With his field training now complete, residents will see Officer Boris out on patrol, proudly serving and protecting the Village of Tequesta.

When asked about his favorite part of the Tequesta Police Department and the Village, Officer Boris shared:

“From day one, I’ve felt how welcoming Tequesta is. People smile, say hello, and genuinely care about this community, and that is truly special. I’m excited to continue to build relationships and do my part to support the department and serve this Village.”

We are truly fortunate to have an officer who embodies our department’s values and believes in the power of community policing. Please join us in warmly welcoming Officer Boris.



Investing in Safety Through Grant Funding

The Tequesta Police Department (TPD) is proud to share several recent grant awards that further strengthen our ability to serve the community, while minimizing additional costs to taxpayers.



For a third time, the Tequesta Police Department has been awarded the Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s (FDLE) Firearms Safety Training Grant. Since hosting our very first class in December 2023, the program has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the community. Based on those responses, we applied once again to continue offering this valuable training opportunity.

This year’s award of \$40,191.00 will allow us to enhance our training and community education environment and continue hosting our monthly firearms classes in a modern, well-equipped setting. Grant-funded upgrades include new conference tables, TVs, and sound equipment—improvements that support clearer instruction, hands-on learning, and a more effective classroom experience for every participant. Check out our website for our updated class schedule and registration.

In addition, the department was awarded a \$10,000 Identity Theft & Fraud Grant through the FDLE. These funds enabled the purchase of specialized investigative equipment used in fraud and identity theft cases, enhancing our ability to investigate and respond to these increasingly complex crimes.

Finally, TPD was awarded \$50,000 to purchase two new drones, allowing the department to deploy this technology during missing person searches, natural disasters, and other critical incidents where aerial support can significantly improve response efforts.



Through strategic grant funding, the Tequesta Police Department continues to invest in training, technology, and community programs—enhancing public safety while reducing the financial burden on local taxpayers. We remain committed to innovation, preparedness, and responsible stewardship of resources in service to our community.



To learn more about our Civilian Firearm Safety Course, or to sign up, please scan the QR Code.



Around the Village



Fire Department

98 Miles for 98 Lives



On December 4th, the Tequesta Fire Department had the profound honor of gathering with our community, partner agencies and residents to send off Marine Veteran, Tim Roberto, as he began the '98 Miles for 98 Lives' walk; a journey of remembrance, resilience, and hope.

From Tequesta Fire Rescue to the Surfside memorial site, Tim walked 98 miles, each one representing a life lost in the Chaplain Towers South tragedy. These miles are more than distance—they are steps taken for the families forever changed, for the survivor still healing, for every first responder and veteran who quietly carries the weight of trauma long after the sirens fade.

We are grateful beyond words to everyone who joined us and to be the starting point for the 4th Annual 98 Miles for 98 Lives walk. The support we received speaks loudly to those who often feel unseen. It tells our first responders, dispatchers, EMTs, police officers, nurses, and veterans that their emotional well-being matters – that their lives matter.

As we honor the lives lost, we also shine a light on those still fighting battles within. Mental health is not a weakness. It is a wound deserving of care, compassion, and community. Together, we can continue 'Stomping Out the Stigma' and raise awareness to ensure that every person who serves has access to the help they need and deserve.

To Tim, our fellow Fire Departments, and every participant who walked any part of this journey; thank you for reminding us all that healing begins when someone takes the first step- and that hope grows stronger with every step that follows.



Welcome to Tequesta Fire Rescue

Tequesta Fire Rescue welcomed two new Firefighters at the end of 2025. We are excited to introduce Firefighter Justin Ramos (Left) and Firefighter Jason Tewari to the Tequesta Fire Rescue family.



Santa's Enchanted Forest

On December 13th, Tequesta Fire Rescue hosted its annual Christmas Open House. With all the attendees, our station was filled with laughter, joy, and the holiday spirit. Seeing families, neighbors, and friends come together reminds us why we are so proud to serve and protect this community. The residents we serve are the very best part of our job, and days like this reinforce how fortunate we are to call this place home.



Tequesta Fire and Santa Visit the Farmer's Market

On December 9th, Santa arrived at the Tequesta Farmer's Market with the help of Tequesta Fire Rescue. It was great to be able to help spread the cheer and spend a Saturday morning with the residents that make working for Tequesta Fire Rescue such a pleasure.



FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

HAVE YOU DONE THIS?

List :

- Unplug unused appliances.
- Check electrical cords for damage.
- Turn Off stoves & open flames after use.
- Keep flammable materials away from heat sources.
- Ensure exits are clear & accessible.
- Inspect fire extinguishers (pressure gauge in green).
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets.
- Know emergency numbers (911 or local fire dept.).

Don't forget to check the box!

SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION

Summer Camp registration has begun for Sportstyme 2026.

Visit sportstymecamps.com for details and registration.

Incorporated Tequesta residents, call 561-762-5447 for discount code.



NOTICE TO RESIDENTS EASTWINDS CIRCLE

The Village of Tequesta Public Works Department is pleased to announce that roadway, curb, and sidewalk improvements on Eastwinds Circle is being performed by Wynn & Sons Construction Co. and is anticipated to continue through February 27, 2026.

Construction Hours:

Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The project includes replacement of damaged sidewalks and curbs, modifications to several driveway aprons within the public right-of-way, and full removal of the existing concrete roadway, which will be replaced with asphalt. These improvements will enhance drainage, provide a smoother driving surface, and provide a cost-effective long-term solution.

Residents will maintain access to the community throughout construction. Wynn & Sons Construction Co. will coordinate directly with affected residents regarding any driveway apron work within the right-of-way. Advance notice will be provided prior to roadway paving, and the Village is coordinating with the Tequesta Country Club regarding temporary use of adjacent parking during that phase. Only during paving operations will limited vehicle access be required.

Residents are kindly asked to refrain from beginning major private property projects during this period to avoid conflicts with construction activities and roadway access.

Thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation as we complete these important improvements.

4th Annual Resident Academy



The 4th Annual Resident Academy is in full swing with a record-breaking 24 participants. This seven-week interactive program provides residents with direct access to Village leaders and staff while exploring the intricacies of municipal governance. The goal is to offer comprehensive education designed to empower residents with in-depth knowledge of their local government operations and foster meaningful connections within the community. Upon completing the program, participants will receive a certificate of completion, gain practical knowledge of local government operations, and develop an enhanced understanding of municipal services and structure.

Stay connected to our website and social media platforms for registration for the 5th Annual Academy.

Village of Tequesta

345 Tequesta Drive
Tequesta, FL 33469



561-768-0700
www.tequesta.org

NOTICE TO VILLAGE OF TEQUESTA RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

January 16, 2026

Dear Village of Tequesta Resident/Business,

Floods can happen anywhere. Here in South Florida, we are especially vulnerable due to low-lying topography, proximity to the coast, and heavy rainfall, particularly in a short period of time. Just one inch of floodwater can cause up to \$25,000 in damage to your building and its contents.

Most homeowners, renters, or business insurance policies do NOT cover flood damage. Flood insurance is a separate policy that can cover buildings, the contents of a building, or both. You can purchase a separate policy for coverage of contents, which can be beneficial for renters. It is important to protect your home, your business, and your possessions against flood damage.

If you do not already have flood insurance, we would like to encourage you to consider flood insurance for your property. If you already have flood insurance, be sure you understand the policy and that the amount of coverage is appropriate for your property and contents. Whether your property is in a low to moderate-risk or high-risk flood area, or if it has had flood damage in the past, it can be insured for flood damage.

For information on rates and coverage, contact your insurance agent. To find an insurance agent and to learn more about the importance of flood insurance, visit Floodsmart.gov.

If you have any questions about this message, please contact the Building Department at (561) 768-0450.

Sincerely,

Mayor Molly Young

This document may be reproduced upon request in an alternative format by contacting the Village Clerk's Office at 561-768-0440 or by completing our accessibility form: <https://bit.ly/3mufeU4>

Joining Us

Jason Fazzaro – Public Works
Julien Eason – Police
Jason Tewari – Public Safety
Justin Ramos – Fire Rescue
Jessica Polito – Tucker – Human Resources
Icner Portillo – Public Works

Anniversaries

Demetrius McDonald 5 years
Kayla Preston 5 years
Carmen Bratu 5 years
Thomas Jarrell 10 years
John Rouse 10 years
John Kostyo 20 years

Retirees

Marjorie Craig – Water Administration

VOT EMPLOYEES

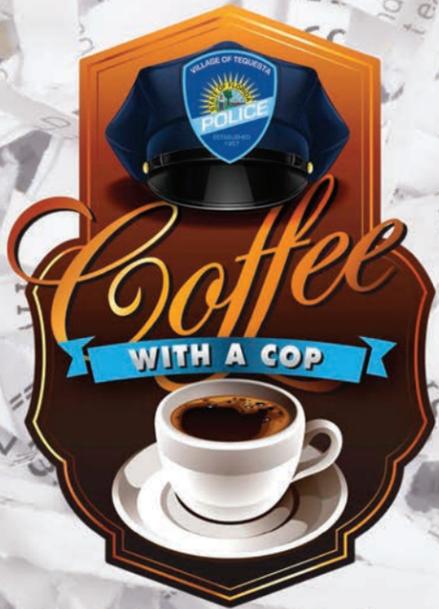
Shred It Coffee with a Cop

SATURDAY

April 11, 2026

9:00 am - 11:00 am

Village of Tequesta Parking Lot



Sponsored by:



Bring your personal documents for onsite shredding

Incorporated Tequesta Residents Only

Mobility Matters



The Village of Tequesta is excited to announce that in October of 2025, the Village Council voted to approve a Mobility Plan for the Village.

This effort aims to ensure that everyone can move through the Village comfortably and safely. Examples of mobility improvements might include enhanced crosswalks, more bike-friendly routes, better public transit options and increased connectivity.

Visit our website to learn more about the approved plan

https://www.tequesta.org/DocumentCenter/View/13716/Tequesta-Mobility-Plan_Final_Appendices

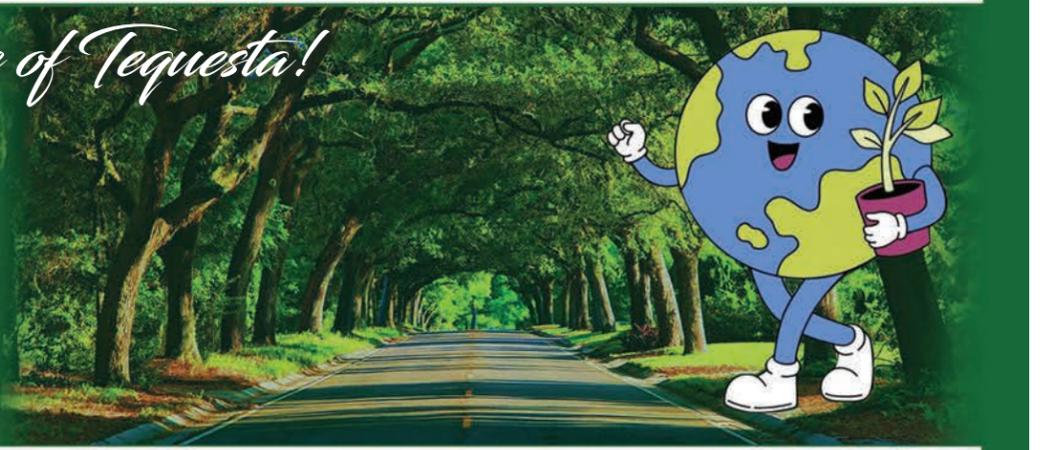


Congratulations to the Village of Tequesta!

We are **officially a Tree City USA** community! That means we're committed to growing greener and caring for our leafy neighbors.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen. Let's keep planting, protecting and celebrating the roots that make our Village so special.

Visit our website (<https://www.tequesta.org/1776/Tree-Rebate-Program-NOW-ACCEPTING-APPL>) to learn more about our tree rebate program and how you can help keep Tequesta thriving.



BE SURE TO FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS IN ORDER TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW THE VILLAGE WILL BE CELEBRATING AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY!

Tequesta
celebrates
AMERICA 250
★ ★ ★ ANNIVERSARY ★ ★ ★





FLOOD INSURANCE

Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), also known as flood hazard maps, are important tools in the effort to protect lives and properties in communities across the nation. By showing the extent to which areas of the Village and individual properties are at risk for flooding, these flood maps help residents and business owners make better financial decisions about protecting their property. However, flood risks are dynamic and can change over time. Water flow and drainage patterns can be altered dramatically due to surface erosion, land use, and natural forces. As a result, flood maps for some areas may no longer accurately portray the current flood risks. Consequently, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been updating the nation's flood maps using the latest data gathering and mapping technology.

There are three types of Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) present in the Village of Tequesta: the floodway (river), the flood fringe (river banks), and Coastal Storm Surge velocity flooding. We are affected by two forks of the Loxahatchee River in the Village (the North and Northwest), as well as the Intracoastal Waterway/Jupiter Sound and the Atlantic Ocean. Areas lying east of Federal Highway are particularly vulnerable to flooding from hurricane storm surges, while people to the west may be vulnerable to riverine flooding. Historically, the Village of Tequesta has mainly been subject to flooding caused by tropical storms or heavy downpours during afternoon thunderstorms. It just takes one storm to cause a flood, and just a few inches of water can cause tens of thousands of dollars in damage often necessitating federal disaster relief.

The Village of Tequesta has been a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) since 1992, which makes it possible for Village property owners to obtain federally backed flood insurance. National Flood Insurance is the best hope to keep residents from paying for the damage out of pocket since homeowners, renters and business insurance policies typically don't cover flood damage. National Flood Insurance is available to any owner of insurable property for a building or its contents. Tenants may also insure their personal property against flood loss. The actual costs will vary depending upon the amount of coverage and the degree of flood hazard. Contact your insurance carrier regarding flood insurance availability, rates and coverage for your property.

In certain instances, such as the purchase of a home with a federally backed mortgage, flood insurance is required. Residents need to be advised of the following:

- **There is a 30-day waiting period for flood insurance policies;**
- **New flood insurance policies will not be written once a storm is approaching;**
- **Premiums for flood insurance policy holders provide the financial recovery for insured flood losses - not tax funds;**
- **With insurance proceeds, policyholders can repair or rebuild damaged homes, clear away debris, and replace business inventories and personal belongings;**
- **Flood insurance policyholders don't need to rely solely on federal disaster loans that must be repaid with interest;**
- **Flood insurance claims are usually handled quickly, helping flood victims rebuild homes and businesses.**

The community qualifies for a 20% discount on flood insurance as a community participating in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). To acquire and maintain CRS discounts, the Village of Tequesta continues to implement flood awareness and mitigation programs in an effort to provide better information and assistance to its homeowners and businesses. The Village provides a status report to the NFIP each year and maintains a Class 6 CRS rating. Reduce the financial impact of flooding by taking steps yourself before disaster strikes. Many residents and business owners in Tequesta are unaware that they qualify for flood insurance. Even more may be unaware they may qualify for Federal financial assistance both pre-disaster and post-disaster.

Everyone should review their current homeowner policy and become familiar with what is and what is not covered, as damage due to flooding is typically not covered. Contact the Building Department for information as to whether or not your home is in danger. Our staff can help you determine your flood zone and elevation. Just call 561-768-0450, check us out on the web at www.tequesta.org or stop by Village Hall during business hours. To View the flood zone map online: <https://www.tequesta.org/DocumentCenter/View/10384/Tequesta-Flood-Zone-Map>

