

COMMUNICATIONS TOWER TO BE INSTALLED AT WATER TREATMENT PLANT PROPERTY

The Cedar Key Water and Sewer District was approached about the possibility of placing a 300-foot-tall communications tower on the water treatment plant site at the intersection of State Road 24 and County Road 347. The purpose of the tower would be to improve emergency radio communications within the City of Cedar Key. Currently, radio communications are often lost by first responders when working within buildings in Cedar Key. One particularly serious example is that communications are often lost within the school building. Levy County is working to improve emergency radio communications throughout the county by adding new towers and transmitters at locations where there are deficiencies. Thus the proposal to place a new tower close to Cedar Key.

The Water and Sewer District owns a total of 10 acres where the water treatment plant is located, and there are available uplands on the site for the placement of the tower. At a special meeting held on March 25 the District Board approved an option and lease agreement with NexTower company out of Gainesville for the placement of a tower on the site to meet the County's needs. The tower will be self-supported and, pursuant to FAA regulations, will be lighted with flashing red lights at night, and white strobe lights during the day. The District will receive rent payments starting at \$900 per month, with increases if cell antennas are added, and with annual COL increases.

Levy County will have the top positions on the tower for emergency communications, but room will remain for the addition of cell phone antennas. It is in NexTower's interest to convince cell carriers to add antenna's to this tower, and NexTower has already approached cell carriers about this opportunity. Thus a side benefit of this tower could be much improved cell coverage within Cedar Key without the need for constructing a tower on the island.

The County considers the need for this tower to be urgent, and so construction should begin soon with completion by late summer. If you have any questions about this tower, please feel free to call or email.

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