



## **Cobb County Water System - Water Efficiency Program News - Fall 2015**

### **Kudos to KSU**

Cobb County's water efficiency program wanted a big project for USEPA WaterSense Shower Better Month in October 2014. Kennesaw State University (KSU) has a longtime partnership with the water efficiency program and a history of sustainability in its classes and buildings. The university had recently acquired Southern Polytechnic University; making it the third largest school in the Georgia state college system and the water efficiency program saw an opportunity to help the university save water, energy, and money while enhancing its environmental outreach.

Cobb County described the idea in August 2014 to Dr. Robert Paul, a biology professor, who teaches sustainability courses where water efficiency staff have spoken. Dr. Paul provided contacts at KSU's central maintenance and athletic facilities (the university has a separate maintenance group just for athletic buildings). Recent economic cutbacks had the university looking for ways to reduce utility bills, so upgrades that could save both water and energy were a natural fit.



Staff met with both central and athletic facility staff in September 2014, along with the marketing/public relations department, and Residence Life representatives. CCWS offered up to \$10,000 worth of free WaterSense labeled showerheads, if KSU would provide the in-kind labor. "Surprisingly, we got consent right at that table," said Kathy Nguyen, Senior

Project Manager for CCWS.

Showerhead performance was a concern to central maintenance, they wanted to ensure a good showering experience for students. Although CCWS staff promoted the certified performance of WaterSense labeled showerheads, KSU staff wanted students to test them before committing to a full upgrade. The group planned a two-week pilot, which Residence Life promoted through social media; the first 100 students to sign up received the new showerheads. They had 100 percent satisfaction from the students that tested them. Athletics wanted theirs before the pilot was completed.

*(Continued on Pg. 4)*

### **Upcoming Events**

For information or to schedule a presentation visit [www.cobbwater.org](http://www.cobbwater.org), email [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org), or call the Water Efficiency Office at 770-419-6244

#### **Senior Center Water Workshops**

Ever wonder how to avoid frozen water pipes? Want to find leaks or learn about your bill? Want to receive and learn how to install free fixtures to lower your bills? Call your local senior center and register for the Water Workshops in October.

#### **WaterSense Sales Tax Holiday**

October 2-4, 2015, Pay no sales tax on WaterSense labeled products.

#### **waterSmart waterArt Reception**

Wednesday, November 18, 2015, 6PM-8:30PM at Big Shanty Art Station

#### **USEPA WaterSense Shower Better Month is October**

Heating water is one of the biggest energy uses in the home. By switching to WaterSense labeled showerheads you can save water and the energy used to heat it. **Free showerheads available all month by emailing [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org)**

## Water Efficiency Outreach Programs

It's water cycle time! This fall more than 800 Cobb County first graders have learned about evaporation, condensation, and precipitation with the Water Efficiency Office's *Water Cycle Puppets* lesson. Students heard the story *The Adventures of Walter the Water Drop*, sang a water cycle song, and made puppets for the different steps of the water cycle. In addition, over 500 fourth graders took an *Incredible Journey* through the water cycle with a fun Project WET activity, making water cycle bracelets along the way.

The fourth graders of Harmony Leland Elementary will soon be water experts! They have taken an *Incredible Journey* through the water cycle, learned about some of the activities that pollute our water sources and how we can protect them with the *Who Polluted the Chattahoochee* lesson, and designed filters to clean water with the *Filtration Station* lesson. If you would like to schedule an outreach program for your students, please email [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org) or call (770) 419-6374.

## The Tappy Project

The Tappy Project, currently in its first year, gives K-2nd grade classes a chance to spend the week with the Water Efficiency Office's mini mascot, Tappy Turtle. Tappy comes with a backpack full of activities for the class to help the students learn about the water cycle, water conservation, and the value of clean, safe tap water. At the end of the week Water Efficiency staff pick Tappy up and post photos of the week on his Facebook page. To learn more about The Tappy Project or to schedule a Tappy visit for your classroom, email [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org) or call (770) 419-6374.

## Green School Update

It's time to submit Green School applications and start recruiting your Green Teachers. We already have applications from several schools, including a few that may become Green Schools for the first time this school year. It's also time to start thinking about the special and unique green projects your school does that could qualify you for this year's Green Innovation Award. You can learn more about the Green School program and find all of the forms at [www.cobbwater.org/greenschool.htm](http://www.cobbwater.org/greenschool.htm).



Fourth graders from Bells Ferry ES try on their "deer ears" while learning about adaptations with the *Animals and Epiphytes* program



Tappy Turtle's friends in Ms. Lane's 1st grade class at Murdock ES show off their drawings of Tappy



## Volunteers Welcome!

Do you enjoy working with students or meeting people? Do you have a passion for preserving our environment and want to help educate others about our precious water supply? We need you! Whether it is just for an hour, or if you want to be involved on a regular basis, the Water Efficiency Program appreciates the commitment that you have to the environment and your efforts to assist us in educating others on water conservation.



There is always a need for extra help: In the classroom

- Assist staff person during classes
- Keep students engaged
- Take photographs
- Set up demonstration area / pass out materials
- Assist students with craft projects or experiments

At civic presentations and community outreach events

- Greet visitors
- Pass out information
- Register people for our newsletter
- Play games with the visitors
- Hand out prizes and giveaways

You can be an important part of the water education programs offered to help others in Cobb County as we all strive toward responsible management of this essential resource. Thank you for sharing your time and talents!

For more information or if you have questions, please email [Gwen.Baldwin@cobbcounty.org](mailto:Gwen.Baldwin@cobbcounty.org). To fill out an application online click on this link <http://ow.ly/Stp5b>. The Water Efficiency Program looks forward to working with you on these fun educational opportunities.

## Tappy's Water Saving Tips

### Change your sprinkler schedule

As the weather cools down and the days are shorter, lawns and plants don't need as much water. Change your sprinkler timer now and remember to turn it off when it rains. Another option is to invest in a WaterSense Labeled weather-based irrigation controller.

### Check for leaks

Find and fix leaks now! One way to find out if you have a leak is to read your water meter before and after a two-hour period, when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, you most likely have a leak. To check if you have a toilet leak, put a couple drops of food coloring in the toilet tank, don't flush the toilet, and wait about 15 minutes. If the color seeps into the toilet bowl, you have a leak.

### Install high efficiency showerheads

High flow showerheads can waste water and energy. Reduce your indoor water use by simply replacing your old showerhead with a high efficiency WaterSense labeled showerhead.

### Get a jump on spring planting

Planting trees or other shrubs in the Fall is highly recommended because as the top of the plant begins to go dormant, the root system continues to grow. The plant's roots, can now "concentrate" on growing, rather than supporting the moisture and other needs of the top part of the plant.

**Count every drop, and make every drop count! It's up to you!**

## ...KSU continued

Cobb County Water System (CCWS) purchased 3,600 1.5-gallon-per-minute WaterSense labeled showerheads at a discount through New Resource Group for all of the dormitories and athletic facilities on campus. Installation was originally scheduled over Thanksgiving, but staff realized they needed more time and installed them over the winter break. When students returned in January, they had shiny new water-saving showerheads in their suites.

CCWS wanted to find a way to measure pre- and post-upgrade water use to gauge the success of the program, but couldn't find the right instrument to do so in the short timeframe. Since the KSU dorms are not sub-metered, Cobb County instead used GIS and asset inventory to isolate the meters serving the dorms and tracked those accounts after the upgrades. In the six months following the retrofit, KSU saved 666,000 gallons of water, or about 28 percent of the water used in the dorms, and about \$6,500 in water bills. Since Cobb County paid about \$9,500 for the showerheads, this retrofit at another university could pay for itself in just one year. There were unmeasured savings in energy use that also benefit KSU financially and reduce their carbon footprint. The water efficiency staff thanks KSU for their commitment to sustainability.

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4

FALL 2015

### Cobb County Water System Water Efficiency Program

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To sign up for this newsletter or to be removed from this mailing list, submit an email to [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org). Be sure to indicate "Sign Me Up" or "Remove Me from Your List" in the subject line.

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This is an official publication of the Cobb County Water System, an agency of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners.

## Water Source Climate Update

This summer was a little hotter and drier than normal. Infrequent rain events coupled with high temperatures increased evapotranspiration rates and created a soil moisture deficit. Allatoona's current level is 838.6 feet, winter drawdown is beginning. The streamflow in most local water bodies that feed the Chattahoochee River are in the normal streamflow range, a few are below 25% of normal flow.

On June 24, 2015, The Georgia Environmental Protection Division approved new drought rules for Georgia. Information on the new rules can be viewed at <http://epd.georgia.gov/proposed-rules>.

Cobb County Water System will be updating our codes and information to reflect the new changes.

Water Restrictions Status: Non-Drought

For Irrigation – No watering between 10AM-4PM (No day of the week restrictions). Other outdoor uses (car washing, pressure washing, etc. have no limits in non-drought status).

Rainfall JUNE-AUG

JUNE –2.97-Inches

JULY –3.51– Inches

AUG –3.09- Inches

2015 YTD – 30.38

JAN-AUG AVG – 33.83

SOIL MOISTURE-(-3.13)

**waterSmart is now accepting entries for our waterArt Contest**

<http://www.watersmart.net/action>



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