



## Cobb County Water System - Water Efficiency Program News - Spring 2016

### Detect Big Savings During Fix a Leak Week

Drip. Drip. Drip. The average American household wastes more than 10,000 gallons each year from easy-to-fix water leaks—that's enough water to wash 270 loads of laundry. If that doesn't seem like a lot, consider that across the country, easy-to-fix household leaks can add up to more than 1 trillion gallons of water lost every year.

That's why the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is encouraging homeowners to find and fix leaks during the annual *Fix a Leak Week*, March 14 through March 20, 2016. Sponsored by EPA's WaterSense® program, *Fix a Leak Week* reminds homeowners of the easy steps they can take to help save water in their community now and for future generations.

Fixing household leaks not only saves water but reduces water utility bills—by about 10 percent. Be for water and start saving today with three simple steps: Check. Twist. Replace.

#### 1. Check

First, check your home for leaks. An easy way to start is to examine your winter water use. If it exceeds 12,000 gallons per month for a family of four, you probably have leaks. Walk around your home with eyes and ears open to find leaks, and don't forget to check pipes and outdoor spigots. You can also detect silent toilet leaks, a common water-wasting culprit, by adding a few drops of food coloring to the toilet tank and waiting 10 minutes before flushing. If any color appears in the bowl during that time, your toilet has a leak. Visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense) for do-it-yourself repair tips or contact a plumbing professional. Free leak dye tablets are available at Cobb Water's customer service facility for *Fix a Leak Week*.

#### 2. Twist

Apply pipe tape to be sure plumbing fixture connections are sealed tight and give leaking faucets and showerheads a firm twist with a wrench.

(Continued on Page 3)

### 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

#### 4th Annual Water Drop Dash 5K and Water Festival Saturday, March 19, 2016

**Time:** 8am-10:30am

**Where:** Chattahoochee Nature Center  
<http://www.waterdropdash.com>

#### eARTh Day Celebration and Movie Friday, April 22, 2016

**Time:** Activities begin at 7pm, movie at dusk

**Where:** Mable House Barnes Amphitheatre  
<http://www.mablehouse.org/amphitheatre.html>

The eARTh Day celebration will include crafts for kids, a poetry out loud event for middle and high school students, viewing of finalist videos for the *H2O in HD* high school video contest, and a showing of *Wall-E*. Email [Gwen.Baldwin@cobbcounty.org](mailto:Gwen.Baldwin@cobbcounty.org) for more information about the event and poetry performance.

#### National Events:

##### Fix a Leak Week - March 14-20, 2016

Residents can receive free leak dye tabs, materials to change out leaking fixtures, and education materials by e-mailing [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org), calling 770-419-6244, or stopping by the customer service center.

##### Sprinkler Spruce Up - May 2016

USEPA WaterSense Program has declared May *Sprinkler Spruce Up Month*. Before irrigation season starts make sure your system has had a check-up. For information on efficient outdoor water use contact the Water Efficiency Office.

We have had a great time this semester visiting some of our Cobb County middle schools. More than 1300 sixth grade students at Daniell, East Cobb, Lost Mountain, and Dodgen middle schools learned about drinking water treatment and water scarcity while participating in our *Water Around the World*, *STEM for Streams*, and *Filtration Station* programs. Many of the students were surprised to learn where their water comes from and how much of the world's population lacks access to safe drinking water. We also visited middle and high school career days and had a great time building water filters with families at King Springs Elementary's STEAM night. Follow our adventures at [www.facebook.com/slowtheflow](http://www.facebook.com/slowtheflow) or follow us on Twitter @TappyTurtle.

### ***Leak Detective Kits***

March 14-20, 2016 has been designated *Fix a Leak Week* by the U.S. EPA WaterSense program, and this year's theme is "Be a Leak Detective"! To help teachers celebrate with their students, and help their schools save water and money, the Water Efficiency Office is offering free Leak Detective kits for Cobb classrooms. Each kit contains the materials needed for a class to give their school a basic water use checkup by hunting for leaks in classrooms and restrooms, and some fun activities to go along with it. If you would like to request a kit or get more information, please email [amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org](mailto:amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org) or call (770) 419-6374.

### ***The Tappy Project***

Teachers, don't forget Tappy Turtle is available to visit your classroom for a week through The Tappy Project. Tappy arrives with a backpack full of books and activities for you to share with the students, and a Tiny Tappy for your class to keep. If you'd like to learn more or schedule a visit with Tappy, contact [amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org](mailto:amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org).

### ***H2O in HD***

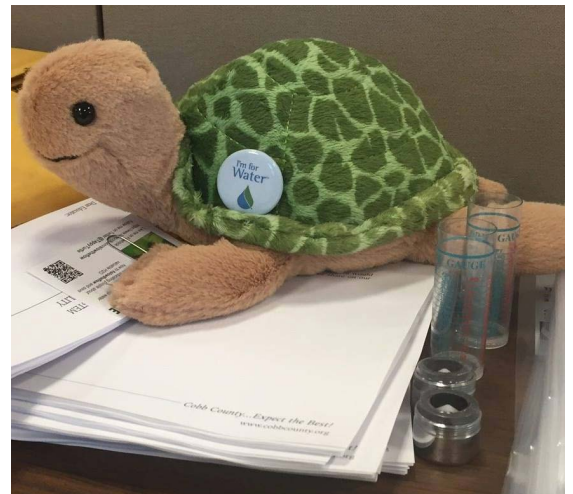
March 31st is the deadline for the *H2O in HD* high school video contest! Learn more at [www.watersmart.net/action/program4](http://www.watersmart.net/action/program4).

### ***Green School Update***

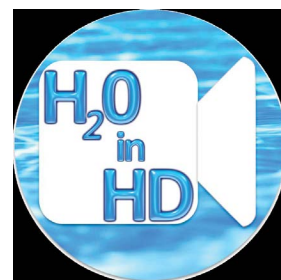
The Green School program is going strong this year. With three weeks left to go to the March 31st deadline, we already have nearly 300 Green Teachers qualified and 23 Green Schools. We also have a number of new participants this year, and a few schools who have qualified for the first time! We are also accepting applications for the *Green Innovation Award* until March 31st. If you would like more information about the Cobb County Green School Initiative or if you are interested in participating, please visit <http://www.cobbwater.org/greenschool.htm> or email [amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org](mailto:amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org).



*Dodgen MS 6th graders test a water filter they designed during the Filtration Station program*



*Tappy Turtle prepares Leak Detective kits to send out to Cobb teachers for Fix a Leak Week*





...Detect continued



If you can't stop those drops yourself, contact your favorite plumbing professional. For additional savings, twist a WaterSense labeled aerator onto each faucet to save water without noticing a difference in flow. Free aerators are also available at the customer service facility during *Fix a Leak Week*. They can save a household more than 500 gallons a year—enough water to shower 180 times!

### 3. Replace

If you just can't nip that drip, it may be time to replace the fixture. Look for WaterSense labeled models, which use at least 20 percent less water and are independently certified to perform as well or better than standard plumbing fixtures. Replacing an old, inefficient showerhead with a WaterSense labeled model will shrink your household's water footprint by 2,900 gallons annually while still letting you shower with power, thanks to EPA's efficiency and performance criteria. With less hot water passing through, WaterSense labeled showerheads can also save enough energy to power a television for a year. Free showerheads are available by emailing [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org).

Because we want to ensure water supplies last for future generations, Cobb County Water System is showing that we're for water by supporting *Fix a Leak Week*. Join us for the fourth annual *Water Drop Dash and Water Festival* to chase down our running toilet. Visit the water festival and learn how to discover clues to fix common leaks like Sherlock Holmes.

Want to do more? Join thousands of your neighbors by supporting the *We're for Water* campaign, organized by WaterSense. Visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense) and take the I'm for Water pledge or "like" WaterSense on Facebook to share why you're for water and learn more water-saving tips: [www.facebook.com/EPAwatersense](https://www.facebook.com/EPAwatersense).

For more information and tips about leaks during *Fix a Leak Week*, visit <http://tinyurl.com/cobbwater-leaks>

## Tappy's Water Saving Tips

Welcome, springtime! Warmer weather is here and our thoughts are turning toward outdoor activities, gardening, and yard work!

Setup a rain barrel and make the best of those April showers.

- You will save money on your water bill. Rainwater is a free resource. The only cost is purchasing a rain barrel.
- You can make your own rain barrel for free. The Cobb Watershed Stewardship program offers FREE Rain Barrel Making Classes. For more information visit: <http://tinyurl.com/cobbstreams-events>
- Rain collection reduces pollutant run off, improving water quality as well as quantity.
- Rainwater is great for watering plants.

**Ready to garden?** Once your garden is in, water in the morning or after dewfall when temperatures are cooler. Using mulch in your garden will help you conserve water. Mulch can hold moisture and keep the roots of your plants protected from the sun. Make sure your soil is moist before putting the mulch down.

**Obtain A Lush Lawn With Less Water and Work.** Over-watering your grass will make your lawn less resilient. Give it a deep watering of an inch of water once a week to create deep roots. Mowing less frequently decreases the lawn's water need. When mowing, remove only 1/3 of the blade of grass and keep those mower blades sharp to avoid injuring the grass.

**Check your sprinkler.** Make sure your sprinklers are directed towards plants and away from hard surfaces. When cleaning sidewalks and patios, use a broom.



In just **10** minutes **you could save...**

- 10** percent on your water bill
- 10** thousand gallons of water
- 10** months of laundry water

**Find and fix leaks!**

## May is Sprinkler Spruce Up Month

Spruce up your sprinkler system and save! Improperly maintained systems can lead to significant water waste. Before you ramp up watering this spring, do a little “sprinkler spruce-up” to ensure your system is operating efficiently. Use this call to action—inspect, connect, direct, and select—to promote healthy landscapes and reduce water waste.

- **Inspect.** Check your system for clogged, broken, or missing sprinkler heads. If you're not the do-it-yourself type, go with a pro—look for an irrigation professional certified through a WaterSense labeled irrigation program.
- **Connect.** Examine points where the sprinkler heads connect to pipes/hoses. If water is pooling in your landscape or you have large wet areas, you could have a leak. A leak as small as the tip of a ballpoint pen can waste about 6,300 gallons of water per month.
- **Direct.** Are you watering the driveway, house, or sidewalk instead of your yard? Redirect sprinklers to apply water only to your lawn or prized plants.
- **Select.** An improperly scheduled irrigation controller can waste a lot of water and money. Update your system's schedule with the seasons, or select a WaterSense labeled controller to take the guesswork out of scheduling.

Learn more about maintaining a water-smart yard by visiting <https://www3.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor/index.html>

## Cobb County Water System Water Efficiency Program

### Contact Us

660 South Cobb Drive  
Marietta, Georgia 30060  
[waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org)  
770.419. 6244

### Staff

Kathy Nguyen  
Amy Warnock  
Gwen Baldwin

For more information:  
[www.cobbwater.org](http://www.cobbwater.org)



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.

### Cobb County Board of Commissioners

Tim Lee, *Chairman*  
Bob Weatherford, *District One*  
Bob Ott, *District Two*  
JoAnn Birrell, *District Three*  
Lisa Cupid, *District Four*

David Hankerson, *County Manager*

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

## Water Source Climate Update

Rainfall this winter exceeded average rainfall and brought seasonal flooding to the area. Allatoona's current elevation is 836 feet. The streamflows in local water bodies that feed the Chattahoochee River are in the normal streamflow range.

Remember to give your irrigation system a spring tune up before starting your system. For more information on outdoor watering tips visit <http://tinyurl.com/cobbwater-outdoorefficiency>

### Water Restrictions Status: Non-Drought

#### For Irrigation:

No watering between 10AM-4PM  
(No day of the week restrictions)

Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/cobbwater-outdoorwateringrules> for more information on outdoor watering rules.

### Rain Fall December 2015-February 2016:

DEC – 9.17 inches  
JAN – 4.83 inches  
FEB – 5.01 inches  
2015 Total – 68.38 inches  
ANN AVG- 49.71 inches  
2016 YTD – 9.84 inches  
JAN/FEB AVG – 8.87 inches  
SOIL MOISTURE-(10.48 inches)

**waterSmart is currently accepting entries for the H2O in HD video contest!**

**Learn more at:**

<http://watersmart.net/action/program4>



**Follow waterSmart<sup>SM</sup> on Facebook for more tips!**

[www.facebook.com/waterSmartPrograms](http://www.facebook.com/waterSmartPrograms)