



## Cobb County Water System - Water Efficiency Program News - Fall 2014

### Cobb County Water System Celebrates *Shower Better Month*

In Cobb County, October is *Shower Better Month*, and the perfect time to encourage consumers to save energy, water, and money by showering better. Showering is one of the leading ways Americans use water in the home. To many consumers, the shower represents the all-important “me time.” It’s an escape from the outside world where they can wake up, wind down, or get ready to tackle the day. So what if there was an even better way to shower? Luckily there is, thanks to WaterSense labeled showerheads.

Whether you are remodeling a bathroom, building a home, or moving into a new one, you can save water and energy without sacrificing performance by installing WaterSense labeled products.

From Friday, October 3, 2014-Sunday, October 5, 2014, WaterSense labeled products are exempt from the state sales tax. Cobb’s Water Efficiency staff will be promoting Shower Better Month and the WaterSense Sales Tax Holiday on Saturday, October 4, 2014, from 10AM-2PM at the Vinings Home Depot on Cumberland Parkway. Additionally, Cobb’s *waterSmart* Program will be working with Kennesaw State University to help the campus continue their sustainability efforts by changing out showerheads to WaterSense labeled showerheads and tracking water and energy savings. *Shower Better Month* highlights how making a simple change can have a huge impact.

Email [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org) to request a free WaterSense labeled showerhead. For more information, and a full list of WaterSense labeled showerheads, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense/products/showerheads.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/showerheads.html).

### 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

#### **10/3-10/5 - WaterSense and Energy Star Sales Tax Holiday Weekend**

No sales tax on WaterSense and Energy Star labeled appliances and fixtures under \$1500

#### **10/4 - Shower Better and Sales Tax Holiday Event**

Join Cobb Water Efficiency staff and EPA WaterSense Program’s Spokesgallon, Flo, at the Home Depot to kick off *Shower Better Month*.

**Time:** 10am-2pm

**Location:** The Home Depot, 2450 Cumberland Pkwy, Vinings

#### **11/18 - waterSmart waterArt Student Reception**

Celebrate our middle school artists and see the 2015 waterSmart waterArt calendar.

**Time:** 6:30pm-7:30pm

**Location:** The Art Station - Big Shanty

#### **National activities:**

#### **October 2014 - USEPA WaterSense Shower Better Month**

Throughout the month, the Water Efficiency Program will have activities and projects highlighting the connection between water and energy. Residents can receive free WaterSense labeled showerheads by e-mailing [waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org](mailto:waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org) or calling 770-419-6244. Free activity sheets and information will be available at Cobb County Water System’s Customer Service facility all month.

# Education Update

WATER \$AVER

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FALL 2014

The 2014/15 school year started off with a bang for the Water Efficiency Office. In the first month of school programs, we have already visited 1100 students at 13 different Cobb County schools, presenting lessons on the water cycle, drinking water treatment, and stream hydrology. First grade students followed the adventures of Walter the Water Drop and made puppets for the various stages of the water cycle with our *Water Cycle Puppets* program. Fourth grade students traveled on an *Incredible Journey* through the water cycle with an engaging and educational game from Project WET.

Powers Ferry Elementary fourth graders worked on their STEM skills with the *Filtration Station* program, an engineering design challenge for water treatment. Working in groups, the students made observations about different types of filtration materials, then designed and built water filters from those materials. Students then tested their filters, analyzed their successes and challenges, and discussed ways to alter their designs.

Students at Walton and Hillgrove High Schools learned about stream hydrology and water supply management this month with our *STEM for Streams* program. Using a model river, the students took measurements of width, depth, and velocity, then used those measurements to calculate stream discharge. The groups discussed how this streamflow data is collected, how it is presented in graphs, and some of the ways it is used, and learned how to retrieve real-time streamflow data from the U.S. Geological Survey website.

We look forward to a busy and rewarding year helping Cobb County students understand the value of water and the importance of conservation. If you would like to schedule a program for your school, please email [amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org](mailto:amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org) or call (770) 419-6374.



Beautify

Conserve

Protect



Powers Ferry 4th graders design and build water filters with the *Filtration Station* lesson

## Green School Update

Now's the time to submit Green School applications and rally support from your Green Teachers! Don't forget, schools can request lessons from the Green School partners on a number of different topics through the Green School website: <http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/GreenSchool.html>

Get an early start and help us have our greenest year yet!

## Fall Into Water Wise Planting

Most of us think of spring as the time to plant, but planting in the fall allows our plants to develop a deep, strong root system throughout the fall and winter. When the hotter, drier spring and summer months come along, the plants will have a strong base and require less inputs to thrive in your landscape. The fall is a great time to start reducing turf to smaller, more practical areas in your yard. Increase shrub and color beds or add areas of low ground cover. This is particularly beneficial in areas of high shade or steep slope. Additionally, the fall is cooler and typically wetter in this region so plants installed in the fall require less water for establishment, saving both valuable water resources and money.

Following a few easy tips will make your fall planting a successful investment in your yard. First check your irrigation timer; fall plants won't require watering as frequently so adjust your timer to shorter cycles and fewer days. Also, this is a great time to see if you have a rain sensor shutoff installed. If you do, check to make sure it is working and unobstructed. If you don't have one already, it is an affordable system upgrade that can avoid overwatering. Irrigation is needed only to supplement natural rainfall.

With our clay/loam soils, fall is an ideal time for aerating fescue and overseeding if needed. Aeration allows the water applied to the landscape, either through rainfall or irrigation, to reach the root zone of your turf and prevents excessive water runoff by increasing absorption. For warm season grasses like Bermuda or Zoysia aeration is most effective in the spring or summer, after the initial greening. Aerating warm season grass in fall can increase weed competition. Warm season grasses are going dormant in the fall and don't need to be tended. Focus your watering on fall plantings. Mulching plants after they are installed helps the plants hold moisture and protects the plant in cold winter weather.

After fall watering, it is important to have your system winterized by a certified irrigation professional or by opening all the valves and draining the system yourself. Most irrigation systems are comprised of PVC pipe and if water is left in the system when the temperatures drop the pipe can be ruptured easily during freeze events.

## Water \$aving Tips

The fall season is right around the corner! Cooler weather does not mean we no longer have to think about using water efficiently. These tips can help you stay waterSmart.

- Mulch all vulnerable plants before the first freeze.
- When the clock falls back check your toilet for leaks. Lift the lid off the tank, squeeze 4-5 drops of food coloring, wait for 10-15 minutes without flushing, and check the bowl. If any of the color appears in the bowl there is a leak in the toilet, most likely the flapper.
- Time your hot water. Are you waiting five minutes for water to heat up? That could be sending hundreds of gallons down the drain each month. An under the sink mounted hot water on demand system can save thousands of gallons a year.
- High water pressure can cause fixtures to use more water per minute and increases the likelihood of leaks and breaks. A pressure reducing valve (PRV) typically last 10-15 years. Use a hose bib pressure gauge to check yours. If your pressure at the outdoor spigot is above 60 psi it may be time to have a plumber check your PRV.



Fall is an excellent time to add a little color to your garden.



## Why waste...

**2,900 GALLONS of water** 

**13 DAYS of energy to power your home** 

**\$70 per YEAR** 

**ShowerBetter** 

# Water Source Climate Update

This summer was fairly typical, with afternoon showers providing relief and helping to maintain soil moisture. Allatoona Lake is nearly at full pool with an elevation of 839.69 feet. Most local waters that feed the Chattahoochee River are in the normal streamflow range. No part of Georgia is currently in drought status. Fall planting season has begun; see Page 3 for fall planting tips.

**Water Restrictions Status:** Non-Drought

**For Irrigation:** No watering between 10AM-4PM (No day of the week restrictions)

**For other outdoor uses (car/pressure washing, etc.):** Odd/even schedule (no hourly restrictions)

- Even and Unnumbered addresses: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays
- Odd addresses: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays

Visit: <http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/WaterRestrict.html> for more information on outdoor watering rules.

Rainfall June 2014-August 2014

- JUNE – 2.59-Inches
- JULY – 2.27 - Inches
- AUG – 2.39 - Inches
- YTD – 26.03- Inches
- AVG –33.83-Inches
- SOIL MOISTURE – (-1.69-inches)

## Cobb County Water System Water Efficiency Program

**Contact Us**  
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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

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

**Entries are now being accepted for waterSmart’s student art contests!**

Learn more at:  
<http://watersmart.net/action>



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