



Cobb County Water System - Water Efficiency Program News - Fall 2013

Understanding Cobb County Water System's Rate Structure

Despite the rainy year we have had, Georgia has water challenges. This is not only due to drought cycles, but also to a limited water supply that is stretched by growing demands. In the last several years the state has been focused on water resource management. In the planning process a lot of attention has come to the metro area and our water use. The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, formed in 2001 by the State Legislature, came out with water plans for the 15 counties in the metro area. These plans are mandatory for all utilities within the District. The *Water Supply and Conservation Plan* required that local utilities adopt a tiered conservation rate by 2006, with the primary goal to reduce discretionary water use. Cobb County needed to comply with this mandate, and conducted a comprehensive rate review in 2005.

A tiered water rate was adopted for residential customers, charging a very low rate for a minimal amount of water, with the rate per 1,000 gallons increasing as consumption increases. Currently Cobb County Water System has a 5 tier water rate. Customers are only billed at the higher rate for the use that falls within the higher tier.

For Example: for 17,000 gallons of consumption the usage would fall into three tiers.

3,000 billed in tier 1 (0-3,000) x \$2.83
12,000 billed in tier 2 (4-15,000) x \$4.36
2,000 billed in tier 3 (16-29,000) x \$5.43

Sewer charges are levied to customers connected to public sewer at a fixed rate per 1,000 gallons of water used (\$5.41/1,000 gallons). While it is true that all water purchased by a particular customer may not be returned to sewer (most notably for irrigation or pool filling), the sewer fee ensures that there is capacity available to treat all water purchased as wastewater if the customer returns it. It is important to note that most of the costs associated with wastewater management are fixed costs that are not impacted when a customer chooses not to return a portion of water purchased. It should be emphasized that the customer can continue to control his or her costs for service by minimizing water use. *(Continued on Page 4)*

Upcoming Events

For information or to schedule a presentation visit www.cobbwater.org, email waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org or call the Water Efficiency Office at 770-419-6244

9/18 - Green School Roundtable

Free for Cobb and Marietta teachers to learn about the Green School Program and the lessons and activities available through Cobb County. Dinner will be served.

Time: 3:30 PM-6:30PM

Location: Cobb County Civic Center

Audience: Teachers

RSVP to: amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org or call 770-419-6374

10/26 - Medication Disposal Day

Drive up and drop off unused or expired medications and personal care products.

Time: 10AM-2PM

Location: Super Station 8/Precinct 1, Cobb Pkwy

Audience: Cobb Citizens

More info: http://portal.cobbcountyga.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=484&Itemid=261

Oct-Nov - School Fall Planting Tour

Contact the Water Efficiency Office if you would like to do a waterSmart planting at your school.

New Programs for a New School Year

One goal of the Water Efficiency Program is to offer engaging, fun, and free outreach programs to Cobb County schools. Programs help students and teachers meet their curriculum goals, while educating students about the value of water and the importance of caring for this precious resource. With this goal in mind, we took time this summer to create some new programs and revamp existing programs for the new school year.

Upper Elementary students can investigate the drinking water treatment process with our new hands-on lesson, ***Filtration Station***. During this activity, students will make observations and predictions, then design their own water filters.

Middle School students can explore stream hydrology with our new ***STEM for Streams*** program. Students will work with our model river to collect data and see how streamflows are measured and calculated. They will then discuss the ways this data can be used to manage our water resources, and why conservation is important.

High School classes can take advantage of our new ***Web Quest***, which was designed to accompany the ***Tri-State Water Wars*** lesson. In this lesson the students are divided into groups to represent the different states. They research the Tri-State Water Wars using the Web Quest and then participate in a facilitated negotiation to try to resolve the conflict. You can view the Web Quest here: <https://sites.google.com/site/tristatewaterwarswebquest/>

In addition to these new lessons, we have fun, interactive versions of some of our classic favorites, including *Incredible Journey* for the water cycle, *Animals and Epiphytes* to cover animal adaptations, and many more. You can see a listing of available programs here: http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/Ef_SchoolLessons.html



Summer campers at the Sunshine House in Acworth participate in the Water Waster Relay



Green School Roundtable

The Water Efficiency Program, along with our partners at the Watershed Stewardship Program, Parks and Recreation's Natural Resources Unit, and Keep Cobb Beautiful, will be hosting a Green School Roundtable event on September 18th. This event will be a great opportunity for teachers to learn about the program, see some of the resources available to them through the Green School partners, and share experiences and ideas with other teachers. The event will include short presentations by the Green School partners, followed by roundtable discussions on environmental education topics. Dinner will be provided for teachers who RSVP for the event.

Learn more about the event or RSVP here: http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/PDFFiles/GSR_flyer.pdf

Cobb County Plumbers Go Green

On July 25, 2013, in partnership with Green Plumbers USA, Cobb County Water System brought the Green Plumbers' "Caring for our Water" course to Cobb County. This course covers the relevant local issues impacting water resources and gives an in-depth review of water efficient technology, alternate water sources, best practices for plumbing maintenance, and sustainable water resource management. Seventeen plumbers from nine different plumbing companies received the training. The training was provided at no cost to the attendees.

Cobb County Water System, as the sponsor, presented to the attendees about our Water Efficiency program and opportunities to partner with Cobb to help our citizens maintain their plumbing systems and save water. The plumbers walked away with new options to increase their business and provide a valuable service to the customers they serve. Kathy Nguyen, Senior Project Manager with Cobb County Water System noted, "We began our relationship with Green Plumbers in 2008 during that severe drought. We have seen what a benefit this training is for our citizens and the plumbers. It is a great partnership. We were very excited to see so many plumbing companies making the investment in sustainable practices."

This class is the first in the Green Plumber Training series. Once all five courses are complete, a company can follow the procedure to become a licensed Green Plumbing Company. Cobb County is very grateful to IAPMO and Green Plumbers USA for partnering with us on this important training.

Water \$avingTips

The fall season is right around the corner! With the end of the summer fast approaching we must remember that water conservation remains an important issue, even in a wet year.

One of the top users of water around the home is the shower, where Americans stand under more than 1.2 trillion gallons of H₂O each year, according to the EPA. A typical shower uses 25 gallons or more of the wet stuff, while Americans use an average of 100 gallons of water a day per person. That's why October is US EPA WaterSense *Shower Better Month*.

Here are some easy ways to conserve water while taking a smarter shower:

- **Install a WaterSense labeled shower head.** WaterSense shower heads are independently certified to meet EPA's performance criteria, so you can save water without sacrificing your spray.
- **Set a timer.** This may feel silly at first, but people tend to lose track of time in the shower. So, setting a five- minute timer can alert you to just how much time you - or your kids - are really spending under the water.

Learn more about WaterSense products at:
<http://www.epa.gov/watersense/>



Why waste...

**2,900
GALLONS
of water**



13 DAYS
of energy to
power your home



\$70
per YEAR



ShowerBetter



Rate Structure Continued...

Cobb County's rate schedule is a necessary facet of our water efficiency program. We also have extensive programs offering information and materials to our customers to help them save water. We hope understanding our rate schedule will help our customers make efficient choices when looking at home and landscape updates.

More information on rates and our residential rate calculator can be found at: <http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/CustSrvcBillPmts.html>

WATER \$AVER

4

MARCH 2013



Cobb County Water System Water Efficiency Program

Contact Us
660 South Cobb Drive
Marietta, Georgia 30060
waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org
770.419. 6244

Staff

Kathy Nguyen
Amy Warnock
Candice Crawford

For more information:
www.cobbwater.org



To sign up for this newsletter or to be removed from this mailing list, submit an email to 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*
Helen Goreham, *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

Summer has been unusually cool and wet this year and all of the area lakes, including Lake Allatoona, are at or above full pool. The streamflows in local water bodies that feed the Chattahoochee River are within the normal percentile. Visit http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/Ef_Calculator.html to determine if your yards needs any supplemental irrigation.

Water Restrictions Status: Non-Drought

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

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

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

Rain Fall June-August 2013

June – 8.0 Inches
July – 6.3 Inches
Aug – 2.3 Inches
YTD – 44.4 Inches
AVG – 33.83 Inches

waterSmart is now accepting entries for the 9th Annual Allatoona Ally Artist Challenge!

Learn more at:
<http://watersmart.net/action/program1>



Follow
waterSmartSM
on Facebook for
more tips!

www.facebook.com/waterSmartPrograms