



Cobb County Water System - Water Efficiency Program News - Spring 2014

USEPA WaterSense and Cobb County Water System Chase Down Leaks

Drip. Drip. Drip. The average household in Cobb County loses 15% of the water they purchase each year to easy-to-fix water leaks. That’s around 10,000 gallons a year. If that doesn’t seem like a lot, consider that across Cobb these household leaks can add up to more than 1.5 billion 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 17 through March 23, 2014. 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.

Partner with Cobb Water and start saving water and money 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 10,000 gallons per month for a family of four, you might have leaks. Walk around your home with eyes and ears open to find leaks, and don’t forget to check pipes and outdoor spigots. Visit http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/Ef_Leaks.html for do-it-yourself repair tips or contact a plumbing professional.

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. If you can’t stop those drops yourself, contact your favorite plumbing professional.

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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

3/12/14 - Allatoona Ally Autograph Party
A party celebrating the student artists included in this year’s Allatoona Ally coloring book.
Time: 5:00pm
Location: South Cobb Regional Library

3/15/14 - Water Drop Dash 5K and Family Education Fair
Celebrate WaterSense Fix a Leak Week, learn about water through games and art activities, and run along the region’s main drinking water source.
Time: Race starts at 7:30am
Location: Chattahoochee Nature Center
More info: <http://www.waterdropdash.com>

3/21/14 - Green Cities Program Launch
An event to wrap up Fix a Leak Week, introducing a new direct install program developed for multi-family customers.
Details TBA

4/22/14 - H2O in HD Video Premier Party
Video premier and announcement of the winners of the 2014 water conservation video contest.
Time: 6-8pm
Location: Cobb-County Marietta Water Authority

National Activities:
USEPA WaterSense H2Otel Challenge 2014
Local hotels and motels can sign up for this program to save water, track their water savings, and be recognized. For more information e-mail waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org or call 770.419.6244.

Despite the weather, Water Efficiency staff have had the opportunity to visit several schools this semester to help students understand water treatment, water conservation, and water resource management. Cooper Middle School students designed and built water filters during the *Filtration Station* lesson and measured streamflows on a model river during the *STEM for Streams* program. Third graders at Garrison Mill Elementary and East Side Elementary learned about animal adaptations and drought with the *Animals and Epiphytes* program, and Birney Elementary students learned about some of the exciting careers available in water during their school's Career Day.

This year, the Water Efficiency Program is encouraging students and teachers to participate in USEPA WaterSense's annual Fix-a-Leak Week. In order to help, Water Efficiency staff are available to come to your class and lead the students in a *School Water Audit*, checking the school for leaks to be fixed and other potential water savings. Teachers who can't schedule a lesson but would like to do an audit with their students may borrow a Water Audit Kit from the Water Efficiency Program. The kits contain all the necessary water audit materials, including drip gauges and flow meter bags, along with easy instructions for using the materials and conducting the audit as well as a letter template for presenting the results of the audit to school administrators. For more information, or to schedule a lesson or reserve a kit, contact Amy Warnock at 770.419.6374 or email amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org.



Kathy Nguyen speaks with Birney ES students about the many career opportunities in water



Green School Update

The Cobb County Green School Initiative recognizes Cobb County schools and teachers that are committed to environmental education. In order to become a Green Teacher, a teacher must teach at least 5 environmentally beneficial lessons and submit an activity log. Any school with 5 Green Teachers will qualify as a Green School for the year. The program has grown each year since its inception, and that trend is continuing this year. With the deadline to apply still almost three weeks away, we have over 200 Green Teachers and 17 Green Schools, including three first-time Green Schools. The full list of Green Schools and Green Teachers will be published in the annual Green School Report in May. For more information about the program or to view Green School reports from previous years, visit <http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/GreenSchool.html>

Leaks continued...

For additional savings, twist a WaterSense labeled aerator onto each bathroom faucet to save water without noticing a difference in flow. Free aerators will be available during the week in Cobb Water's Customer Service facility.

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. With less hot water passing through, WaterSense labeled showerheads can also save enough energy to power a television for a year. Cobb Water provides free WaterSense labeled showerheads that can save a household more than 500 gallons each year—the amount of water it takes to shower 180 times!

Because we want to ensure water supplies last for future generations, Cobb County Water System offers many materials to help our customers Check, Twist, and Replace their way to water savings. Contact waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org for more information.

To celebrate *Fix a Leak Week*, Cobb County's water efficiency program will be supporting the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Second Annual Water Drop Dash on Saturday, March 15, 2014, at 7:30AM at the Chattahoochee Nature Center. After this family friendly run/walk along the region's main drinking water source, the Chattahoochee River, join us at the family water festival. Kids can learn how to make a water meter to track use at home and adults can play *The We're for Water Plinko* game and win water saving devices. Race registration includes free admission to the Nature Center for the day.

For more information and tips about how to save water during Fix a Leak Week, visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense>.



Ahhh, Spring in Georgia. Birds singing, daffodils and dogwoods blooming everywhere, and of course the dreaded blanket of pollen. Here are some tips to help you save water as we brush off this winter and head into spring and summer:

- Before irrigation season begins, do a visual inspection of your irrigation system. A cold winter like we had can result in broken pipes and large amounts of water wasted when the system is reactivated. At least every 3 years have your system audited by a licensed and certified irrigation professional.
- The first time you run your irrigation system, watch each zone run. Check to make sure your sprinkler heads are positioned properly and not spraying your sidewalk, street or driveway.
- Doing some spring cleaning? Use a broom to clear off your porch, deck, or driveway instead of a hose to save yourself quite a bit of water.
- When it's time to wash the pollen off of your car, take it to a commercial car wash that recycles water instead of washing it in the driveway with a hose.
- Be sure to add a layer of mulch to your new spring plantings and add fresh mulch to established plantings as needed.
- While waiting for your shower to warm up, catch the cold water in a bucket. You can use it to water your spring plantings.



We're
Chasing Leaks
for
EPA WaterSense

Fix a Leak Week

Helping Multi-Family Properties Go Green

Cobb County Water System will be launching a new program to help multi-family properties save valuable water resources and lower their water bills. The *Green Cities* Program brings together trained Green Plumbers and ultra-high efficiency fixtures to bring savings to our multi-family customers. *Green Cities* is a direct install program that replaces toilets, shower heads, and aerators at participating properties. It also includes an audit to identify additional water savings opportunities and requires recycling of all removed fixtures.

The installations will be done by local plumbers trained through Green Plumbers USA. The technology provided is manufactured by Niagara Conservation, is WaterSense labeled and is more efficient than current market technology.

This program will not require out of pocket capital expenditure by participating properties. Cobb Water will pay for the retrofit and the costs will be reimbursed to CCWS through a fee assessed to the customer's water bill for 3 years. This program will be available to multi-family properties served by Cobb County Water System that were built in 1992 or earlier.

CCWS will kick the program off at a launch event on Friday, March 21, 2014, to wrap up Fix a Leak Week.

Watch www.cobbwater.org for more information on this program.

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Cobb County Water System Water Efficiency Program

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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 winter was unusually cold for the region and brought precipitation in the forms of rain, sleet, and snow. The winter drawdown of Lake Allatoona is complete and the spring recharge has begun. The current lake level is 830 feet, a normal elevation for this time of year. The streamflows in local water bodies that feed the Chattahoochee River are in the normal range. No parts of Georgia are currently in drought status.

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

Rainfall January - February 2014

JAN – 2.4 inches
FEB – 3.22 inches
YTD – 5.62 inches
AVG – 8.87 inches

waterSmart is now accepting entries for the 2nd Annual H2O in HD video contest!

Learn more at:

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



Follow waterSmartSM on Facebook for more tips!

www.facebook.com/waterSmartPrograms