



Cobb County Water System - Water Efficiency Program News - Spring 2015

Simple Steps to Big Savings

Drip. Drip. Drip. The average American household wastes more than 10,000 gallons each year from easy-to-fix water leaks—that's the amount of water needed 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 16 through March 22, 2015. 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 10,000 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 http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/Ef_Leaks.html.

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. For additional savings, twist a WaterSense labeled aerator onto each bathroom faucet to save water without noticing a difference in flow. Cobb Water has free faucet aerators that can save a household more than 500 gallons each year—the amount of water it takes to shower 180 times!

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

Third Annual Water Drop Dash 5K and Water Festival – Saturday, March 21, 2015

Time: 8AM-10:30AM

Where: Chattahoochee Nature Center

Cobb County Employee Earth Day Fair – Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Time: 11AM-2PM

Where: Water System Lab Rain Garden

National Activities

Fix a Leak Week March 16-22, 2015 – The USEPA WaterSense program has declared the second week of March Fix a Leak Week to inform citizens about the impact of water leaks, as well as how to detect and fix leaks. Throughout the month the water efficiency program will have activities and projects highlighting this important topic. Residents can receive free leak dye tabs and materials to change out leaking fixtures by e-mailing waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org or calling 770-419-6244. Educational information will be available on the website, TV23, and in the Cobb Water System customer service lobby.

H2O in HD Video Contest

Do you know a Cobb County high school student who has a passion for art and the environment? The waterSmart program is currently accepting entries for the *H2O in HD* high school video contest. Students have a chance to win prize money (up to \$500) for themselves and for their schools by creating a short video PSA about the value of water. Students may work alone or in teams. To learn more about the contest or to download an entry form, visit <http://watersmart.net/action/program4>. The deadline for entries is April 3rd, so why not start today?

Water Efficiency Outreach

Despite some inclement weather days, the Water Efficiency Program has visited quite a few schools this semester. **Campbell Middle School** 6th graders discovered that math is an integral part of science while participating in the hands-on *STEM for Streams* program. **Dodgen Middle School** students became environmental engineers for the day while designing and building water filters with our *Filtration Station* program. Students at **Lewis Elementary** and **Baker Elementary** learned how animals and plants can survive during a drought with the *Animals and Epiphytes* lesson. We explored *Water Around the World* with **Durham Middle School** 6th graders, had a great day at **Lovinggood Middle School's** Science Quest event, and spent three days with **Dowell Elementary's** 4th graders, focusing on a number of different water topics. We look forward to visiting many more of you in the next couple of months!

If you would like to schedule an outreach program from the Water Efficiency staff for your students, please email waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org or call 770.419.6374.



Campbell MS 6th graders measure stream width and depth



5th graders at Keheley ES build a water filter

Green School Update

We're getting close to the March 31st deadline for the Green School Initiative, and applications are rolling in. Already, more than 300 Cobb County teachers have qualified as Green Teachers for the 2014-15 school year, and 23 schools have already qualified as Green Schools. Congratulations to **Bells Ferry Elementary** for achieving Green School status for the first time! To learn more about the Cobb County Green School Initiative and how your school can get involved, visit <http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/GreenSchool.html>

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. Cobb Water provides free WaterSense labeled shower heads to customers. Just contact waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org to request a shower head, aerator, or a whole house kit.

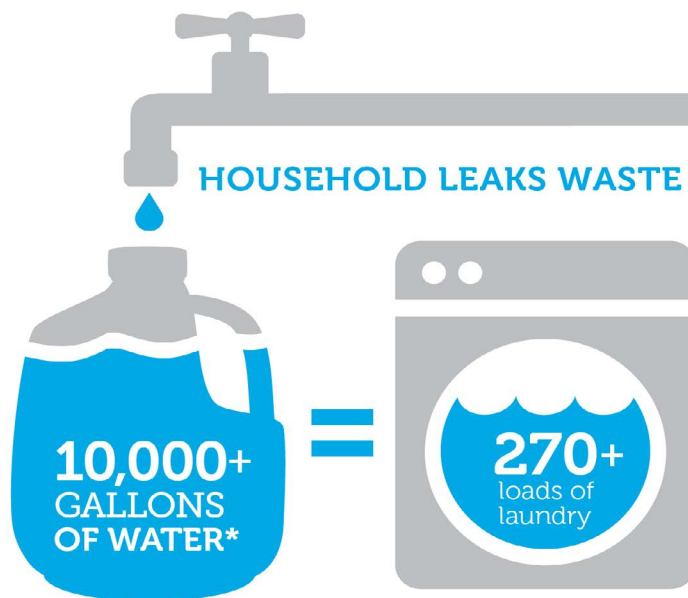
Because we want to ensure water supplies last for future generations, Cobb Water is showing that we're "for" water by supporting Fix a Leak Week. We will be participating in the Water Drop Dash 5K, Children's Fun Run, and Water Festival at the Chattahoochee Nature Center at 8 AM Saturday, March 21, 2015. Come out and chase down Cobb's Running Toilet, practice your Check, Twist, and Replace skills at our booth by participating in the Plumber's Rodeo.

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 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.

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



- Spring time means fun in the sun and pollen on our cars. When washing your car, use a bucket and sponge, or make sure you have a shutoff nozzle on your hose. Washing the car in the grass, provides irrigation for your lawn and keeps soapy water from running into our streams.
- The first time you start your irrigation system, watch it run then walk your property. Look for heads that got clipped or moved during the winter and are watering streets, fences or driveways. Also check for standing water or puddles, this is an indication of a broken pipe in your underground irrigation system.
- Do you know how to set your irrigation timer? Spring is a great time to ask your landscape professional if your timer is set correctly and have them show you how to shut off your system if you have a problem.
- Getting your deck spring-ready does not have to raise your water bill. Use a broom to clean off the deck and patio furniture. Burn calories and save water at the same time!



*Average U.S. family per year

Sprinkler Spruce-Up

When it comes to a home's irrigation system, a little maintenance goes a long way. Before you ramp up your watering this spring, spruce up your irrigation system by remembering four simple steps: *inspect, connect, direct, and select*:

- **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 program.
- **Connect.** Examine points where the sprinkler heads connect to pipes/hoses. If water pools in your landscape or you have large wet areas, you could have a leak in your system.
- **Direct.** Are you watering the driveway, house, or sidewalk instead of your yard? Redirect sprinklers to apply water only to the landscape.
- **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.

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SPRING 2015

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 actually a little drier than normal. Low temperatures and frequent, well distributed, low volume rain events reduced evapotranspiration rates and kept the soil moist. Allatoona's current volume is 832 feet. The streamflow in most local water bodies that feed the Chattahoochee River are in the normal streamflow range. Water Restrictions Status: Non-Drought

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

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

Rainfall DEC 2014-FEB 2015

DEC – 4.05-Inches
JAN – 3.88– Inches
FEB – 3.77- Inches
2014 – 40.23
ANN AVG- 49.71
2015 YTD – 7.65
JAN/FEB AVG – 8.87

SOIL MOISTURE-(6.70-Inches)

waterSmart is now accepting entries for the 3rd 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