



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

Does Your Home Make WaterSense?

In Cobb County residential water consumption comprises more than 50% of the system's total use. Home is not just where the heart is, it is also where water savings are. If you are in the market for a new home to start 2014, are you asking the right questions to make sure you are getting a water efficient home that will save water and money on your utility bills? The easiest way to know you are getting a home that will save water is to look for a WaterSense Labeled Home. These homes have been built to a standard that saves 20% more water than comparable new homes.

If you cannot locate a WaterSense labeled new home the next best option is to see if the fixtures and irrigation timers are WaterSense labeled. The US EPA WaterSense program is the water equivalent to Energy Star and makes it easy to determine if the fixtures or products will save water. Labeled products have been independently tested for both performance and water savings of 20% over similar products. Looking for the label takes the guess work out of shopping for water saving products. In Cobb County the average single family home uses 65,000 gallons of water a year. A 20% savings would result in a savings of 13,000 gallons of water a year with a potential reduction in water and sewer costs of \$127.00.

If you are staying in your existing home, why not give it an Extreme WaterSense Makeover! Cobb County Water System has free WaterSense labeled aerators and showerheads. Just contact waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org. For single family homes built in 1992 or earlier the water efficiency program has a \$100.00 rebate for WaterSense labeled high efficiency toilets. Eligible customers can receive a rebate credit for up to 3 toilets per property. Information on the rebate program can be found at www.cobbwater.org. (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

1/14/14 - Water Saver Brown Bag Lunch and Learn
Free for Cobb County Staff. Learn how to save money on water and energy bills. Free water saving fixtures!

Time: 12pm-1pm

Location: Water System Lab Training Room

Audience: Cobb County Staff

RSVP to waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org or call 770-419-6244

Month of January - Never Waste Twitter Contest
See article on Page 3 for more information.

2/12/14 - Allatoona Ally Coloring Book Party
Celebration for winning students and their families.

2/18/14 - Water Saver Conservation Class
Similar to 1/14 class - this session will be held at the Cobb Senior Wellness Center (12pm-1pm)

Month of February - WaterSense H2Otel Challenge
Local hotels and motels can receive free information, assistance, and tools to help them save water and track their savings. Email waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org or call 770-419-6244 for more information.

3/15/14 - Water Drop Dash 5k and 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

www.waterdropdash.com

Fall Fun With Filters and Flowers

It has been a very busy fall for outreach by the Water Efficiency staff. So far this school year, we have visited 18 different schools and reached over 4000 students!

During a week at Birney Elementary, the upper elementary students helped us kick off our new Filtration Station lesson, which has been a big hit with students and teachers alike. During the lesson, the students experimented with various filter media, including sand, gravel, cloth, and paper. They tried to predict which material would result in the cleanest water, then observed as we poured “dirty” water through the different media. Working in groups, the students then used their observations to design and build their own water filters. We were quite impressed with the creative designs that the students came up with, as well as how effective many of the filters were.

In addition, we helped hundreds of students understand the water cycle with our Water Cycle Puppets program and Project WET’s Incredible Journey lesson. We also debated some serious Water Dilemmas with environmental science students at Hillgrove High, and we helped King Springs’ upper elementary students understand what it’s like to be an animal in Georgia’s Okefenokee swamp during times of drought.

Water Efficiency staff also reached students at Ford, Due West, and Hollydale Elementary schools with the waterSmart program’s Fall Planting Tour. We spoke with garden club students about water efficient planting techniques and helped students plant flowers in school garden beds and along walkways.

If you would like to schedule a program for your students, please contact the Water Efficiency office at waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org.

Green School Update

While the Water Efficiency staff and our Green School partners have been out helping teachers meet their lesson requirements for the Green School program, many of our Green Teachers have been just as busy on their own, planning and teaching environmental programs for their students and submitting their activity logs for review. Congratulations to Hillgrove High, Nickajack Elementary, and Picketts Mill Elementary, who have already qualified as Green Schools for the 2013-14 school year. To learn more about the Green School program or about our new Green Innovation Award, please visit <http://water.cobbcountyga.gov/Files/GreenSchool.html>



Amy Warnock teaches Birney ES fifth graders about water treatment with the Filtration Station lesson



Kathy Nguyen helps Hollydale ES students plant pansies during the Fall Planting Tour

How Do *You* Save Water?

Tweet Us Your Tips and Win
a Never Waste Bottle!



In January 2014, Cobb County Water System wants to hear how you save water in Cobb. Follow Cobb County Water System on Facebook and Twitter and participate in our Cobb Never Wastes Twitter contest. Just follow us [@cobbh2o](#) and tweet your most creative conservation tips with [#cobbneverwastes](#) during the month of January. Each week the water efficiency program will select the best tip and the winner will receive a high quality, BPA free, stainless steel reusable water bottle as shown in the Alliance for Water Efficiency's Never Waste Campaign.

The Chattahoochee River, one of Cobb County's two water sources, is one of the smallest rivers in the United States to serve a major metropolitan area. It is vital for Cobb County citizens to use water efficiently due to our limited supply and to be good stewards of our water sources, which also serve people downstream of us. That's why in the month of January we want to hear from you!

Look for contest updates on our Facebook and Twitter feeds. Don't miss the chance to win this cool, water-saving bottle.

Follow us:



Water \$aving Tips

Winter is here, and while we might not be watering our lawns or maintaining much of a garden, there are still ways to cut back on water usage. One of the most important things we can do is to prevent damage to our pipes. Here are some tips for winter water savings:

- **Insulate your pipes.** Preventing burst pipes and leaks is vital when it comes to conserving water in winter. Make sure outdoor pipes are wrapped so they stay warmer and are less likely to freeze and rupture.
- **Drip your faucets.** When temperatures drop below freezing, let your faucets drip to prevent a frozen pipe. Use a large pot or bucket to catch the dripping water. That water can be used to flush the toilet or water plants, so it won't go to waste.
- **Know where your shut-off valve is.** Despite our best efforts, sometimes a pipe will still rupture in the winter. The faster you can cut off the water, the less is lost. Your water shutoff valve may be located at your meter or inside your home.
- **Winterize your irrigation system.** Turn off the system at the main control, open all the valves to allow the water to drain completely from the system, then close the valves. This can help prevent damage and leaks when you turn your system on the next year.



You're never too young to be waterSmart, as this young resident learned during the Acworth Fall Festival

WaterSense continued...

Even though it is winter, don't forget to think outside the home when looking for water savings. Installing weather based controllers and rain shutoff sensors on an existing irrigation system can make it easier to provide your plants the correct amount of water, without overwatering. Winter is the perfect time to find a bargain on WaterSense labeled controllers.

Water efficient landscapes take planning. If you are thinking about sprucing up the yard this year, winter is a great time to research plants and grasses that are both attractive and acclimated to our regional climate and agronomy. Our water efficiency staff would love to speak with you and help plan out a landscape and irrigation strategy or talk about indoor efficiency opportunities. Saving water all year long makes WaterSense!



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WINTER 2014

Cobb County Water System Water Efficiency Program

Contact Us

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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.

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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

Fall has been a little dryer than the early part of the year. The winter drawdown of Lake Allatoona has begun. The current lake level is 829 feet, a normal elevation for this time of year. The streamflows in local water bodies that feed the Chattahoochee River are in the dry to normal streamflow range. Parts of far northwest Georgia and central and southern Georgia have slipped into the abnormally dry category on the US Drought Monitor. Cobb County remains in the normal range. As winter approaches, your irrigation system should be winterized and shut down for the season.

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 Sept-Nov 2013

September - 2.25 inches
October - 2.13 inches
November - 1.61
Year to Date - 50.78 inches
Average - 45.81 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