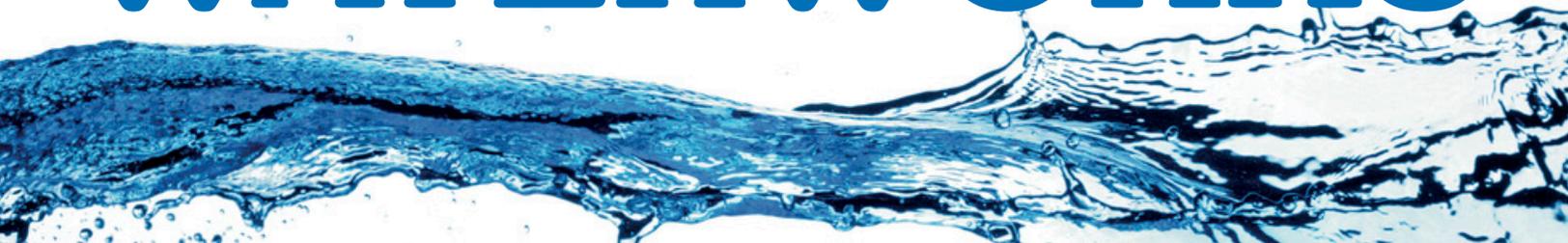


WATERWORKS



Provided as a public service for our customers and neighbors

WATER CONSERVATION STARTS OUTSIDE!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Beth Murany
President

Jeffrey A. Ricken
Vice President

Richard Webb
Secretary

Victoria O'Dell Coates
Assistant Vice President

Escoto Thomas
Assistant Secretary

Landscape Irrigation

One of the most important steps in maintaining a healthy landscape is effective irrigation. A properly watered lawn and garden is more resistant to pests and other lawn problems. However, much of the water used to maintain our landscapes is wasted through inefficient watering techniques. By developing a water-efficient lawn and garden, you can maintain a healthy and beautiful yard that benefits the environment.

Water-Efficient Landscapes

A water-efficient landscape starts with plant selection. Choosing plants adapted to the area will help make your landscape both beautiful and water-efficient. Plants native to your area typically require less maintenance and smaller amounts of pesticides, fertilizers, and supplemental water. Keep in mind, though, that newly established landscaping will require more water than an established area. Adjust your watering schedule according to the needs of your plants.*

Watering Mistakes

Much of the water applied to lawns and gardens never gets absorbed by the plants. Common ways that water is wasted include:

Runoff. Applying water too rapidly causes runoff, because grass and plants can only absorb so much water at a time. When runoff occurs, soil, fertilizers, and pesticides can be carried to nearby streams.

Evaporation. Watering in the middle of the day or using a sprinkler that sprays a fine mist causes much of the water you apply to be lost through evaporation. Plants don't have enough time to absorb the water before it is evaporated by the sun.

Underwatering. Watering too little is wasteful because it does little to alleviate any drought stress that the plants may have.

Overwatering. Applying too much or too often causes the greatest waste of water. In addition to overwatering the plant, excessive irrigation can leach nutrients deep into the soil away from plant roots, which increases the chances of runoff pollution.

waterdistrict25.com

10347 Clodine Road
Richmond, TX 77407

281-277-0129



C O U N T Y
Municipal Utility District No. 25

WATER CONSERVATION AND CONSUMER EDUCATION:

The Corner Stone Of A Successful Water Conservation Program

Water conservation is critical if we are to ensure an ample supply for future generations. A key component of water conservation is consumer education. The end user must implement good water use practices or water conservation does not occur. One part of the District’s consumer education includes our partnership with Marcario Garcia Middle School. The District and Garcia Middle school hold an annual event, the Calendar Contest, to be sure our youngest consumers understand the importance of saving water and protecting the public water ways via our storm drains. Based on the drawings provided by the children, we are pleased to say our children have a unique and thorough understanding of what must be accomplished to save water for the future.

We are pleased to announce the results of this year’s calendar contest:

Winners and Honorable Mentions of the Fort Bend County MUD No.25 2016 Calendar Competition!



Coverpage	Dacey Hoh	July	Axzey Mojica
January	Rahimeen Khan	August	Evelyn Carreno
February	Arfa Momin	September	Andrea Parada
March	Hassan Hatham	October	Michelle Cruz
April	Britney Le	November.....	Nathyn Martinez
May.....	Aim Varma	December	Bonnie Huynh
June	Insha Ali		

Honorable Mention

Kimmy Roll	Ayaan Quadri
Mariajose Wences	Razin Khoja
Ethan McNew	Nnenna Okwuegbu
Cindy Le	Joanna Ibrahim
Aminah Minhas	Minhal Zaidi
Judith Vazquez	Syed Maisum
Mackenzie Cleveland	Sarosh Noorani
Zahra Sheikh	Allison Nguyen
Michael Nguyen	Tristan Nix
	Calvin Chau

Judges, Guest Speaker and Teacher Coordinator

Judge Beth Murany: President, Fort Bend County MUD No.25

Judge Mary Moore-Hayes: Executive Director, Human Resources, Fort Bend County MUD No.25

Judge Chris McBrayer: IT Director, Fort Bend County MUD No.25

Guest Speaker Steve Kim: Executive General Manager – Fort Bend County MUD No.25

Teacher-coordinator Richard Battenfield: 6th Grade Art Teacher, Macario Garcia Middle School

A very special thank you to Fabiola Padron, Executive Administrative Manager, Risk Management and Regulatory Compliance for the District, who managed to bring a plethora of pieces together to make sure the event was properly executed; to Annemarie Duplantis, Executive Administrative Assistant who supported Fabiola’s efforts throughout the process; Richard Battenfield and all the staff at Garcia Middle School for the hard work and effort to ensure the Calendar Contest was a win-win for all involved. Finally, thank you to all the children who participated and shared ideas regarding how to ensure a safe and ample water supply for the future.

Good Watering Techniques

The key to watering lawns is to apply water infrequently, yet thoroughly. This creates a deep, well-rooted lawn that efficiently uses the water that is stored in the soil. To know when to water your lawn, simply observe the grass. Wilting and discoloration are signs of water stress. At the first sign of wilting, you have 24 to 48 hours before damage occurs.

To water properly, apply 1 inch of water to the lawn as rapidly as possible without runoff. An easy way to measure your application of water is to place a 6-ounce tuna can on your lawn. When the can is full, you have applied enough water.

If you start to notice runoff before the can is full, turn off the water. Then, wait for approximately one hour to allow the grass to absorb the water, turn the



water on again, and wait for the tuna can to fill.

Water early in the morning, before 10 a.m. Avoid watering from mid-morning to late afternoon, when you can lose one-third of your water to evaporation. Also avoid watering in the evening, because lawns and plants that are left wet overnight are more prone to disease.

COMMUNITY HEARTLINES UPDATE

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

WATER IS LIFE! However, water is not the only item needed to sustain life and that is why the District, as your water provider, initiated several socially responsible programs that will make life better for the residents in our community. Partnering with the District for our **COMMUNITY HEARTLINE** projects – things that will make you feel just a little bit better – by helping others who may not be able to help themselves....by making a difference where you live...for your family and neighbors.

Community Food Drive: The District extends a heartfelt “Thank you” to all our residents for ensuring the semiannual food drive was a huge success. The East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry, with your support, provides nutritious meals to thousands of families who rely on your generous donations. Subdivisions who gave generously to help those in need include:

- Orchard Lakes Estates 67 bags of food donated
- Pheasant Creek 48 bags of food donated
- Summerfield 35 bags of food donated
- Stratford Park 35 bags of food donated

- Old Orchard 25 bags of food donated
- Park Point 12 bags of food donated
- Chelsea Harbor 10 bags of food donated
- Oak Lake Court 3 bags of food donated
- Windsor Estates 1 bag of food donated

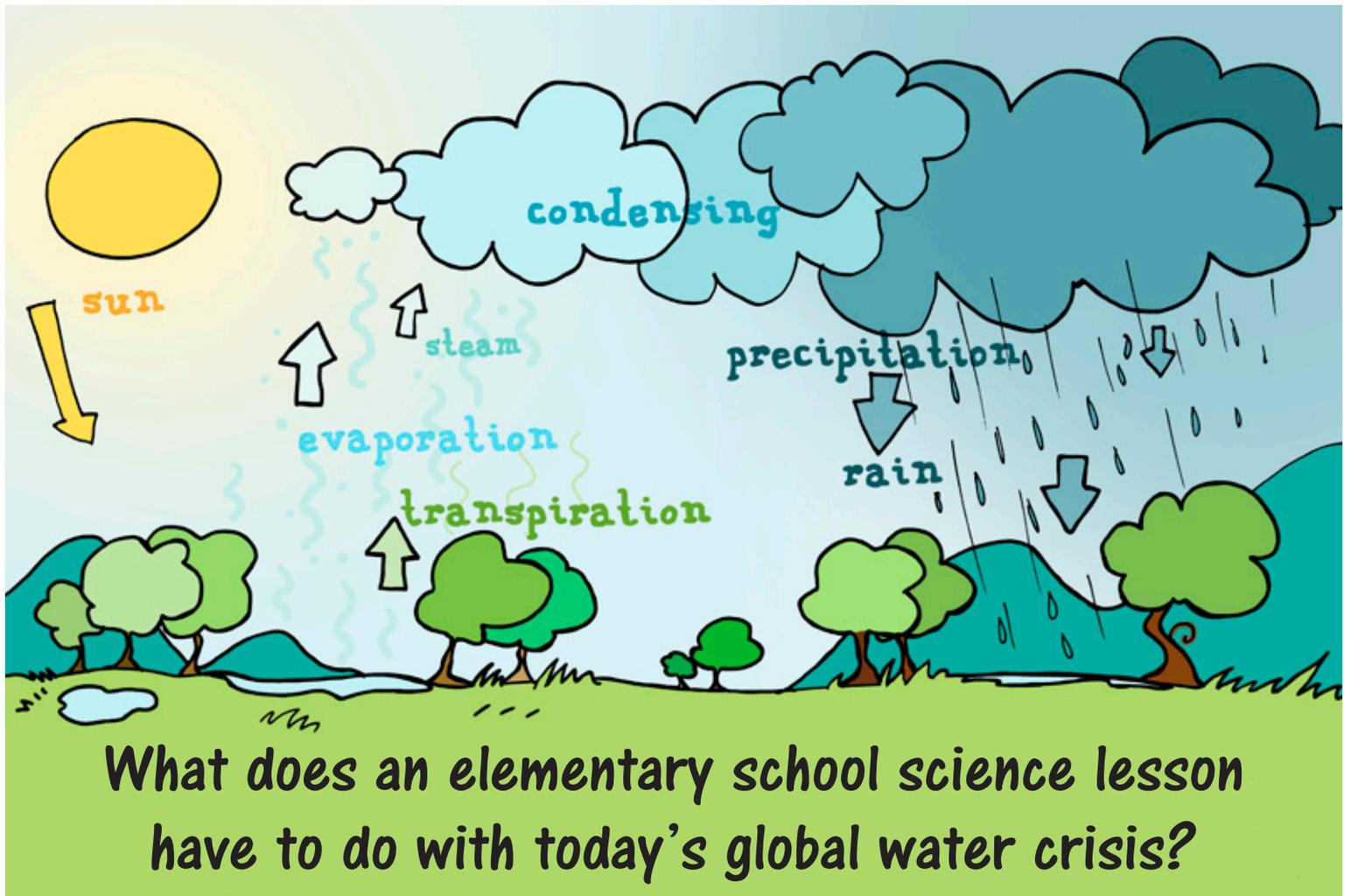
The next food drive is scheduled for April-May, 2016, but we can’t do it without you! Please give what you can and let’s continue to help out families in need!

Voluntary Donations: Did you know you could add a voluntary donation, when you pay your water bill, which is deposited in a separate fund, with the East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry, to help neighbors experiencing unexpected difficulties, pay their water bills? Additionally, if you are the neighbor who needs help, contact the East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry, whose only goal is to help people in need ☺

The Tax Rate Has Been Reduced!

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the District’s 2015 tax rate has been reduced. Hence, while growth can be a challenging and even daunting prospect, the vision of our Board of Directors, who made the decision long ago to manage growth in our District, is paying big dividends to the residents in the form of a stabilized levied tax rate per \$100.00 of valuation.





What does an elementary school science lesson have to do with today's global water crisis?

Most of us learned about the **hydrological or water cycle** by the time we were in the fourth grade. It is a pretty important science lesson, but a lot of years might have passed since then, so here's a recap...

The water cycle has no particular starting point, so let's begin with the oceans, since that is where most of Earth's water exists. The sun -- the energy behind the water cycle -- heats up the earth's surface water. Some **evaporates** or vaporizes into the air. Rising air currents carry the vapor up into the atmosphere, along with water from **evapotranspiration**, which comes from plants and the soil. The vapor rises into the air where cooler temperatures **condense** it into clouds. Air currents move clouds around the globe, cloud particles collide, and then fall out of the sky as **precipitation** -- rain, sleet or snow. Some of the snow can accumulate as ice caps and glaciers, storing frozen water for thousands of years. Most precipitation falls back into the oceans or onto land, where, thanks to gravity, the precipitation flows over the ground as **surface runoff**. Some of the runoff finds its way to rivers, which ultimately flow to the oceans. Runoff and groundwater seepage accumulate and are **stored** as freshwater in lakes, rivers and streams. The rest of the runoff soaks or **infiltrates** into the ground and replenishes aquifers (saturated subsurface rock), which store huge amounts of freshwater for long periods of time. Yet more groundwater is absorbed by plant roots and ends up as **evapotranspiration** from the leaves. All of this water keeps moving and the cycle continues endlessly.

Now that we're reminded about how the water cycle works, here are some disturbing facts: Less than 1 percent of all the freshwater is readily accessible for human use. In the 20th century, the world's population tripled, but the use of water increased sixfold. By the middle of this century, there will be an additional 3 billion people on our planet. One in five people already do not have access to safe drinking water. Groundwater depletion is a global condition. At least 2 billion people rely on groundwater as their primary water source, and much of this water comes from aquifers that are increasingly at risk in the coming decades. Think of this as a lot of people drinking from straws in the same glass of water...sooner or later the glass will be empty.

Are you getting the picture? Sure, there may be plenty of water on the planet, but it isn't always where people need it most. Isn't it time to stop taking our finite water resources for granted? Will you and your family make a commitment to use water more efficiently?

Water...we can do so much more with less!

HOW MUCH WATER DOES MY TEXAS LAWN NEED?

Great question. Unfortunately, there is no single simple answer! There are many variables -- the season, type of turfgrass, the quality of the soil, recent rainfall, and even the height of the grass itself.

Texas A&M research scientists and turfgrass specialists -- like Dr. Richard White -- have been focusing on these questions as well as issues associated with water conservation, irrigation scheduling, and water quality preservation for decades. Their research is paying off with some solid advice for homeowners about how they can do a better job with water management. One of the most valuable recommendations has to do with the method used to apply the water. If folks would use the *cycle and soak method for irrigating*, they would capture more water in the soil, avoid unnecessary runoff into the gutter or street, and produce better turf and healthier plants in landscaped areas.

According to Dr. White, cycle and soak isn't accomplished by setting the controller to come on all at once for 20 to 30 minutes. Their research demonstrates that doing it that way will waste or lose 30 to 40 percent of the water applied. Texas has a variety of soils that range from sandy to clay textures, but most urban lawns are on clay textured soils. They may be fertile, but they have very small pore spaces and are slow to accept water. Technically, that means that infiltration rates are well below one-tenth of an inch per hour.

Set the controller to turn the sprinklers on for a brief period (5 to 6 minutes) and off for about an hour to allow the water to thoroughly soak into the soil, then have it come on again for another 5 to 6 minutes. White says there might be a small amount of runoff using this method, but nothing like what can occur with the typical 20-minute cycle.

How efficient your watering will be is another factor to avoid wasting water. Here are some suggestions.

Helpful Tips...

- ◆ Restrict watering to early morning, around 4:30 a.m. before the household's water rush hour and before the sun can evaporate the sprinklers' distribution.
- ◆ Avoid cutting grass too short; longer grass loses water more slowly and helps to keep the soil moist.
- ◆ Add mulch to landscaped areas to retain moisture.
- ◆ Kill the thirsty weeds that steal precious water from grass roots. Deep roots grow healthier turfgrass.
- ◆ Install a rain gauge or "smart" controller on your irrigation system to prevent it from coming on during or after a recent rain.

Visit online (www.SaveWaterTexas.org) for more helpful, water-sparing irrigation tips. ■



"A typical landscaped yard consists of lawn area and ornamental plants. If watered properly, homeowners can see the beauty, pocket some green, and save some water..."

– Dr. Richard White,

Texas AgriLife Research turfgrass management scientist, College Station, TX

Source: Based in part on an AgriLife TODAY article, "Water, rest, water, save" by Kay Ledbetter.

BILLING CHAT LINE

Helpful Hints to Improve Your Bill Paying Experience

1. Call the office to enroll in E-Notification! Once enrolled, you receive an e-mail notification when the new bill is available for viewing online. **NOTE: Please update your information if your email address changes!**
2. You have more options for paying your bill than ever before! Pay Online, Pay by Phone, Pay at the District Office, Place your payment in the drop box located inside the Pheasant Creek Shell Station, Pay your bill at the Fiesta Grocery Store at Hwy. 6 and Bellaire, Enroll in ACH payment option, Pay by Debit or Credit Cards or by Electronic Check.
3. **IMPORTANT REMINDER:** Residents using bank online payments need to know that the bank cuts a check and sends the payment as a paper check via regular postal mail delivery to our office. Allow up to ten days for delivery if you use online banking services because bank online payments ARE NOT ACH TRANSFERS.
4. The District mails bills monthly. Your Water bill payment is due on the 24th of every month. HOWEVER, if you do not receive your bill, call us! We are happy to send a copy of your bill or you can view your bill online at <http://www.waterdistrict25.com>. Have a problem with your water bill? Call us! We are here to help!
5. Want a quick way to earn credits to your monthly bill? Participate in one of the Water Conservation Rebate options offered by the District.

EARN A ONE-TIME CREDIT TO YOUR BILL!

(1) Replace a High-Use Toilet with a High Efficiency or LOW-FLOW Toilet (HET) or install a Water Smart Irrigation system or Rain Water Harvesting system at your residence within the District. (2) Schedule an appointment for one of the District's licensed Inspectors to visit your residence to verify replacement of HIGH USE TOILET with HIGH EFFICIENCY or LOW FLOW TOILET installation. District personnel will photograph old toilet and new toilet or installation of Smart Irrigation or Rain Water Harvesting system, as part of the verification process. (3) Provide a copy of proof of purchase and installation. Once all three steps are complete, and the paperwork is submitted to the District's Billing office, residents earn a one-time maximum credit on water bills as described below:

INSTALLATION OF/ CONVERSION TO SMART IRRIGATION SYSTEM OR INSTALLATION RAINWATER HARVESTING SYSTEMS:

One time credit of \$100.00 (one hundred dollars) on your water bill **FOR HIGH EFFICIENCY OR LOW FLOW TOILET SYSTEMS***: One time credit of \$100.00 (one hundred dollars) for first toilet, \$75.00

credit (seventy five dollars) for second toilet and \$50.00 (fifty dollars) for all subsequent toilets*

For information on High Efficiency or Low Flow Toilets, visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/toilets.html>. *Rebates applied to your water bill.

II. INSTALL LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEADS AT NO COST TO RESIDENTS (LIMITED TO HOMES OWNED WITHIN THE DISTRICT).

The District will provide two (2) high quality low flow showerheads to all residential customers at no cost to the customer. All you have to do to obtain the showerheads is complete the order form on the District's website (www.waterdistrict25.com), and click on the Low-Flow Showerhead Order Form under the header Water Conservation (allow 3-6 weeks for availability.) For information on Low-Flow Showerheads, visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/showerheads.html>

III. ENROLL IN THE WATER SAVINGS REBATE PROGRAM

District customers have the opportunity to enroll in a voluntary program that offers a rebate, in the form of a credit to your water bill, designed to reward our customers for water conservation. To Enroll:

- Contact the District Billing Office and agree to participate in the program for one year (365-day period, calculated from the date the resident joins the program).
- Billing staff will compare the resident's current water usage (gallons used) to water usage for the same time in the previous year for this one-year period.
- Every 6 months, in the defined 12 month period, that the customer uses less water (measured in total gallons used) compared to the water used for the same period in the previous year, the resident will receive a 10% rebate in the form of a credit to their water bill (based on current year's usage with a maximum credit of \$75.00 per account.) For the months in the current billing cycle, when total gallons used equals or exceeds amounts used compared to the same period in the previous year, no credit will be issued.
- The conservation rebate program ends 365-days from the date the resident joins. The resident must voluntarily sign up for a new one year commitment to earn further rebates.
- Call to sign up today, or go to the District's website, www.waterdistrict25.com, click on the Water Conservation Registration form, and email to our office.

Ft. Bend County MUD #25 Kids Page



By the time most of us finish grade school, we've heard that "mighty oaks from little acorns grow" -- usually to remind us that even very large things in life can start out very small. On the topic of mighty trees....here's a question that you'll really have to stop and think about. Ready?

When you see a big, tall, heavy, mature tree, do you ever wonder where its *mass* -- its thick trunk, its branches, its canopy of leaves -- came from? Trees are some of the largest organisms on our planet, but they start out as a seed, right? So, where does the wood and bark and limbs -- the tree's substance -- originate?

Many people guess that trees come from the soil, but upon further thought, that answer doesn't actually work. Many trees have massive roots that obviously take something from the soil. Some say that trees even look and feel solid like dirt. But why doesn't the soil around trees recede as the tree grows if that's the source of the large plant's mass?

Puzzled? If it makes you feel any better, scientists have been trying to answer the question about where trees get their mass since the early 1600's. One research project back then lasted over 5 years and involved measuring the amount of soil in a container over the period of time the tree "grew", and comparing it to what the tree itself weighed. The scientist discovered that even though the tree increased in size, it "took" only a very tiny portion of soil content over the years to sustain it.

So what else could contribute to a tree's growth? It's at this point when folks suggest it must

be water from rain that is absorbed by the plant. Every living thing needs water to survive, so this must be at least part of the answer, and of course it is! And so is sunlight, right?

Let's introduce the word *photosynthesis*; we learned about that in elementary school, too. Sunlight is the energy that converts CO_2 (carbon-dioxide) from the air into O_2 (oxygen) and some H_2O (water). Plants *breathe in* carbon dioxide and *breathe out* oxygen -- for humans to breathe in and breathe out carbon dioxide that plants need. Very convenient. This *symbiotic* (mutually beneficial) relationship helps keep us alive! But sunlight energy is not "matter".

Back to the "mass" issue. What is the missing ingredient? It surprises almost everyone to discover that 95 percent of a tree actually comes from carbon dioxide. That means that trees are largely made up of air! That is exactly correct, according to **Richard P. Feynman**, who shared the 1965 Nobel Prize in Physics. "People look at a tree and think it comes out of the ground. The substance of a tree is carbon. But if you ask where does the *substance* of the tree come from, you discover trees come out of the air!"

How in the world did those heavy, branchy, giant, hard, bark-covered lifeforms get their substance from the AIR? Even Feynman said that sounds more like "sorcery than science." But here is the answer. Trees get their mass from air and water. They "eat" the air -- that is done by (literally) chomping down on airborne carbon dioxide. The process uses the sunshine to pull the carbon dioxide atoms apart, getting rid of the oxygen -- which it breathes out or exhales back into the air -- and what is left is the carbon and water -- the ingredients needed to make the substance of the tree. Trees take up water out of the ground -- which got there from the air as rain. So...final answer...trees do indeed get their substance from the air. ♠



THE OPERATOR'S CORNER

PROTECTING THE WATER SUPPLY! Pools and/or sprinkler systems are required, by District statutes, to have a backflow device installed and, once installed, the device must be inspected annually by one of the District's operator's to ensure the device meets state regulations and is properly installed.

CALL TOLL FREE 1-866-414-9950 to report Illegal Storm Sewer Dumping

Speaking of Storm Water Drainage systems, residents play a large role in ensuring the storm drains remain clear. How? Simple ways you can help ensure drains remain clear and functional include:

- ❖ Mulch-mow grass. Sweep up and dispose of any grass clippings on paved surfaces. Do Not Dispose of grass clippings in storm drains!
 - ❖ Avoid broadcast spraying of pesticides that could enter storm water inlets.
 - ❖ Avoid spraying pesticides or fertilizers within 50 feet of any storm drainage structure (unless stricter limits apply).
 - ❖ Follow all manufacturers' recommendations for mixing, applying, cleaning-up, storage and handling of pesticides and fertilizers.
 - ❖ Apply wastewater from rinsing pesticide containers on targeted pests or use it to dilute the next batch.
 - ❖ Maintain sprinkler systems at rates that do not exceed the infiltration rate of the soil. Moisture sensors are recommended to minimize irrigation.
 - ❖ Do Not Empty or Dump household paints, engine oil, mop water, gasoline or diesel or any other chemicals into storm drains.
- ❖ Our pets need exercise too, but please, **SCOOP THAT POOP**. As a courtesy to your neighbors and the environment, take a "pick up bag" with you when walking your dog. You don't want doggie droppings ultimately contaminating your public waterways or causing blockage in the storm drains.

Storm drains are created for rainwater and snowmelt drainage. When storm drains are clogged with other items, proper drainage is impaired. Additionally, pollutants discharged directly into storm drains end up in our rivers and streams through the storm drains located on streets and in parking lots. Any pollutants entering these drains flows untreated to the water bodies we use for drinking water, swimming, and fishing, poisoning the supplies needed to sustain life. Do your part; protect the storm drains!

