

# WATERWORKS



Provided as a public service for our customers and neighbors

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## REBATE OPPORTUNITY EXTENDED!

The District remains committed to preserving ground water sources and offering savings to our customers. Thus, the District is extending the opportunity to join programs that accomplish both objectives!



### How Residents Earn Rebates:

#### I. 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 at your residence within the District, (2) make an appointment for one of the District's 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 as part of the verification process*), and (3) provide a copy of proof of purchase. 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*:

#### FOR IRRIGATION SYSTEMS:

- \$100.00 (one hundred dollars) on your water bill if completed by 01/01/2013.
- \$75.00 (seventy five dollars) on your water bill if completed by 01/01/2013.
- \$50.00 (fifty dollars) on your water bill if completed by 01/01/2013.

#### FOR HIGH EFFICIENCY OR LOW FLOW TOILET SYSTEMS\*:

- \*\$100.00 (one hundred dollars) for first toilet; if completed by 01/01/2013;
- \$75.00 (seventy five dollars) for second toilet; if completed by 01/01/2013;
- and \$50.00 (fifty dollars) for all subsequent toilets if completed by 01/01/2013.

For more information on High Efficiency or Low Flow Toilets, visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/toilets.html>

\*Rebates applied to your water bill.

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## **II. INSTALL LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEADS AT NO COST TO RESIDENTS:**



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](http://www.waterdistrict25.com)), and click on the Low-Flow Showerhead Order Form under the header Water Conservation on the left side of the screen (allow 3-6 weeks for availability.) For more 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 to be calculated from the date the resident joins the program).
- Billing 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 [seventy-five dollars] 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 program. 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](http://www.waterdistrict25.com), click on the Water Conservation Registration form, complete the form and click the button to email to our office (or print and drop in one of two payment boxes located outside the District's office or in the Pheasant Creek Shell Station).

## **COMMUNITY HEARTLINES UPDATE**



Neighbors helping neighbors is the cornerstone of the District's Community Heartlines program. The life sustaining programs include quarterly blood drives and bi-annual food drives.

1. The recent Spring Food Drive was, again, a HUGE success and we want to extend a warm thank you to everyone who participated ☺ Food collection results by subdivision are as follows:

1st Place: Stratford Park  
2nd Place: Orchard Lakes Estates  
3rd Place: Summerfield

2. The District is now partnering with Garcia Middle School for quarterly blood drives, which resulted in the highest number of donations ever for the blood drive held in May 2012. The next blood drive is scheduled for this fall.

# WATER CONSERVATION

Water conservation is necessary to ensure an adequate supply of drinking water for the future. Hence, water conservation is everyone's responsibility. How can you help? The following are some helpful tips for reducing water use:

- Maintaining healthy, attractive lawns and landscape areas requires much less water than you think. Aim for one or two waterings a week (if it doesn't rain and if the grass needs it) and an inch of water, which will help the turf grow deep roots and not be as "thirsty" during dry periods. Set the system to complete watering cycles before 4 am to reduce evaporation loss and avoid interference with weekday morning "water rush hours," when families need water for starting the day.
- Invest in a soaker hose no longer than 100 feet, Place between your shrubs and trees. Attach a timer to the closest outdoor faucet and connect the two with your garden hose. Turn on to seeping -- not spraying -- strength and leave on until an 8-inch screwdriver goes easily into the earth to a depth of 6-8 inches, which will indicate how long to leave hose on and can program the timer to deep water once a week. For trees older than 3 years not planted alone, use the garden hose about once a week. Place the hose midway between the trunk and the end of the canopy, water slowly and deeply, avoiding any runoff. Move the hose around the tree until every quadrant has been soaked. Consider a Tregator, which is a slow release bag of water that will water the tree over a 5-9 hour period.
- Don't forget to mulch! The more you mulch, the better chance your plants will survive extended dry periods. Garden beds with perennials and annuals can use a soaker hose system too! Adding mulch over the soaker hose and around the shrubs and tree drip line helps conserve moisture.
- St. Augustine grass needs  $\frac{3}{4}$  to one inch of water per week to stay green. Water long enough to dampen the dirt to a depth of 6 inches (use that screwdriver again to check moisture penetration). Avoid "scalping" the lawn -- when St. Augustine is kept at about 3 inches, the grass can provide shade for its own roots.
- Native plants, especially Texas Superstars and drought-tolerant greenery, will do the most to minimize landscape watering needs. Plant annuals in seasonal containers, and use as an attractive focal point for your yard. Container plants can easily be sustained by inexpensive drip irrigation options available at neighborhood nurseries or a do-it-yourself store.
- Find and fix leaks! A leaking faucet can waste up to 100 gallons a day! Saving water is impossible as long as faucets, toilets and showers are leaking so if you find a leak FIX IT!
- Two thirds of home water use is for toilet flushing and bathing. Don't use toilets as waste baskets and shorten shower by 5 minutes to save 25 gallons each time you bathe! Additionally, if you prefer a bath, consider filling the tub half full and save 10-15 gallons. Never allow water to go down a drain that can be used for something else, such as watering plants. Commit to save 20 gallons of water every day.



## BILLING CHAT LINE

**Helpful hints from the Billing Department 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.
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 at the District office or 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. 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 [www.waterdistrict25.com](http://www.waterdistrict25.com)
4. Want a quick way to earn credits to your monthly bill? Participate in one of the Water Conservation options offered by the District (view options on the District website, call our office for details or review items listed at start of this newsletter)

## THE OPERATOR'S CORNER



- Lift Station 9 is complete and now online ☺
- The construction of the new wastewater treatment plant No. 2 is 87% complete and should be online by the end of this year ☺
- The recent rainfall event saw rising water in many subdivisions. The District's storm water drainage system is fully operational and working as designed. According to Justin Ring, Engineer for the District, "Mark Vogler with Fort Bend County Drainage District (FBCDD) clarified the situation and confirmed that the only cleaning out that was performed by Fort Bend County after the rain event was on Oyster Creek, not Red Gully.

There were no blockages in Red Gully. The main culprit was the spillway that was built to relieve flooding on Oyster Creek, which was overgrown with vegetation that did not allow the spillway to perform as designed. FBCDD is working with Sugar Land to make sure that recent problem does not happen again."

- 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

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# Take the 10 Gallon Water Conservation Challenge!

## Make a commitment to use water more efficiently!

Water plays an important role in our lives...in fact, no living thing can survive without it! We can all learn to use water wisely. If each of us used **just 10 gallons less** each day, think of how much water we could save by the end of a week! or a month! or a year! It is amazing how fast the savings will add up!



## Things to do...

1. Proclaim a Water Conservation month.
2. Have a slogan contest and make posters to put up around the school.
3. Hold a Water Conservation Rally and perform skits to show how to save water.
4. Create Water Conservation bookmarks for your parents with tips on conserving.
5. Create a calendar from students' water conservation drawings.
6. Take the 10 gallon savings pledge!

- Take shorter showers = 4 gallons per minute
- Ask an adult about fixing a leaky faucet or "running" toilet = 5 to 200 gallons a day
- Use a broom instead of a water hose to clean the driveway and sidewalks = 9 gallons per minute
- Ask an adult to adjust the irrigation system controller to water only lawn and plant areas, not driveways, streets or sidewalks.
- Remind an adult to install water-saving sprinklers and a rain sensor to prevent them from coming on in the rain.
- Only run the dishwasher with a full load = 12 gallons per load
- Wait for a full load before running the washing machine = up to 43 gallons per load
- Turn off the faucet while brushing teeth = 4 gallons per minute.

**See how easy it will be to save 10 gallons a day!**

Source: [www.SaveWaterTexas.com](http://www.SaveWaterTexas.com)

## TOO MUCH...OR TOO LITTLE... RAINFALL CAN BE A PROBLEM!

One of the key lessons we learned during this past year of drought is that clean water is important to all of us; for our health and well-being, and to sustain a healthy economy, too. Not only does water supply a habitat for marine life, but clean water provides recreational opportunities, drinking water for our homes, businesses and manufacturing, and even provides the means to generate electricity. We also learned that old Ben Franklin was right when he warned that we wouldn't "know the worth of water until the well ran dry." During the drought this past year, we stopped taking an adequate supply of clean water for granted, and we paid more attention to things that impact our water resources.

### *Trouble in the streets...*

What do motor oil, lawn fertilizers, cigarette butts, grass clippings and pet waste all have in common? All contribute to what the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) warns is the number one threat to our drinking water supplies... Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS). Today, the primary source of oil pollution in North America's coastal waters isn't leaking oil tankers or oil rigs, but can be tracked back to countless oil leaks from the more than 235 million cars currently on the road. Drip, drop...cars make daily oil deposits on roadways, parking lots and driveways and neighborhood streets. Stormwater falls on hard surfaces like roads, roofs, driveways and parking lots during rainfall. Since rainwater cannot seep into the ground, water runs off to lower areas, carrying globs and sheens of oil from paved surfaces into the storm drains...on to creeks and streams...then into bays and estuaries...and finally into the Gulf of Mexico.

### *Addressing a serious problem...*

Here are some more statistics about this sneaky kind of water pollution that might surprise you. Illegal dumping of chemicals and toxic waste accounts for less than ten percent. Forty percent of water pollution originates with automotive fluids washing off paved surfaces from normal rainfall and cleaning activities.

Twenty five years ago, most of the "point-source" pollution -- the kind where the source was easily identified -- was virtually eliminated when industries and wastewater treatment



facilities cleaned up their discharge to public waters to comply with the Clean Water Act or face crippling fines.

According to Bruce Parker, President of the West Harris County Regional Water Authority, “Today, the largest source of water pollution comes from impervious surfaces -- city streets, parking lots and neighborhoods -- where a veritable cocktail of toxic deposits is swept along by rainwater runoff that trickles down into the streets, and streams along gutters to the nearest storm drain. Pollutants rush into creeks, rivers, water reservoirs, and lakes where pollution can harm fish and wildlife, kill native vegetation, negatively impact recreational waterways, and even contaminate sources of our drinking water.”

“Here’s an idea of the impact a hard surface makes,” Parker continued. “Consider the difference between one inch of rain falling onto a meadow and the same amount falling onto a parking lot. The parking lot sheds 16 times the amount of water that a meadow does!”

### ***Making informed choices...***

So, what can be done to help arrest this growing threat to our water supplies? Actually, quite a bit...and some of the measures help solve more than one problem and are aesthetically pleasing, as well! Perhaps the most important thing we can do is to learn about NPSP and do whatever we can to stop pollution. This is not as difficult as one might assume and one simple ‘message’ sums it up: **ONLY RAIN IN THE DRAIN!** What goes into the storm drains ends up -- untreated -- in our lakes, rivers and streams. So, good common sense dictates that we recycle or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals, as well as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, and -- most especially -- used motor oil.

Another persistent problem is the improper disposal of pet waste. Americans own 75 million dogs and sadly, an estimated 40 percent of pet owners don’t clean up their dogs’ “deposits” at home or when out for a walk. Thanks to major public information campaigns about the impact of ‘pet poop’ on local streams and waterways, people are getting the message from homeowner associations

and parks that if their dog makes a deposit in a public place, the owner has a responsibility to scoop the poop and deposit it in the trash or in receptacles provided.



There is growing interest in residential “sustainable infrastructure techniques”. The techniques involve substituting alternatives to areas traditionally covered by nonporous surfaces. Grasses and natural ground cover, for example, can be attractive and practical substitutes for paved driveways, walkways, and patios.

Consider constructing wooden decks, gravel or brick paths, and rock gardens to keep the natural ground cover intact and allow rainwater to slowly seep into the ground which acts as a natural filtering process and reduces harmful water quality impact from rainfall that carries chemicals and pollutants into storm sewers and retention ponds, and eventually into nearby streams and lakes. Creating a rain garden in a shallow depression in the yard -- planted with native flowers and grasses -- can also make good use of rainwater runoff. 💧



# What is SUSTAINABILITY and How Does it Affect YOU?



Sometimes new words come into our vocabulary...or old words take on a new meaning – which is the case with SUSTAINABILITY. The dictionary says that the root word, sustain, means to last or endure. That’s simple enough. So, sustainability, then is the ability to continue or survive.

Today, the word is increasingly used to refer to what will be required for planet Earth to sustain all of its resources to be able to provide a home for humans and animals and plants...forever. A lot of changes have occurred over the past 100 years that have impacted our environment – natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, hurricanes and floods; man-made and natural air and water pollution; and depletion of some of our natural resources like groundwater. People are searching for sustainable solutions to problems, which means finding solutions that work well now and into the future for the longterm.

One of the important things to think about is where the products and services you buy or use come from. Where do the “leftovers” from the items go? What impact does your use of the products or services have on our overall environment? On other humans and animals and plants? Can the products be recycled or reused? And, do you take the time to make recycling a habit?

When you think about the important issues, consider the resources that are used to manufacture things you use. Are these resources renewable or non-renewable? Renewable resources are ones that can be restored or regenerated naturally as fast or faster than used.

Many business leaders have decided that sustainability matters very much, and have chosen not to use so much extra packaging on their products that ends up in landfills. The production of energy uses both renewable and non-renewable resources, and what goes around comes around, so to speak. We used to rely on windmills to bring water to the surface for use by settlers and animals during the frontier days. Today, giant turbines are catching the wind to produce millions of kilowatt hours of electricity.

And just about everywhere on our planet, people are realizing that our precious water resources are not being replaced as fast as we are using them. We need to balance meeting the water needs of current and future users while protecting and sustaining the natural systems that provide water.

People of all ages can help change wasteful habits and behaviors when it comes to water use. Remember, the water we conserve today can serve us tomorrow! ■

# Have you considered a Rain Garden?

by Denise Miller

It's hard to think about flooding in the midst of a record-breaking Texas drought. However, residents of Harris County know that rains will come and the downpour may be torrential.

Fortunately, many local properties are protected by the MUD drainage systems that channel water into local retention ponds and bayous. However, homeowners often wrestle with specific areas that drain slowly or receive excessive runoff from surrounding slopes or neighboring property. Underlying clay soils, slow water infiltration, and the resulting standing water provide mosquito breeding areas and kill residential lawn grasses. Contouring your property or installing drains increases runoff, or installing a rain garden is a green solution that may be simpler and less expensive.

A rain garden acts as a biological sponge to soak up excess water which is then held by soil and water-loving plants. A properly placed rain garden can reduce erosion and turn a disadvantage into a beautiful home asset. Incorporating native plants that tolerate wet soil, turns an unsightly mud hole into a beautiful Texas habitat. Numerous native plants are well-suited to our climate and support beneficial insects and birds.

Rain gardens are sometimes confused with ponds. However, rain gardens only contain standing surface water for as little as 24-48 hours until the moisture infiltrates the soil. In contrast, ponds contain standing water and require a liner, as well as water aeration and circulation systems. Generally, ponds also require more careful management than do rain gardens.

## Survey Your Site

Before installing a rain garden, take time to understand your yard's drainage patterns. Some questions to ask include:

- Is water draining from a gentle slope and accumulating near the house foundation?
- Does a low spot only become soggy during the spring and fall but remain damp or dry during the rest of the year?
- Is the water affecting a deck, foundation, or fence line?

The answers to the questions will help you



decide where to position your garden site and whether water needs to be channeled away from structures.

## Plants for Rain Gardening

A wide range of plants are suitable for rain gardens. A garden contour with gradually sloping sides and a deep center or end will accommodate a range of plants that tolerate both wet and dry conditions as well as those that really love wet feet. Estimate the amount of sun the site will receive during different seasons, and finally, consider going native. Butterflies, hummingbirds, and beneficial insects will thrive in a well-planned rain garden full of native Texas plants.

On the upper Gulf Coast, consider incorporating some of the following in your plan:

- Grasses: inland sea oats, bluestem, Gulf Muhly
- Trees: pawpaw, possumhaw, southern wax myrtle.
- Wildflowers: Louisiana iris, Turk's Cap, blue mist flower,
- Shrubs: American beautyberry, Flame acanthus, buttonbush

## Additional Resources

[www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org) Searchable plant data base. Specify water, sun, and bloom requirements to customize your plan.

<http://harris.agrilife.org/files/2011/05/raingardens.pdf>. Agrilife fact sheet includes a detailed list of recommended trees, shrubs, and grasses, and wildflowers for wet areas. 💧

*Denise Miller is a science writer and educator who lives in Cypress, Texas.*

## Irrigation Research Project Results...

# HOW MUCH WATER IS ENOUGH FOR MY TEXAS LAWN?

An important, locally funded research project was initiated at the Texas A&M Turf Grass Research Site. This ongoing project has produced information about the irrigation needs of various turf grasses to help answer residents' questions about "how much water"...and "how long should a system run."

One of the most frequent questions homeowners ask about maintaining their lawns is, "How much water is enough?" One response has been that an inch of water a week -- by rainfall or irrigation -- is the right amount. Others argue that even that is more than is really needed to sustain Texas turf.

Local research – obtained through a series of residential irrigation system evaluations – demonstrated unequivocally that homeowners over-water their grass; in fact, the evaluations revealed that most residential irrigation systems are set to run 3 days a week...or more. When asked, homeowners explained they believe that their irrigation systems must run more than three days a week in order to sustain the desired landscape. This response validated the need for research-based irrigation usage facts upon which to base "efficient use" messages and consumer outreach efforts.

Subsequently, a Task Force was created to acquire critical data that would be consistent and accurate enough to support irrigation usage recommendations by water suppliers. The TAMU Soil and Crop Science Department's Turfgrass Research Facility Development Committee, selected as the research site, provided six 50' x 50' test plots, and another area of approximately 30' x 500' for Task Force research and consumer education about irrigation options for a typical southeast Texas home.

Each 50' x 50' plot (see photo, right) was divided in two sections; with half planted in St. Augustine grass and the other half planted with Bermuda grass. The water to the test areas is delivered by spray heads, rotors, and rotating spray heads — the most common irrigation heads utilized in residential and commercial landscapes in Texas.

One objective of these planting/watering comparisons was to demonstrate for a homeowner

how the turfgrass planted in their yard — Common Bermuda or St. Augustine — will respond if watered 2 days a week versus 4 days a week. A second goal was to allow a visual comparison of the overall appearance of the grass in the plots relative to the length of time the stations were allowed to run. For most homeowners, spray heads are usually set on 15 minutes per zone, and rotors are set on 30 minutes for the zones they water.

Here's an example: If the homeowner's yard has St. Augustine grass, with spray heads in the turf, the test plots can confirm that watering for "X" amount of time, 2 days a week will produce turf that looks just as good as the plots that were watered for "X" amount of time, 4 days a week. These test plots are in full sun, totally without shade. So, since most homeowners have some kind of shade in their yard -- either in the grass or beds or both -- irrigation run times can be adjusted even lower due to less evaporation.

In this study, the equipment in the plots was duplicated exactly so any variance in appearance of



the grass could not be the result of different equipment. With six plots with rotors, sprays, drip, and rotary nozzles, plots 4, 5, and 6 are installed to replicate plots 1, 2, and 3, so the frequency of irrigation running on one plot can be increased or decreased compared to the other plot... making a valid comparison possible.

### In summary...

The project's objective was to compare a Southeast Texas Lawn watered two days a week with one watered four days a week. As it turned out, the project effectively showed us that **grass can indeed survive with minimal watering or just a little rainfall.** Until now, there had not been any definitive research in our area to confirm that a yard can indeed sustain a drought with water applied – by rain or irrigation -- only two days a week.

During traditional weather patterns, irrigation is supposed to supplement rainfall -- but during the recent drought of record, the roles are reversed with rainfall supplementing irrigation. This study underscored the importance of continuing to educate homeowners about the *negative effects of overwatering* — not only from a finite resource standpoint, but for the health and sustainability of the resident's landscape.

According to Dr. Chalmers, Texas AgriLife Extension professor and co-author (with Dr. James McAfee) of *Turfgrass Selection for Texas and Turfgrass Establishment for Texas*, "If you know a few simple facts, it isn't all that difficult. First, **throw out the "inch of water a week" advice.** That may -- or may not -- prove to be the formula for your lawn. Here's a clue: water moves into most clay soils at a rate of about 0.09 inches per hour... not very fast. Irrigation systems, on the other hand, may apply water at a rate of 0.25 to 1.5 inches per hour or more. So...for efficiency, the irrigation controller should be set to apply only about 0.10 inch of water at a time. *Applying water faster than a soil can absorb in one setting results in water moving across the soil surface, running into the gutter, and down the storm drain.* Setting irrigation to repeat this type of cycle every few hours allows water to move into the soil."

Using two watering cycles per night with a brief run time, permits the water to soak into the soil and is called **Cycle and Soak.** If a homeowner runs the system for 15 minutes once per night, that is the same as 7 or 8 minutes, twice per night. 💧

## A picture is worth 1,000 words!



Here's a visual comparison\* of turf grass that has been overwatered (top) and some that has received water only once a week or when it was needed, "training" it to grow deeper roots. Obviously the deeper roots will allow the grass to survive periods of little water. This root base is not accomplished overnight, but results from a water-sparing irrigation approach and proper soil amendments. \*Not from the TAMU project.

### FINANCIAL UNDERWRITERS:

North Harris County Regional Water Authority  
 West Harris County Regional Water Authority  
 North Fort Bend Water Authority  
 Houston Gulf Coast Irrigation Association  
 The Woodlands Joint Powers Agency  
 SaveWaterTexas 💧 Cinco MUD #1  
 Grand Lakes MUD 💧 WCID 132

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The irrigation design was donated by Doug Goodwin of Irrigation Services; and the irrigation materials were donated by Hunter Industries, Texas Irrigation Supply, Lasco Fittings, WWIP Corporation, Cimmaron Marketing and AMC Industries. The St. Augustine and Common Bermuda sod was donated, delivered and installed by Mata Turf. The system's irrigation mainline was installed, and the smaller mainlines to each test plot are also now complete. Coordination for the research project was handled by the Houston Gulf Coast Irrigation Association (HGICIA) under the leadership of Jay Hartley.



## **Nobody wakes up and says, “I’m going to waste some water today!”**

Thousands of gallons of this finite resource are wasted everyday through dripping faucets, “running” toilets, unnecessary lawn irrigation, and even just plain carelessness. Let’s face it...we’ve taken our water supplies for granted. We must implement aggressive measures to preserve our groundwater resources to enable our aquifers to recharge. The challenge will require everyone’s commitment to use water wisely, so let’s put water-wasting habits to bed!

### *The Operator’s Corner* *Continued from page 4*

- 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, gasoline or diesel or any other chemicals into 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 the drains flow 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!