

WaterSense Offers New Ways to Save Water

WaterSense is a voluntary program that helps consumers identify water-efficient products and programs that meet water efficiency and performance criteria. Products that carry the WaterSense label are at least 20 percent more water efficient and perform as well or better than standard models. WaterSense-labeled products include water-efficient toilets, bathroom faucets and faucet accessories, urinals, and new homes that are designed to reduce indoor and outdoor residential water use compared to typical new homes. WaterSense also certifies programs for irrigation professionals.



Recently, WaterSense added residential showerheads to the list. Showering claims the largest single use of hot water in the home, accounting for 37 percent of total hot-water use. By installing a water-efficient showerhead, you can reduce water consumption by 25 percent to 60 percent. Find more water conservation tips at www.takecareoftexas.org/water-conservation-tips/.

WaterSense has also kicked off its national “We’re for Water” campaign to encourage all Americans to make simple choices to save water. The campaign will travel cross-country, stopping at national landmarks and educating consumers about WaterSense-labeled products and other ways to save water. For more information on the WaterSense program, visit www.epa.gov/watersense/.

Don't Forget to Apply for a Texas Environmental Excellence Award!



There's still time to submit an application for the Texas Environmental Excellence Awards! You can nominate an environmental project that exemplifies that timeless Texas spirit.

Deadline for entry is Oct. 8.
For more information, visit www.teea.org.

TCEQ Names New Ombudsman for Rural Areas

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality recognizes that the needs of rural communities differ from those of other areas of the state. As a result, the agency created a rural

ombudsman position. Jason Robinson has been selected as the agency's first rural ombudsman. He will use his 12 years of experience working for a small community to link small, local governments with TCEQ assistance programs, regulators, and other associations and state agencies. He also will bring specific concerns to the attention of agency leaders and rule makers to facilitate better communication and compliance.

Pollution Prevention Workshops Scheduled

The TCEQ, in partnership with The University of Texas at Arlington, will offer two workshops that teach companies how to comply with the Waste Reduction Policy Act by preparing and implementing an effective, cost-saving pollution prevention plan.

These yearly workshops benefit both large and small companies and are geared toward environmental, health, and safety managers; plant managers; production personnel; engineers; and related professionals.

The workshop schedule includes the following dates and locations:

Arlington, Oct. 21–22
Houston, Nov. 10–11

For more information and how to register, visit www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/events/P2Workshops/p2workshop.html.

NRG Wharton Reduces Emissions by 80 Percent

NRG Energy's TH Wharton Electric Generating Station in Houston—a Clean Texas Bronze-level member—has installed low-emission combustion systems that work with natural gas turbines to achieve significantly better performance. The low-emission combustion systems improve air and fuel mixing during combustion and substantially reduce nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions.

As a result, NO_x emissions from these units have decreased by up to 80 percent, falling from 20–25 parts per million (ppm) to less than 5 ppm. As an added benefit of the new systems, carbon monoxide (CO) emissions also have substantially reduced, to less than 5 ppm.



As part of their community involvement, employees from TH Wharton partnered with colleagues from the Greens Bayou Electric Generating Station in Houston to plant 500 trees on and around NRG property. Employees also enlisted the help of their families and friends.

“NRG is very focused on reducing the environmental impact of our generating fleet,” said Roger McConnell, plant manager for the TH Wharton and Greens Bayou plants. “While the company is investing in wind, solar, biomass, and emission-free nuclear, this planting activity was a way that our individual employees could help further this goal as well.”

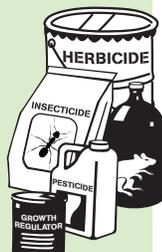
For more information about the Clean Texas Program, visit www.cleantexas.org.

Agricultural Waste Pesticide Collections Scheduled

The TCEQ organizes free, regional collections of unwanted or unused (waste) pesticides throughout the state as part of the Agricultural Waste Pesticide Collection program.

Fall collections include the following locations:

Sep. 14	Montague County
Sep. 16	Ellis County
Sep. 28	Concho County
Sep. 30	Gillespie County
Oct. 5	Chambers County
Oct. 7	Fort Bend County
Oct. 12	Jones County
Oct. 14	Parker County
Oct. 26	Jackson County
Oct. 28	San Patricio County



All collections are slated from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information and specific addresses, visit www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/AgWaste/schedule.html.

Make Plans to Attend the 2010 Water Quality/Storm Water Seminar

The TCEQ will host the 2010 Water Quality/Storm Water Seminar Sept. 23–24.

The seminar, which will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Austin, offers the following:

- Updates of rules and regulations in the TCEQ’s Water Quality Division.
- Details on the application and technical review process for municipal, industrial, storm water, CAFO, and sludge permits.
- Explanations of the permitting process.
- Opportunities to ask TCEQ staff questions.
- Updates on homeland security, reclaimed water, pretreatment, and environmental management systems.

Register online through Sept. 16 at www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/events/stormwater.html.

Highlighted TCEQ Publications

Preserving and Improving Water Quality: Programs of the TCEQ for Managing the Quality of Surface Waters, GI-351, provides an overview of the standards and criteria the TCEQ uses to define and evaluate the quality of surface waters in Texas, and the programs and practices the state employs to protect and restore water quality.

Take Care of Texas River and Sky Kids’ Sticker, M-037, is a vinyl sticker (3.5” square) with the Take Care of Texas message, featuring mascots River and Sky.

Confused About Environmental Rules?, GI-202, briefly describes the TCEQ’s Small Business and Local Government Assistance program.

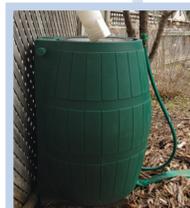
To order TCEQ publications, visit www.tceq.state.tx.us/publications.

Take Care of Texas Tips

At Home

Collect and Use Rainwater

Lawn and garden watering make up nearly 40 percent of total household water use during the summer. By collecting rainwater for use on your lawn, plants, flowers, trees, and shrubs during the peak summer months, you can save up to 1,300 gallons of water. If all Texas households collected rainwater for their watering needs, we could keep more than 10 billion gallons of water in our aquifers, lakes, and rivers.



Around the Office

Reduce Your Unwanted Mail

Each year junk mail, including unsolicited mail to businesses, ends up as 4 million tons of solid waste. E-mail or call direct-marketing companies to remove your name or those of former employees from their mailing lists—some companies have websites that allow for removal. You also can register with a comprehensive junk-mail reduction service for a small fee. Search for “junk mail” online to find some of these services. By taking your name off marketing mailing lists, you can help reduce waste.

www.takecareoftexas.org

Take the Survey!

The TCEQ values your opinion on how we are doing and how we can improve. To make your opinion known, fill a survey out today. Go online at www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/customersurvey or to request a paper copy, call 800-687-4040.