

Collin
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Ellis
Fannin
Freestone
Grayson
Henderson
Jack
Kaufman
Navarro
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Rockwall
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REGION C

Water Planning for North Texas

2003 Third Quarter Newsletter

Update: RCWPG Adopts Two Proposed Amendments to Regional Water Plan, Awaits Final Approval from TWDB

The RCWPG has adopted two proposed amendments to its 2001 *Region C Water Plan*. The amendments were requested by the Athens Municipal Water Authority (AMWA) and the Greater Texoma Utility Authority (GTUA) and will add new water management strategies not originally included in the region's water plan.

On Monday, June 23, the RCWPG held a special public hearing to discuss the two requests for amendments. After discussion and public comment at the hearing, the planning group voted to adopt the amendment requested by GTUA. The amendment requested by the AMWA was later adopted at the August 23 RCWPG public meeting.

After the planning group voted to adopt the amendments, they were sent to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to be considered for approval

and incorporated into the regional water plan. On August 20, the TWDB approved the GTUA amendment. The Athens amendment will be considered for approval by the TWDB at its Sept. 17 board meeting.

The last step for approval of the amendments is final inclusion of the amendments into the State Water Plan. The TWDB must hold a public hearing and consider approval of their inclusion in the State Water Plan. The TWDB is aiming to hold that public hearing sometime in November 2003, at which time the board will also consider final inclusion of an amendment adopted by Region M encompassing Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Maverick, Starr, Webb, Willacy and Zapata counties in Texas.

Participate in Region C Water Planning

Public attendance is welcome at Region C Water Planning Meetings.

Next Meeting:

Monday, October 6, 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Location:

Trinity River Authority
Central Wastewater Treatment Plant
6500 W. Singleton Blvd.
Grand Prairie, TX 75212
(972) 263-2251

For more information, contact:

James (Jim) M. Parks, RCWPG Chair
At:

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To be added to the mailing list to receive the quarterly RCWPG newsletter, send your name and mailing address to Amanda Pendegrass at Cooksey Communications via e-mail at Amanda@cookseypr.com or via fax at 972.580.0852.

Visit www.regioncwater.org for the most up-to-date news, water planning information, water conservation tips and RCWPG meeting information.

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Robert O. Scott

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A. Leroy Burch

Municipalities

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Howard Martin
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River Authorities

Danny Vance

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Roy J. Eaton

Water Districts

Jerry W. Chapman
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Water Utilities

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Richland-Chambers Wetlands Water Reuse Project: A Water Reuse Success Story in Region C

What does a regional water provider do when it faces increasing demand for water supplies and a population boom of one million additional people by 2050? It joins forces with a leading state agency to develop an innovative water reuse project, the likes of which have never been seen before in the United States.

In May of this year, the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD), one of Region C's largest water suppliers, in cooperation with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, launched the second phase of its Richland-Chambers Wetlands Water Reuse Project, an integrated water supply and wildlife habitat project designed to divert water from the Trinity River to the Richland-Chambers Reservoir in Corsicana via a series of wetlands used to filter contaminants.

The project, originally begun in 1991, was designed to increase the supply of Dallas/Fort Worth drinking water while providing an additional habitat for wildlife. The TRWD decided to try to tap into an available water resource to supplement the water supply from existing reservoirs. Wastewater that has been discharged by the wastewater treatment system in Fort Worth would be withdrawn from the Trinity River and diverted through a series of wetland cells made up of indigenous plants to the Richland-Chambers Reservoir – where it could then be used as a viable water supply for the 10 North Central Texas counties the TRWD serves.

The TRWD projects that the \$20 million project will eventually increase water yields from the Richland-Chambers Reservoir by as much as 63,000 acre-feet per year – a 30 percent increase and enough water to serve an additional 300,000 people for one year.

“The wetlands project is one that responds to the increasing needs for water conservation and appreciation for the environment,” said George Shannon, Tarrant Regional Water District board president and RCWPG member.

“As a result of this project, fully one-third of our downstream reservoir’s yield is expanded, and we have also created a new

environmental sanctuary for marine life and water fowl,” Shannon continued. “The District is proud to have Texas Parks and Wildlife as a partner in so productive a venture.”

Phase one of the project was a “pilot-scale” wetland developed by Alan Plummer Associates, Inc. to test the feasibility of the TRWD’s project. After eight years of study and success with the pilot-scale wetland, the District initiated the second phase, or the “field-scale” phase of its water reuse project, with the addition of almost 250 acres of new wetlands that have had water flowing through them since May 2003.

The TRWD is still testing the program during its second phase, which will last more than a year. Right now, recycled water is being returned to the Trinity River. However, during this phase, a pump station will be constructed to lift water into the Richland-Chambers Reservoir. The last phase, or “full-scale” wetlands, will eventually include a comparable wetland system at Cedar Creek Reservoir.

Once all is said and done, there will be approximately 2,000 acres of wetland treatment systems adjacent to each reservoir and an additional water supply for North Central Texas residents. Wildlife in the area will also have a new habitat they can occupy, making the project a success in meeting the needs of humans *and* the environment.



Region C Water Conservation Strategies Already Underway

As the population of Texas continues to grow and demand for water rises, water conservation becomes an increasingly important water management strategy. Since regional water planners began their work more than five years ago, conservation has been a viable strategy considered by the Region C Water Planning Group (RCWPG).

In addition to conservation efforts suggested by the planning group, many cities and towns across North Central Texas have long been implementing water conservation measures on their own. From basic programs including tiered rate structures and plumbing retrofits to more elaborate and highly publicized initiatives such as the Richland-Chambers Wetlands Project and the Dallas Water Utilities Conservation Program, water conservation is becoming a significantly bigger part of local water management strategies.

The following list represents various water conservation measures that are currently in use across North Central Texas:

- Tiered rate structures in many cities
- Water rebate programs for entities that use less water than in the previous year
- Richland-Chambers Wetlands Project
- Leak detection and repair programs
- Meter testing and replacement programs
- Plumbing retrofits
- Enforcement
- Reuse
- Xeriscape gardening demonstrations
- Distribution of Texas Smartscape CDs
- Education and public outreach, including the Waterwise program, presentations to various community organizations about water conservation and the development of publications such as brochures, newsletter articles, bill stuffers and information on city Web sites

For more information about water conservation measures taking place in your community, contact your local city or town government.

Planning Group Member Chosen as Texas' Outstanding Environmentalist for 2003

Congratulations to Region C Water Planning Group member Bob Scott for being chosen as Texas' Outstanding Environmentalist for 2003 by the League of Women Voters of Texas.

A longtime advocate of the environment and conservation, Scott received his award in April 2003 for going above and beyond to protect the environment. In addition to serving on the RCWPG, Scott currently is president of the Tarrant County Coalition for Environmental Awareness. He has also been involved with various other environmental organizations, including the Fort Worth Audubon Society, the Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation. Scott received a chemical engineering degree from North Texas State University, now the University of North Texas.

Water Conservation Corner

Tips for repairing and preventing leaks in your home

In the average household, water lost through leakage is equivalent to 9.5 gallons per person. While most of the water lost to leaks is attributed to toilet leaks, faucets are another common contributor to water leak problems.

Most common toilet leaks occur from worn or broken toilet parts, leaking refill valves, broken or improperly adjusted lift chains or poorly sized replacement parts. In order to repair and prevent water leaks in your home, follow these simple steps:

Approximately 25 percent of all toilets leak. Check to see if yours is leaking. Here's how:

- To determine if the toilet is leaking, remove the tank lid after the tank has stopped filling. If there is a leak you will be able to see a leak or hear water running.
- To test for a silent leak, mix a few drops of food coloring or place a dye capsule or tablet into the water in the toilet tank. Wait 10 minutes without flushing the toilet. If the dye appears in the toilet bowl, the toilet has a silent leak.
- Deteriorated toilet parts are the most common cause of toilet leaks. Remember to check each toilet part, replace worn parts with good quality parts and retest to make sure leaks have been fixed.

Leaks can account for 10 percent or more of the water bill, wasting both water and energy if the source is a hot water faucet. Fix leaky faucets immediately:

- Faucet leaks are usually caused by worn washers or “O” rings. Usually these can be replaced using a screwdriver and an adjustable wrench. However, if you have to replace the entire stem assembly, know the faucet brand and take the original part with you to a home improvement center. Universal parts often do not work, so you need to ask for replacement parts specific to your brand.

The water meter can be a good resource for detecting leaks:

- When using the water meter to check for leaks, turn off all faucets and water-using appliances. Read the dial on the water meter and record the reading. After 15 to 20 minutes, recheck the meter. If no water has been used and the reading has changed, a leak is occurring somewhere in the plumbing system.

Source: Texas Water Development Board. Some reference material was adapted from “Handbook of Water Use and Conservation” by Amy Vickers.