

State agency teams up with Cobb on water conservation

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The Cobb-Marietta Water Authority initiated "waterSmart" to promote conservation. Now the Georgia Department of Natural Resources has climbed on board.

The agencies have joined forces to launch "Save Water, Save Time, Save Money ... waterSmart," a statewide program designed to teach Georgians to conserve water outdoors, especially during summer months.

Since April 17, Georgia has been in a Level 2 drought, which means limits on outdoor water usage from midnight to 10 a.m. on certain days.

The expanded waterSmart program will include an education campaign promoting outdoor water conservation with topics ranging from spring planting tips to irrigation systems.

WaterSmart will feature pilot communities in Albany, Augusta, Cobb County, Columbus, Dalton and Macon. Each will implement a larger program with homeowner seminars and water conservation curriculum for classrooms.

Some tips from the program:

- ▶ Don't water your lawn too frequently. Generally, an established lawn needs about 1 inch of water every seven to 10 days to remain healthy.
- ▶ Soak, don't sprinkle. When you water, aim the nozzle at the base of plants so more water will reach the roots.
- ▶ Turn off your automatic irrigation system when it rains or, better yet, use an automatic time controller and attach a rainfall sensor to turn off the irrigation system if significant rainfall has occurred.
- ▶ Don't water in the heat of the day. Water in the early-morning hours (4 to 10 a.m.) to prevent evaporation.
- ▶ Using pine straw, bark chips or ground hardwood mulch on the roots of plants and trees helps soil retain water and decreases the needed frequency of lawn-watering.

Brochures and other information are available throughout Georgia and the pilot communities.

▶ To learn more, visit www.conservewater

