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One Out of Three North Texans Admit to Watering Their Lawns Three or More Times a Week

North Texas Municipal Water District launches Water IQ campaign to promote wise water use in region

WYLIE, Texas — Today, the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD) launches its 2011 Water IQ campaign to help encourage and educate residents regarding efficient water use practices for a healthier lawn. Water IQ, an official State of Texas water education and awareness campaign, provides tips and resources to use water wisely and efficiently.

A survey conducted for NTMWD reveals that 33 percent of residents admit they water their lawn three or more times a week — a practice detrimental to lawns and a common waste of water according to area agronomists. According to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, the typical North Texas home with an automatic sprinkler system has five irrigation zones and each zone applies 15 gallons of water per minute, so during the typical watering cycle of 10 minutes per zone, the average sprinkler system in North Texas sprays about 750 gallons.

The NTMWD survey (Baselice & Associates, August 2010) also revealed that 70 percent of North Texans think they use more water indoors than out. “The truth is more water is used outdoors,” said Jim Parks, NTMWD executive director. “In the summer, outdoor water use can account for up to 80 percent of home water use, and about half of that is wasted due to over-watering of our lawns, broken sprinklers or water runoff according to the Texas Water Development Board.”

“Now imagine if one of those sprinklers is misaligned,” continued Parks. “That’s a lot of water — and money — down the drain.”

Coins and Bills

NTMWD learned that the biggest motivator to save water is monetary: In the same research survey, 89 percent of residents said they are more likely to conserve water if they know they will save money on their water bill.

The new Water IQ TV public service announcements by NTMWD help consumers understand the monetary ramifications of wasting water. In the 15-second spots, a misdirected sprinkler head spouts coins onto a driveway that flows into a storm drain, and in the other, a leaky faucet drips quarters. The money theme is extended in both spots by including other objects made of money such as grass made of dollar bills and mulch represented by pennies:

http://northtexas.wateriqknowyourwater.org/ad_campaign.php.

(more)

Grass Roots

NTMWD invites North Texas residents to visit Water IQ “Grass Roots” community events to meet with agronomists, turf and water experts, to ask their landscape and watering questions. Additionally, a display consisting of three mini yards with exposed root systems demonstrates the effects of efficient watering versus inefficient watering on Texas lawns.

Events will take place June 25 in Allen, July 1 in Royse City, July 3 in Princeton, July 16 in Frisco, July 30 in McKinney, August 6 in Farmersville, August 20 in Rockwall and September 24 in Garland.

Water trivia games and pledges round out the community events and give residents the chance to win prizes, including reusable water bottles and a Water IQ home makeover kit featuring water-saving and low-flow devices.

Water IQ Tips

- Watering your yard deeply (about 1 inch) and infrequently (about once a week) using the cycle soak method produces a healthier lawn.
- Overwatering is harmful for native plants and is a common cause of plant death.
- Lawns with improperly managed and operated sprinkler control boxes can use up to 35 percent more water than lawns without automatic sprinkler systems.
- Operating sprinkler systems manually allows for more control over when and how much is watered.
- Raising the lawnmower blade and cutting grass to a height of 3 inches shades the soil, which reduces evaporation and allows roots to grow deeper.
- Watering early or late saves 25 gallons of water a day.

For more details about the Water IQ outreach events or for simple tips on how to conserve water, visit <http://northtexas.wateriqknowyourwater.org/>.

About North Texas Municipal Water District

NTMWD directly serves the following cities and/or water supply agencies: Allen, Farmersville, Forney, Frisco, Garland, Mesquite, McKinney, Plano, Princeton, Richardson, Royse City, Rockwall, Wylie, Bonham, Caddo Basin S.U.D., Cash W.S.C., College Mound W.S.C., Copeville S.U.D., East Fork S.U.D., Fairview, Fate, Forney Lake W.S.C., Gastonia-Scurry S.U.D., Greater Texoma Utility Authority, Josephine, Kaufman, Kaufman Four-One, Lavon W.S.C., Little Elm, Lucas, Melissa, Milligan W.S.C., Mt. Zion W.S.C., Murphy, Nevada W.S.C., North Collin W.S.C., Parker, Prosper, Rose Hill S.U.D., Rowlett, Sachse, Seis Lagos M.U.D., Sunnyvale, Terrell and Wylie Northeast S.U.D.

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MEDIA NOTE: About the research: A third-party research firm, Baselice & Associates, Inc., conducted a quantitative phone survey of 812 residents of North Texas in 2010. This is the first time the research has been released to media. The margin of error for the survey research is +/- 4.9 percent.