

Tuesday, Nov 27, 2007  
Posted on Tue, Nov. 27, 2007

## Regional message clear: conserve

By SUSAN SCHROCK

Star-Telegram staff writer

ARLINGTON -- The water supply for future generations will partially come from water we conserve today, officials say.

Representatives of area cities, including Arlington, Mansfield and Fort Worth, met this month at a regional water conservation symposium hosted by the Tarrant Regional Water District to discuss programs and city ordinances they could use to encourage people not to waste water.

"Having a common water conservation message across the region is so important," said Linda Christie, the water district's government and community relations director. "It keeps communities tuned in to the same theme and lets them know that we're all in this together. Saving water is not really a choice anymore. It's something we all need to do."

The symposium participants got to hear ideas from state water conservation leaders, including San Antonio and Austin. San Antonio got its hotels to replace water-wasting toilets and shower heads with low-flow fixtures. Austin has an ordinance that restricts residential watering to twice a week. The city also holds water conservation classes for those who install irrigation systems and do landscaping.

Julie Hunt, Arlington's water utilities director, said cities need to get people to change the way they think about and use water.

State officials project that the population in this 16-county area, including Tarrant, Dallas, Denton and Collin counties, will nearly double to more than 13 million by 2060, further taxing existing resources.

"We're having to plan for the future demands of the state," Hunt said.

"Conservation is one of the ways we can do that."

Hunt said Arlington has undertaken several initiatives to conserve water and is considering more. The main focus has been on outdoor watering, which accounts for 50 percent of the city's water demand in the summer.

Last year, for example, the city began prohibiting residents from using outdoor sprinklers between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., the hottest part of the day.

The city also requires all commercial properties and new residential properties to have rain and freeze sensors on their automatic sprinkler systems.

"You don't want sprinklers to run during or right after a rain. It's also a safety issue," Hunt said.

"You could get water on the pavement, which could freeze and cause slippery walking or driving conditions."

Arlington is also planning to hire a water conservation specialist for public outreach.

The city is considering beginning a program next year to help residents swap older toilets and shower heads for low-flow versions. Older toilets, for example, can use up to 7 gallons per flush whereas newer ones use about 1.6 gallons.

### **6 ways to save water**

- 1.** Turn off water while brushing your teeth.
- 2.** During cooler weather, water your lawn once every two to three weeks.
- 3.** Install low-flow toilets and shower heads.
- 4.** Wash dishes in a dishwasher, which uses less water than washing by hand.
- 5.** Run dishwashers and washing machines only when full.
- 6.** Choose native, drought-tolerant landscaping.

To learn more about water conservation, visit the Tarrant Regional Water District's Web site, [www.trwd.com](http://www.trwd.com).

#### *FAIR USE NOTICE*

*This document contains copyrighted material whose use has not been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. The Texas Living Waters Project, which is a nonprofit undertaking, is making this article available in our efforts to promote comprehensive water planning in Texas. We believe that this constitutes a "fair use" of the copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. If you wish to use this copyrighted material for purposes of your own that go beyond "fair use", you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.*