Master Gardener Specialist – Irrigation Efficiency Training
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

March 20, 21, 22, 2017

Drought and landscape water restrictions provide an opportunity for Extension to educate homeowners about irrigation efficiency. Because of water restrictions, homeowners are more aware than ever that they do not understand how an irrigation system and an irrigation controller work. Master Gardeners have a tremendous opportunity through all their connections to provide homeowners with unbiased information they can understand and use immediately to conserve water and maintain a beautiful green landscape.

Automatic irrigation systems are a convenient method to irrigate and maintain landscape beauty and investment. However, most homeowners tend to overwater their landscapes and create runoff. Runoff waste valuable potable water, strains water treatment plants and supplies, and contaminates water resources. Irrigation efficiency and other landscape water conservation practices are the keys to protecting water resources, maintaining a beautiful landscape and extending your community's water supply. Water conservation is the least expensive method to make water resources sustainable.

Most homeowners increase water usage during the summer by 35 to 70%. Homeowners do not want to waste water, cause pollution or increase their water bill but most homeowners just do not know how to determine how long to run their irrigation system, how to set and reset their irrigation controller for different seasons, detect leaks and how to fix common irrigation problems. Texas AgriLife Extension can provide this information to homeowners through presentations and demonstrations by you once you finish this training.

The Master Gardener Specialist – Irrigation Efficiency training will cover hands-on practices for determining irrigation efficiency, setting controllers, soak and cycle method, minor irrigation repairs, system trouble shooting, catch-can test, converting spray head irrigation to new water conserving heads, converting spray irrigation to drip irrigation and other water conservation practices.

Master Gardener Irrigation Efficiency Specialists will volunteer 20 hours above their current volunteer obligation, train Master Gardeners in their county, present the information to at least 3 other groups and do a catch can demonstration for Master Gardeners, a garden club, neighborhood association or civic organization.

Registration
Only 15 participant spots are available for this training. Registration is first come/first served basis.

Submit your registration forms as soon as possible at https://dallas.tamu.edu/courses/2017/march-20-22-2017-mg-specialist-irrigation-efficiency-san-antonio/

Payment and forms must be in our office by March 15, 2017. No refunds will be given.
For registration information contact Karen Sanders at karen.sanders@tamu.edu.
To pay by credit card contact Karen Sanders at 972-952-9671.

Tuition $200.00
Registration fee of $200.00 per person that includes:
Irrigation Efficiency Master Gardener Specialist Manual
- Power Points, evaluations, and report form for public presentations
- Two lunches (Tuesday, and Wednesday) Please let us know about any special dietary needs
- Snacks and drinks will also be provided each day

Irrigation Demonstration Box (Optional) $250.00
Irrigation demonstration box is available at an additional cost. Each box has over $250.00 of equipment. This demonstration box may be purchased by the County Master Gardener Association to keep at the county office or by the individual Master Gardener. We want to make this offer separately from tuition to keep down the cost of the training.

Travel
Participants will need to provide their own travel and hotel arrangements. If you are looking to car pool or for a roommate, let us know. Dress appropriately for outdoor activities. A listing of surrounding hotels will be provided with receipt of the registration form.

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March 20, 21, 22, 2017

Host: Bexar County Extension
Bexar County Master Gardeners
Location: San Antonio Botanical Garden
Education Building
555 Funston Pl, San Antonio, TX 78209

AGENDA
March 20, Monday
12:00 noon (no lunch, eat before or bring your own)
Overview: Why We Are Here. Awareness, Expectations, Obligations and Limitations

I. Landscape Irrigation and Water Issues

Learning Objective: Understand state and regional water supply problems and the relationship and importance of landscape irrigation conservation
A. State and Regional water planning and most recent projections
B. State laws, regulations and licensing certification programs related to landscape irrigation
C. Local ordinances and programs

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Success Story - Bexar County Master Specialist – Irrigation Efficiency
Classroom Session of Basic Irrigation Components

II. Basic Irrigation System Troubleshooting as related to Water Conservation

Learning Objective: Know how to identify the most common problems and landscape irrigation systems from a water conservation perspective
A. General overview of application devices and their operation
B. Field exercises on how to identify and document common problems that affect water use efficiency (“system troubleshooting”)
C. Adjustments that can easily be done by a homeowner

March 21, Tuesday
9:00 – 12:00 noon
Field/Site Session of Basic Irrigation Components

II. Basic Irrigation System Troubleshooting as related to Water Conservation
Learning Objective: Know how to identify the most common problems and landscape irrigation systems from a water conservation perspective
A. Field exercises on how to identify and document common problems that affect water use efficiency (“system troubleshooting”)
B. Adjustments that can easily be done by a homeowner
C. Catch can test to determine precipitation rate

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm Lunch provided

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
SAWS Representative

2:00 pm – 4:00
Classroom Session

March 22, Wednesday
9:00 am – 12:00 noon
Classroom Session

IV. Setting Irrigation Controllers
Learning Objective: Learn what types of controllers are available and how to use/program them
A. Overview of types of controllers
B. Programming electronic (non-mechanical) controllers
C. Operation and management of ET (“Smart”) controllers

V. Landscape Management Practices that Encourage Water Conservation
Learning Objective: Learn how soil preparation, plants selection and mulch will make a difference for irrigation efficiency

VI. Drip irrigation
Learning Objective: Learn how drip irrigation is more efficient, easy to install or convert a regular irrigation system to drip

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm Lunch provided

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Resources
Power Points and Fact Sheets
Irrigation Demonstration Boxes