



Unexpected Partners: How External Partnerships Can Lead to Greater Water Savings

The Rain Catcher Pilot Program: Co-Funding a Water Customer Incentive Program

14th Annual Central Texas Water Conservation Symposium

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

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RAIN
CATCHER
PILOT
PROGRAM

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Catch Rain, Catch Savings!

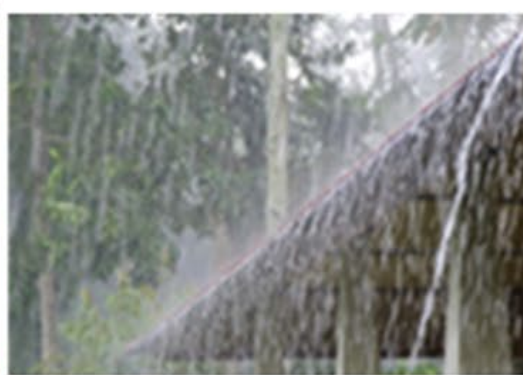
Discover rebates & guidance to help
beautify your garden & help your creek

Ready to Get Started?



512-974-2976

Call for a site assessment and
water saving report!



Rain Catcher Pilot Program Area

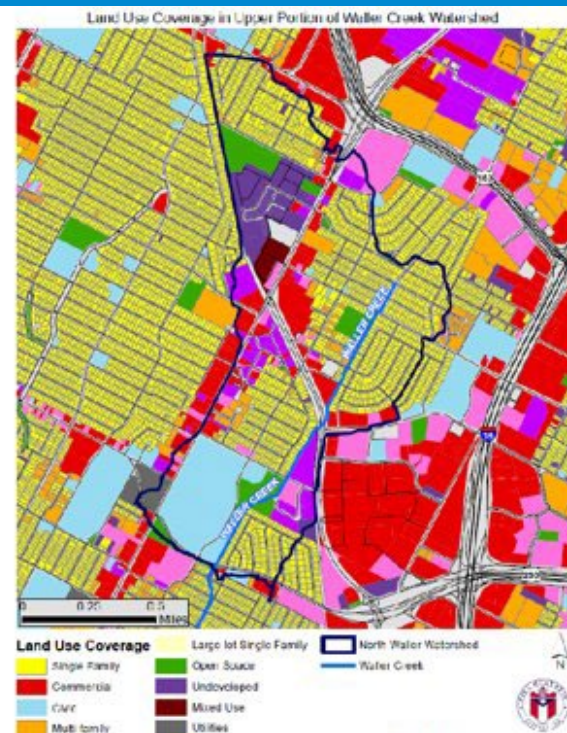
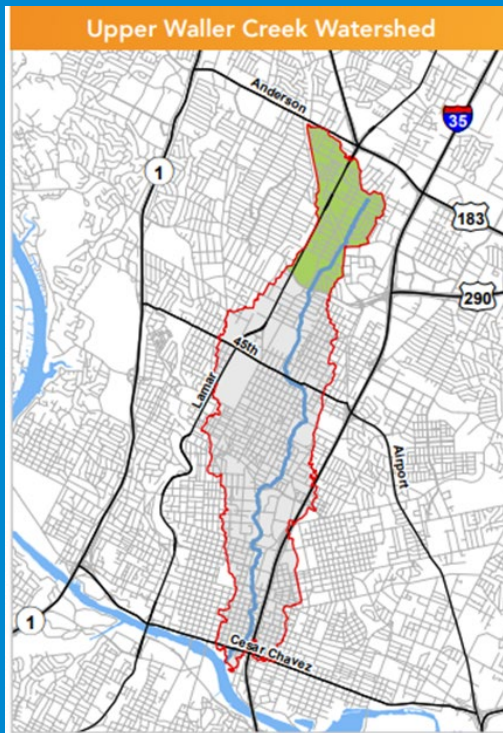


Figure 2.
Rain Catcher Pilot Program Phases

Upper Waller Creek Watershed

- North Central Austin
 - Near Koenig, Lamar, 183, Airport Blvd
- 1.08 acres
- 47% impervious cover
- Heavily residential
- Four phases
- Total eligible properties 1446



Technical Expertise



One hour site assessment and design recommendations.

Administrative Streamlining



Urban Patchwork will streamline the design, installation, and payment processes for program participants.

Financial Incentives



- Reduced drainage charge
- Existing Rainwater Harvesting and Rainscape Rebates
- \$1,000 per tree with passive irrigation system.
- PLUS an additional \$1 per gallon.

Rain Catcher Pilot Program Progression

❖ Pre-Pilot

February 2011 – 2018

❖ Phase 1

Fall 2018 to Fall 2019

❖ Phase 2 - Beginning of Pandemic

Summer 2020 – January 2021



❖ Phase 3 – During Pandemic & Winter Storm Uri

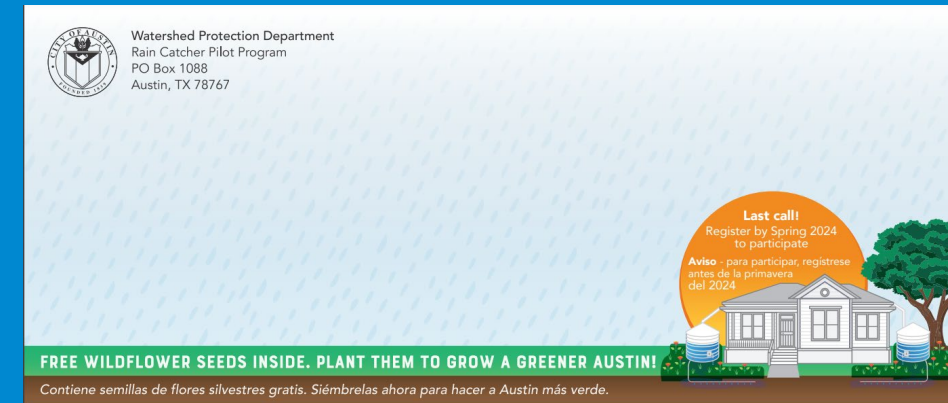
February 2021 – January 2022

❖ Phase 4 – Coming out of the Pandemic

February 2022 – January 2023

❖ Phase 5 – Current phase

February 2023 – January 2025



❖ Beyond the Pilot





WATERSHED PROTECTION

- **Provides**
 - Pilot program administration
 - Ambassadors
 - Funding for non-profit partner
 - \$1 per gallon
 - Drainage Charge Discount
 - Associated scientific and sociological studies
- **Focus**
 - Include community members in the solution
 - Strengthen “one water” concept and collaborations
 - Improve urban hydrology
 - Increase base flow in creeks
 - Reduce erosive events
 - In some cases, address nuisance flooding issues
 - Increase aquatic life in our creeks
 - Increase enrollment in the Drainage Charge Discount



- **Provides**

- Expertise from doing rainwater-focused incentives since the 1990s
- Administers existing rebate programs
- Funding for existing rebate programs including:
 - ❖ Rainwater Harvesting – up to \$5,000 for equipment to capture rainwater
 - ❖ WaterWise Landscape – up to \$3,000 to convert turf grass to native plant beds
 - ❖ WaterWise Rainscape – up to \$1500 for landscape features that hold rainwater

- **Focus**

- Conservation – Reduce use of potable water for landscapes
- Provide alternate water resource for emergency use



Since the beginning of the pilot Austin Water has provided rebates for the RCPP program \$25,700.80

■ Provides

- Provides \$1000 per tree for up to two street trees with a 500-gallon front yard cistern that passively waters them

• Focus

- Increase the number of street trees
- This geographic area is within Urban Forestry's target area to increase urban canopy cover



Urban Forest Grant



The Urban Forest Grant strengthens Austin's urban forest by funding stewardship activities like tree planting, tree care, education, and disease control projects.

The DSD Urban Forestry funding has supported 68 trees @\$1000 each trees that have either been planted or encumbered = ~ \$68,000



- **Provides**
 - Third-party partner relationship connecting city and residents
 - Expertise – including consulting on DIY
 - Streamlining the process
 - Free rainwater collection site assessment
 - Connects participant with a contractor
 - Inspects installed systems
 - Completes rebate applications
 - Gathers data and submits reports to the City
- **Focus**
 - Ecologically restorative landscaping
 - Residential property and public space
 - Turning a patchwork of underutilized spaces into a quilt of common good



Urban Patchwork highlighted one of the completed residential projects during the 2021, “Outdoor Living Tour.”



Stacked Incentives

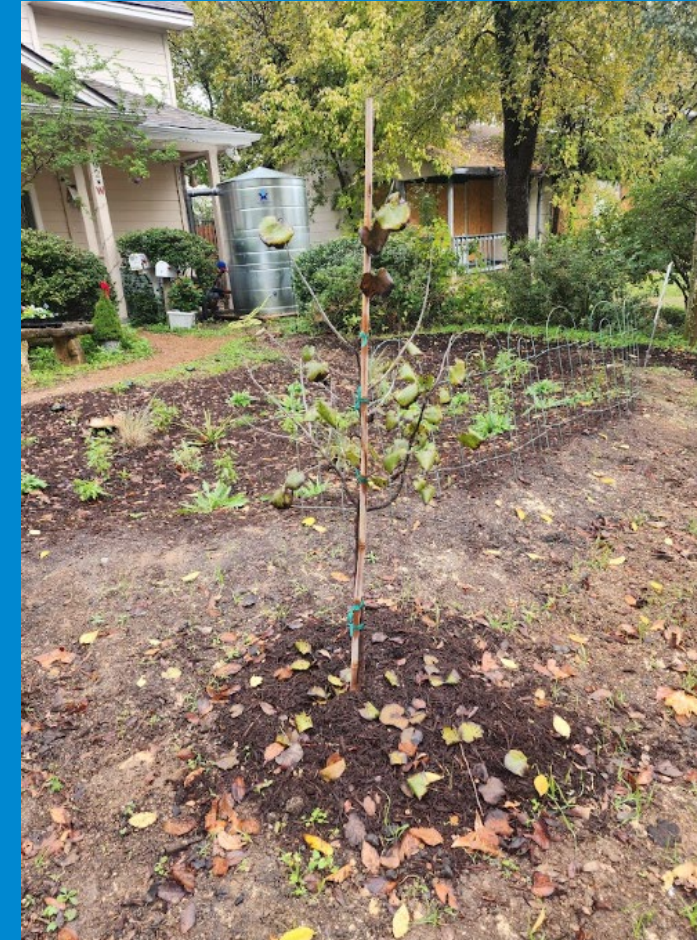


- Development Services Department: \$1000 per street tree, up to 2 trees, irrigated with a 500-gallon cistern
- Austin Water: \$.50 per gallon (for 500 gal cisterns)
- Watershed Protection Department: \$1/per gallon captured
\$~2500 per site administrative costs



Example 1

System Cost: \$14,851
 Copay: \$5477.00
 Resident Copay %: 37%



Site Details		Owner Info	Ambassador	Outreach	Program Info	System Details	
Unique ID	System Cost	Administrative costs		Resident Copay	Resident Pay %	WPD Max Match	
000260	\$14,851.00	\$2,500.00		\$5,477.00	36.88%	\$4,740	
WPD Funding	Urban Forestry Funding	Austin Water	Off Set Cost		Previous DUF	New DUF	% Change
\$3,750.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,325.00					NA
Unique ID	Rain Gardens Installed		Rain Garden Gallons Captured		IC % Taken Offline		
000260	2		1,330		%		
Cisterns Installed	Cistern Gallons Captured		Total Gallons Captured		Number of Trees		
3	2,500		3,830		2		
Cisterns				Trees			
Cistern ID	Material	Size (gal)	Tree ID	Type	Size (gal)		
1	metal	1000	1	Mexican Plum	10-15		
2	poly - black	1000	2	Redbud	10-15		
3	poly - black	500					



Example 2:

System Cost: \$10,625
Copay: \$1373.00
Resident Copay %: 13%

Administrative



Site Details		Owner Info	Ambassador	Outreach	Program Info	System Details	
Unique ID	System Cost	Administrative costs		Resident Copay	Resident Pay %	WPD Max Match	
000835	\$10,625.00	\$1999		\$1,373.00	12.92%	\$0	
WPD Funding	Urban Forestry Funding	Austin Water	Off Set Cost		Previous DUF	New DUF	% Change
\$3,720.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,533.00					NA
Unique ID	Rain Gardens Installed		Rain Garden Gallons Captured		IC % Taken Offline		
000835	2		1,070		%		
Cisterns Installed	Cistern Gallons Captured		Total Gallons Captured		Number of Trees		
2	2,650		3,720		2		
Cisterns				Trees			
Cistern ID	Material	Size (gal)		Tree ID	Type	Size (gal)	
1	black poly	1100		1	Oak FY 15 gal	10-15	
2	black poly	1550		2	Redbud FY 15 gal	10-15	



Example 3

System Cost: \$9391

Copay: \$226

Resident Copay %: 2.41%

	Site Details	Owner Info	Ambassador	Outreach	Program Info	System Details
Unique ID	System Cost	Administrative costs		Resident Copay	Resident Pay %	WPD Max Match
000492	\$9,391.00	\$2590		\$226.00	2.41%	\$4,637
WPD Funding	Urban Forestry Funding	Austin Water	Off Set Cost	Previous DUF	New DUF	% Change
\$3,020.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,555.00				NA

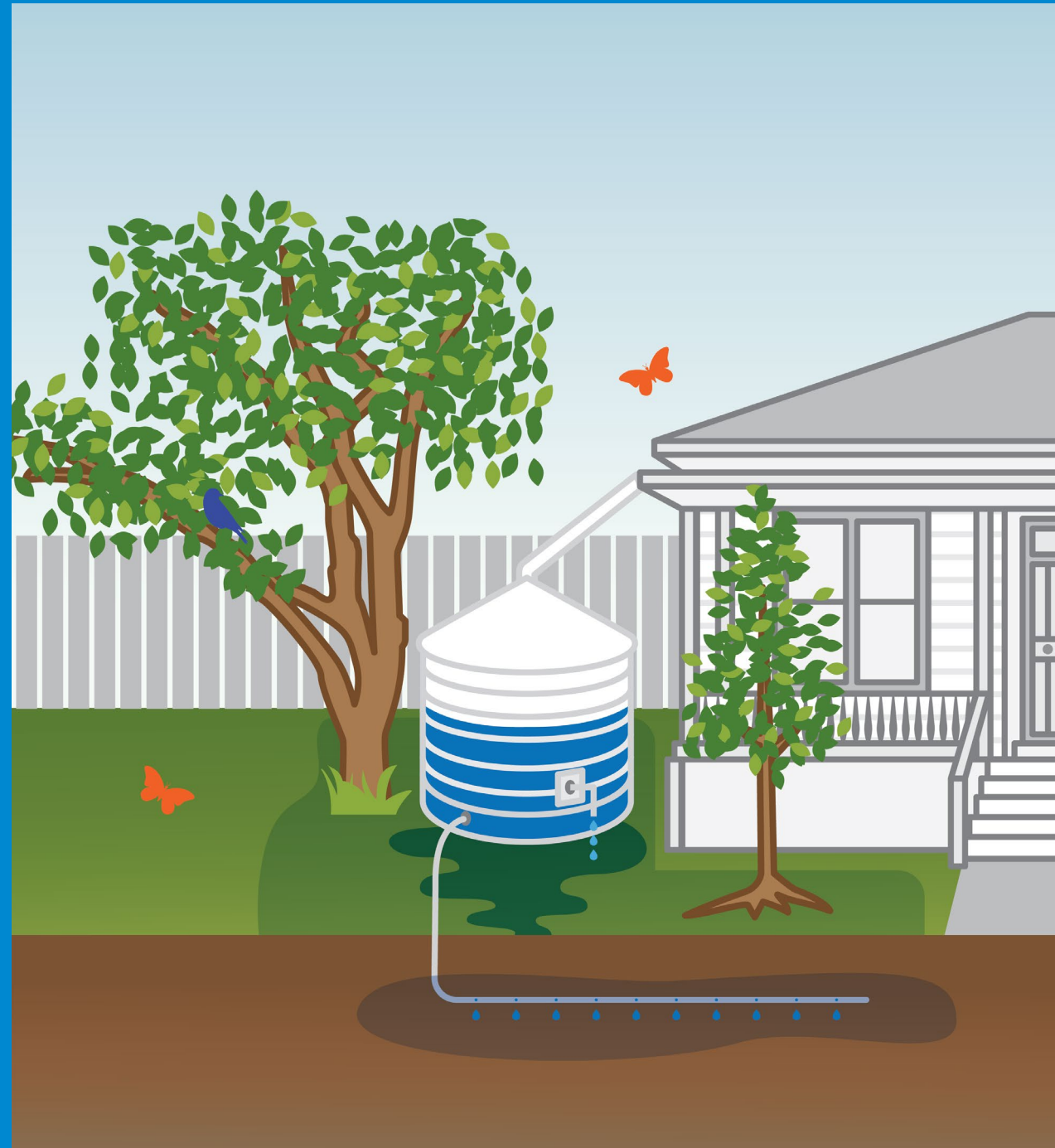
Unique ID		Rain Gardens Installed		Rain Garden Gallons Captured		IC % Taken Offline	
000492		0		0		%	
Cisterns Installed		Cistern Gallons Captured		Total Gallons Captured		Number of Trees	
2		3,010		3,010		2	
Cisterns				Trees			
Cistern ID	Material	Size (gal)	Tree ID	Type		Size (gal)	
2	black poly	1100	1	Crape Myrtle - front yard	15 gal	10-15	
3	black poly	1910	2	Anacacho Orchid FY	15 gal	10-15	



Thank you



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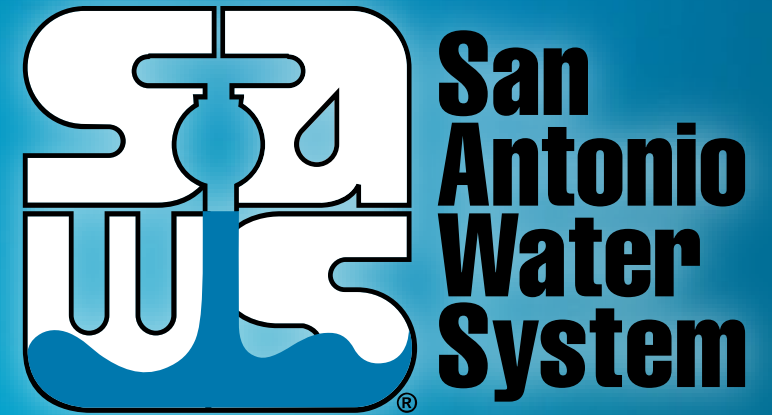
Expanding Water Conservation through Partnerships

Juan Soulas

SAWS Conservation Planner

Central Texas Water Conservation Symposium

March 19, 2024



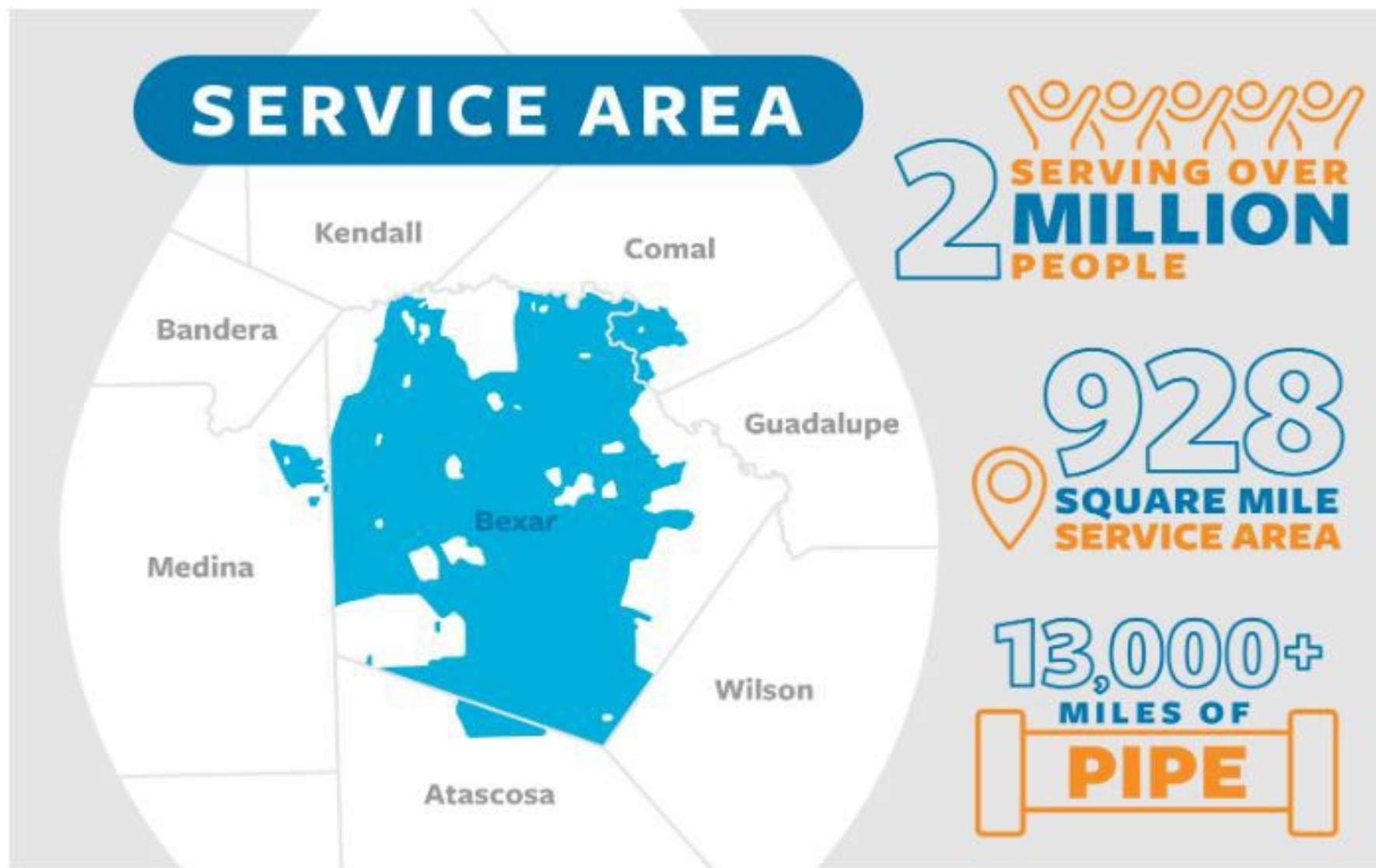
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SAWS Conservation Outreach



Central Texas Water Conservation Symposium



Expanding Conservation through Partnerships

- Legal instruments utilized:
 - Performance Based Contracts
 - Used for Non-Profit organizations for outreach
 - Bexar County Master Gardeners
 - Gardening Volunteers of South Texas
 - San Antonio Botanical Garden
 - Eco Centro/SAC
 - Mitchell Lake Audubon Center
 - Green Spaces Alliance
 - Vendor Agreements
 - Used for retail vendors to accept SAWS issued eCoupons
 - WaterSaver Landscape Coupon
 - WaterSaver Rewards

Contracted Partners in Conservation

What's in the performance-based contract with Nonprofit Organization?

- Partners must conduct a minimum of 30 approved activities annually. All must receive pre-approval.
- Learning objectives must align with SAWWS Conservation goals.
- Program must be promoted in organization's calendar and posted in GardenStyleSA Calendar.
- Display SAWWS and GardenStyleSA logos during program.
- Program must be run entirely by the NPO: planning, promotions and execution of workshop.
- At presentations and events, on a given year SAWWS Staff has ~10,000 engagements, with partners over 300,000.

Conservation Partners



Earth Friendly Gardening & Landscaping
Presented by Bexar County Master Gardeners

Sat Mar 2nd 9:00am - 10:00am

**Cultivate! Spring Into
Landscape Gardening -
Online Learning -
Rewards Eligible**

Spring is the season for renewal. Come join Lynn Cox, Bexar County Master Gardener, as she discusses what can be done to refresh, renew, ...



**GREEN
SPACES
ALLIANCE
OF SOUTH TEXAS**

Mon Feb 5th 11:30am - 12:30pm

**SAWS WaterSaver
Rewards, Rebates and
Coupons - Online
Learning - Rewards
Eligible**

WaterSaver Rewards = 1 point Join Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas for this interactive online workshop to learn about the SAWS ...



Wed Feb 7th 6:00pm - 7:30pm

**Gardening Basics -
Rewards Eligible**

WaterSaver Rewards = 1 point Gardening is one of the most exciting and rewarding lifestyle changes one can implement. But where do you ...



Sat Feb 10th 8:00am - 11:00am

**2nd Saturday Habitat
Clean up at Mitchell
Lake - Rewards Eligible**

WaterSaver Rewards Points = 1 point per calendar year Learn native plant landscaping techniques by joining members of the community at ...

**Gardening
Volunteers**



of South Texas



Fri Feb 23rd 6:00pm - 7:00pm

**Drought Tolerant Tips,
Tricks and Tech -
Rewards Eligible**

WaterSaver Rewards = 1 point Water conservation can take on many forms in your lawn, garden, or landscaping. This class will cover how to ...



Sat Mar 16th 8:30am - 1:30pm

**Watersaver Landscape
Design School - Rewards
Eligible**

WaterSaver Rewards = 3 points Garden Volunteers of South Texas' Landscape Design School has three phases: one for you to read at home, one ...



Central Texas Water Conservation Symposium

San Antonio Botanical Garden

WaterSaver Lane to Community



Contracted Vendors and WaterSaver Coupons

Why and What's in the agreement?

- SAWVS' WaterSaver Landscape coupon program is to encourage customers to reduce the amount of turf and replace it with a drought tolerant landscape bed.
- WaterSaver Rewards encourages qualified customers to attend approved conservation workshops/events and/or successfully complete incentive programs to earn points.
- Participating vendors accept the eCoupon issued by SAWVS as cash at the point of sale and then submit all coupons on a regular basis for reimbursement.
- Vendor must furnish a detailed copy of the sales receipt for every coupon redeemed.

WaterSaver Landscape Coupons



- \$100 Landscape E-coupon to purchase 15 plants.
- Redeem at participating vendors.
- Mostly natives with some well-adapted.
- 40 species, over 100 varieties.
- Selection includes ground covers, perennials, shrubs and small trees.
- Average out of pocket to customer \$50.

Landscape Coupon Transformation


800 square feet of grass removal

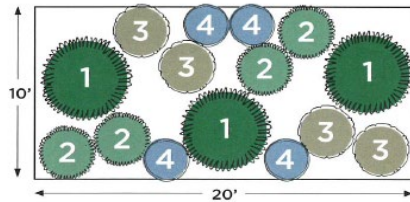


Coupons essential for “Plant by Numbers” transformations

San Antonio Water System

Plant by Numbers

 **Curb Appeal for Sun**
Plant selections stay under 3 feet tall. Spacing shown is for fully grown plants.
Click on plant names for more info on the species.





1 Large Perennial
Pick 1 species and buy 3 plants.


2 Small Perennial
Buy 4 plants of this species.


3 Small Perennial
Pick 1 species and buy 4 plants.


4 Low Growing
Pick 1 species and buy 4 plants.


Rosemary



Autumn Sage



Octopus Agave



Frogfruit


Muhly Grass


Artichoke Agave


Damianita


Red Yucca


Purple Heart


Want \$100 for these plants?
This design is eligible for one WaterSaver Landscape Coupon if you remove 200 square feet of grass.
Apply today at GardenStyleSA.com/coupons to get 15 plants for free.

San Antonio Water System

Quick Tips on Planting and Maintenance

Mulch 2 inches deep using 16 bags of 2-cubic-foot mulch.

Rosemary
• Prune to shape if desired.
• Appreciates occasional water.

Artichoke Agave
• Thorny tips can be snipped to minimize pokiness.
• No extra water needed.

Muhly Grass
• Cut back in late winter if desired.
• No extra water needed.

Frogfruit
• Can be mowed as desired.
• May brown in drought/frost.
• Appreciates occasional water.

Red Yucca
• Cut down faded flowers in late winter if desired.
• No extra water needed.

Damianita
• Light shaping as desired.
• No extra water needed.

Octopus Agave
• Cut down faded flowers.
• Transplant pups, if desired.
• No extra water needed.

Purple Heart
• Spreads easily.
• Browns back in winter.
• Appreciates occasional water.

Autumn Sage
• Cut back old branches by 1/3 in spring or as needed.
• Appreciates occasional water.

Scan for gardening basics and how-to videos on planting, weeding and more!



Watering Countdown To Establish New Plants

3 3 times per week for 3 weeks

2 2 times per week for 2 weeks

1 1 time per week for 1 week

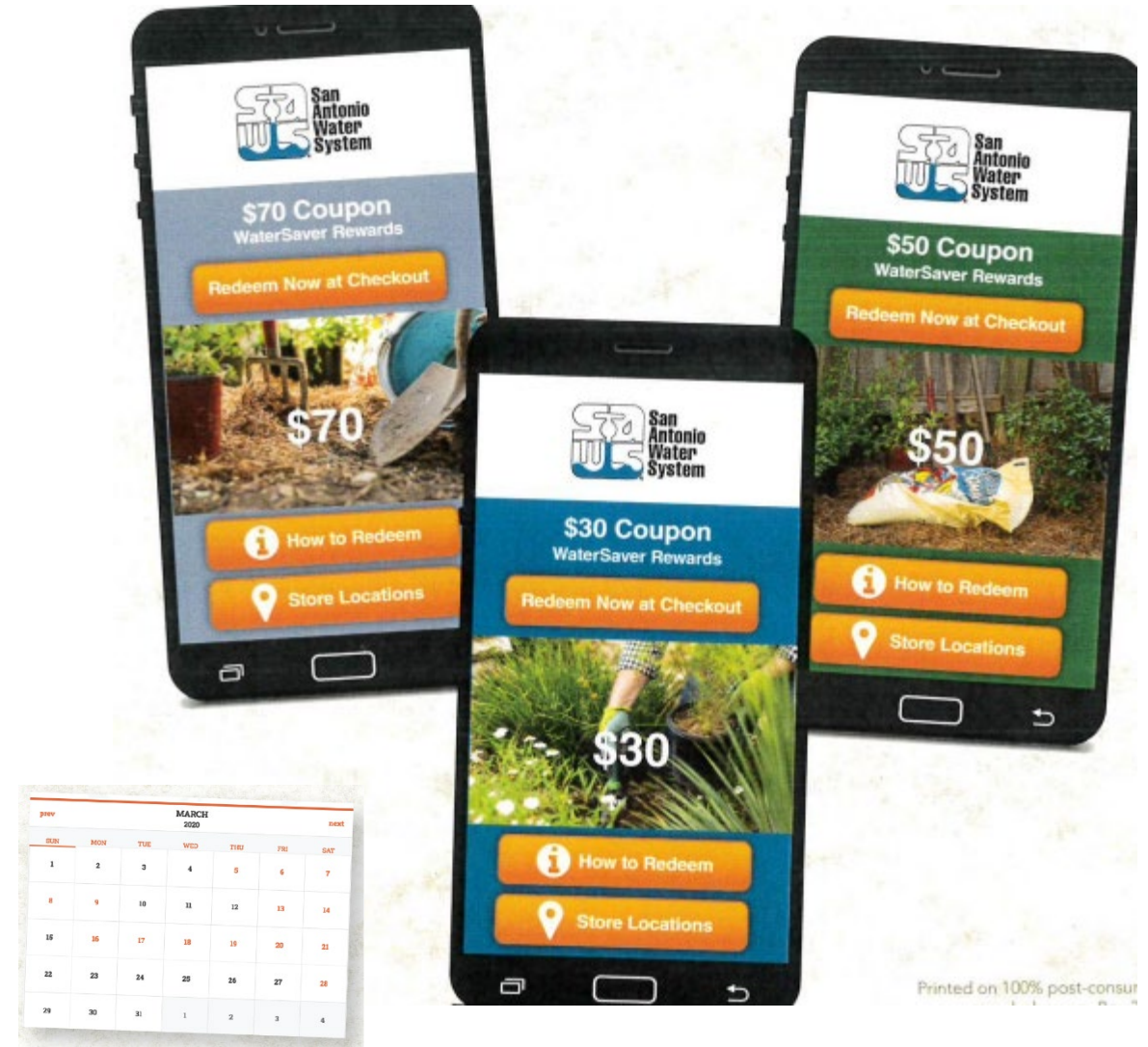
No extra watering required.

Drought Busters!
Look for this icon for exceptional performance during exceptional drought!

WaterSaver Rewards

Get rewarded for your water-saving ways!

- Customers earn points by attending eligible events and workshops, and program participation.
- Earned points become \$30, \$50 and \$70 discount eCoupons.
- Redeemed at participating vendors.
- Used towards plants, mulch, soil, bed edgers, garden tools etc.
- Fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and rock are not eligible.



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SAWS Conservation

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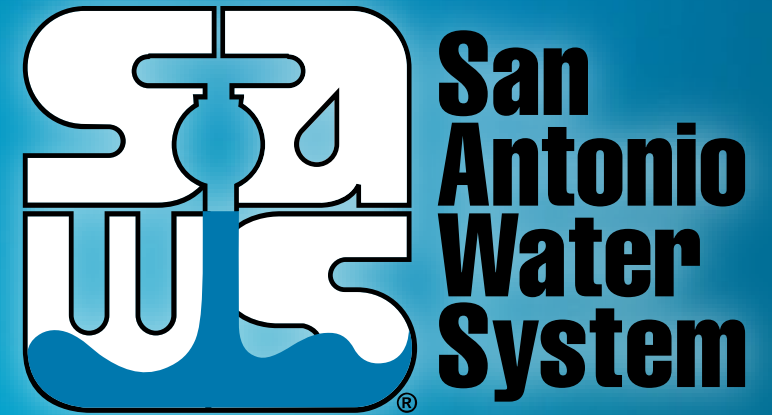
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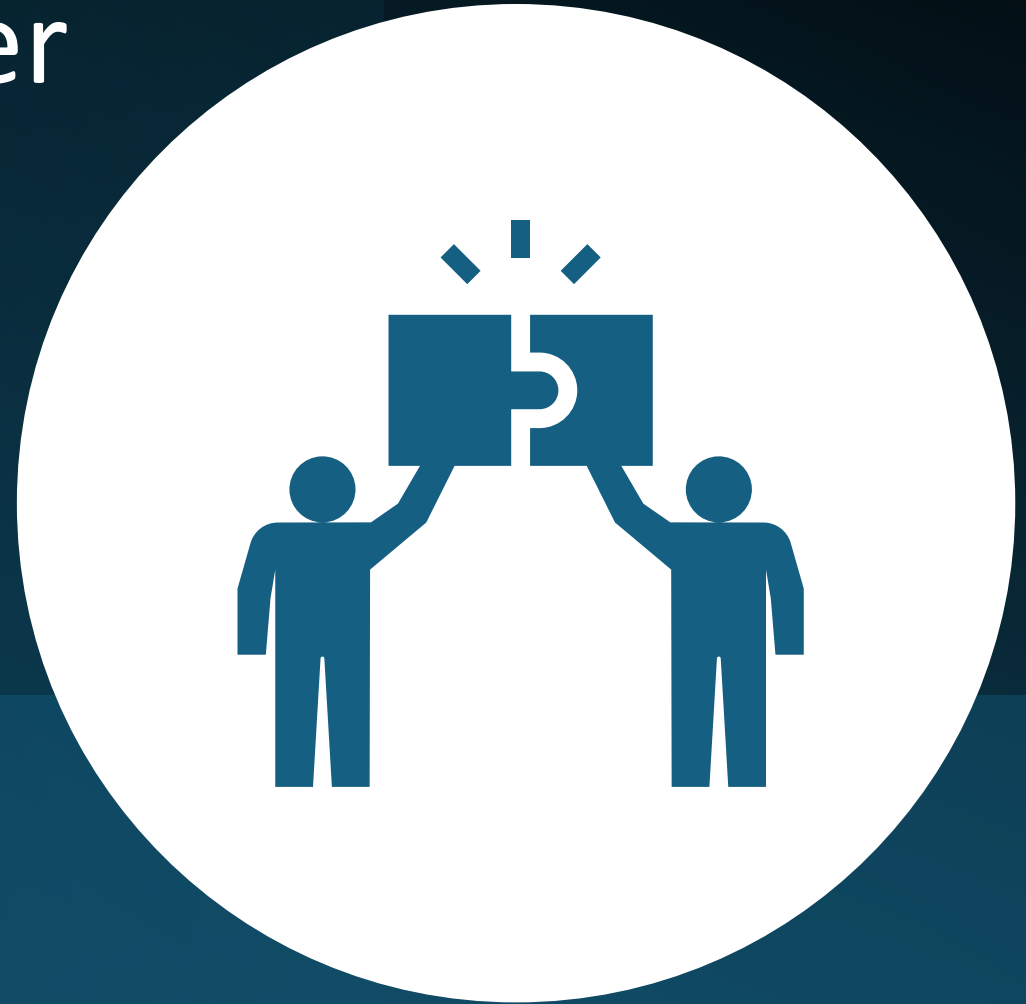
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Unexpected Partners: How External Partnerships Can Lead to Greater Water Savings

Joining Forces for Water Conservation



ROUND ROCK TEXAS

MAIN GOALS



1

Reach target audiences and increase program participation.

2

Sharing and using resources with partnering organizations.

3

Furthering our knowledge.



Williamson County

AgriLife Extension Services

Target Audiences



Reaching outdoor water users and people looking for advice

Sharing Resources



Using science-based recommendations to educate our customers

Education



Furthering our knowledge and working with the community

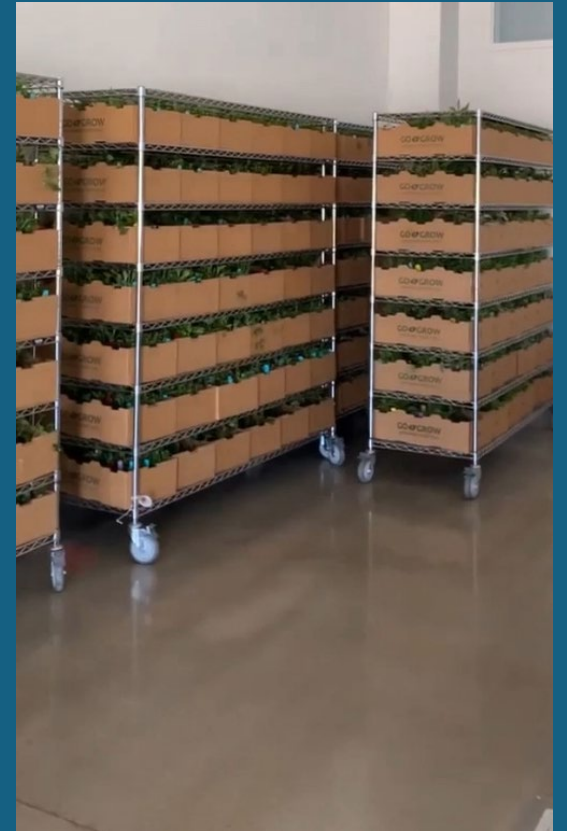
Neighboring Utilities

- Local Irrigation Station Classes
- Georgetown Conservation Expo



Private Businesses

Helping us promote
rainwater harvesting and
native landscaping
by providing affordable products
to residents



CONNECT WITH US



jwoods@roundrocktexas.gov



emorales@roundrocktexas.gov



roundrocktexas.gov/conservation





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