



How One Community is Tackling Their Water Quality Issues

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2022

Water Quality seems irrelevant to most people, even though drought, newly emerging pollutants, infrastructure age, assuring safe drinking water, and other concerns are constantly in the news these days.

How do you get residents of your community to talk about how healthy, clean waterways mean less expense to treat for drinking water?

What prompts them to avoid wasting water so there is some left for fish and other wildlife use?

How can you get conversations started about water quality that address the needs of humans, as well as “everything else?”

Consider recruiting, training, and engaging resident volunteers to help! Their voices lead to real behavior changes in your community. It starts with finding their values and making sure your programs empower them to act.

Poll One

According to recent research, which of these personal values is the number one motivation for environmental volunteering?

- a. Contributing to science
- b. Learning more about nature
- c. Contributing to nature conservation
- d. Volunteering as a Citizen Scientist
- e. Working alongside people with shared values

How local water issues can be tackled by local volunteers

- **Clearly define and prioritize problems**
 - Which are possible for trained volunteers to realistically address?
 - Requires local agency/entity oversight and training
- **Create Action Plans that are science-based, specific, feasible**
 - Which top issue is suitable for volunteers to effectively tackle?
 - Requires local agency/entity oversight and training
- **Build capacity by engaging volunteers**
 - Science based education for potential volunteers – raise awareness
 - Volunteering Opportunities that close the knowing-doing gap
 - Incorporate Volunteer “Identity” reinforcement (Rewards)
 - Additional, periodic higher-level training to retain active volunteers (Rewards)

Poll Two

Which step comes first when you are ready to recruit volunteers?

- a. Assure knowledge to share and tools to take action
- b. Meet where they are; interact personally on local WQ issues
- c. Recruit and notify engaged residents from target audiences
- d. Widely share info to community about WQ: all social media

How Township volunteers were recruited, initially trained, engaged to act

- Meet audiences where they are, personalize issues
 - Parks and Dog Parks conversations
 - Neighborhood Meetings – Village Associations, HOAs, Local civic/social Orgs
 - School group activities: aquatic field studies, classroom conversations
- Classes to elevate knowledge, recruit volunteers
 - Texas Waters Specialist training: Water Labs, Online Discussion Group
 - Recruit diverse audiences to volunteer – Master Naturalists, high school students, area residents, civic/social organizations, scouts
- Volunteer engagement in meaningful programs
 - Install markers on storm drain inlets
 - Distribute educational information as door hangars
 - Hand out pet waste bag dispensers
 - Citizen Science:
 - Waterway cleanup and litter auditing events
 - Stream Team Volunteer WQ Monitoring



2022 Stats through August

299 VOLUNTEERS

1,365 HOURS

(1,365 X \$28.14 = \$38,411.10)

4,249 DRAINS MARKED

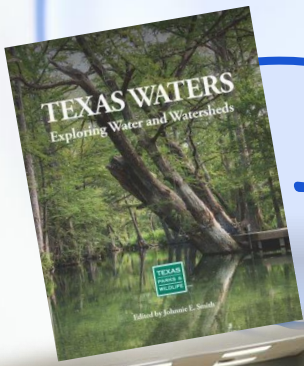
7,460 HOUSES GOT DOOR HANGARS

OVER 1,000 DOG WASTE BAG
DISPENSERS/CARABINERS GIVEN
OUT

2021 Environmental Services Divisions Highlights

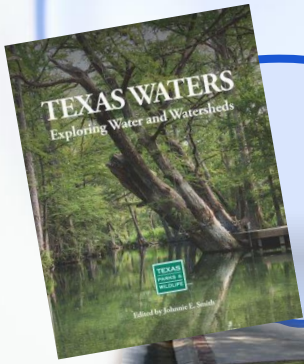
CLASSES/ATTENDANCE	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
CLASSES					
COMPOST	6/201	8/165	8/198	2/71	5/347
GARDENING / LANDSCAPING	4/322	6/304	7/338	8/625	9/796
INVASIVES SPECIES	0	2/35	1/42	2/93	7/525
MOSQUITO EDUCATION	27/930	52/1,517	53/1,786	0/0	6/225
POLLINATOR SUPPORT	0	2/111	6/364	4/96	5/724
RECYCLING EDUCATION	0/0	5/80	2/31	1/20	7/1,267
NATURE LECTURES	6/407	6/529	6/388	5/340	5/535
WATER CONSERVATION	25/1,851	15/1,672	37/2,345	12/264	39/2,524
TOTAL PROGRAMS/PARTICIPANTS	68/3,711	98/4,413	120/5,492	34/1,509	83/6,943
SPECIAL EVENTS					
	4/2,346	4/1,845	5/3,250	5/4,123	6/4,145
VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACTIVITIES					
ADOPT-A-PATH PROGRAM HOURS	1,040	1,390	970	1,066	2,135
WATERSHED PROJECT HOURS				111	518
INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL VOL HOURS	-	-	524	1,004	1,020
GREENUP COMMUNITY LITTER CLEANUP	3,576	2,988	4,308	-	2,229
PROGRAM & EVENT SUPPORT	988	746	1552	685	1,034
TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS	5,604	5,124	7,354	2,866	6,936*

* Valued at \$183,318, based on Independent Sector's Texas 2021 volunteer hourly value of \$26.43



How Township volunteers trained as Texas Waters Specialists – Water Labs ++





How Township volunteers help neighbors learn about water quality

THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP

BE A DOGGY DO NOT A DOGGY DON'T

WHY WORRY ABOUT DOG WASTE?

1 gram of dog waste contains more than **23 million bacteria**.

The average waste output per dog is .7 pounds per day. In The Woodlands, that equals about **27 tons per day** or six dump trucks!

Rain washes pet waste into storm drains and waterways. As it decomposes, the waste uses up **precious oxygen** needed by fish and other creatures to stay alive and healthy.

Dog waste is the **#3 cause of water pollution** in the U.S. It is classified as a dangerous environmental pollutant by the EPA.

Dog waste carries diseases and viruses such as Salmonellosis, Parvo, Coccidia, Toxocariis and more. These can be transmitted to other wildlife, pets and humans.

HOW CAN I HELP?
ALWAYS bag and dispose of pet waste in the trash can.

Remember: Dog waste is a dangerous pollutant which can cause harm to wildlife, waterways and humans.

Be a Doggy Do and not a Doggy Don't.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?
Contact The Woodlands Township Environmental Services Department at enviro@thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov or 281-210-3800.

Learn more about The Woodlands Township at www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov

THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER



Working with your MUD

VOLUNTEER WORKERS ARE INSTALLING MARKERS ON STORM DRAINS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF OUR WATER.

Anything put down Storm Drains flows straight into the nearest waterway, untreated/unfiltered. Please: No yard debris. No chemicals. Only Rain belongs in the Drain!

To get involved, contact the Environmental Services Department at 281-210-3800. For information about Stormwater Pollution, contact your MUD.

