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Rockdale County Student Wins Water Essay Contest

Melissa Johnson, a student at Conyers Middle School, is the Rockdale county winner in the annual Clean Water Campaign/waterSmart essay contest. Johnson, a student in Ms. Crowe's class was presented with a poster and certificate by Commission Chairman Norman Wheeler on November 9 at 8 AM.

In honoring Johnson with her achievements, Chairman Wheeler addressed Rockdale County's commitment to providing clean water to residents by saying, "In 2003, Rockdale Water Resources has met or exceeded state water quality standards throughout its first full year of operating a water treatment facility. It continues to meet or exceed state standards." He said, "Rockdale County gained its water independence in 2002 by the utilization of our reservoir on Big Haynes Creek, and construction of a 22.1-million-gallon-per day (mgd) Water Treatment Plant."

"Water is a precious resource and should be conserved and used wisely," Johnson said in her winning essay. "Water quality is a big issue today because of population growth and urban expansion and development. We need more water every day so it is important to conserve and stop polluting."

The two organizations, Clean Water Campaign and waterSmart, teamed up to encourage children and parents to address the growing need to improve water quality and conservation efforts in Georgia. Students researched and shared their thoughts on why conserving water and preventing water pollution is important for the future of their river, lakes and streams. The main goal of this program was to encourage students to create solutions to water conservation and water quality in metro Atlanta.

The contest was open to sixth, seventh and eighth graders in Bartow, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Forsyth, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale and Walton Counties. Student winners in each county were awarded a Clean Water Campaign / waterSmart certificate. All award winners will receive a visit by an elected official at an award presentation.

About waterSmart

The **waterSmart** program was initiated by the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority to educate metro area residents about "state of the science" methods for conserving water while maintaining beautiful lawns and landscapes. waterSmart tips were developed in conjunction with the Georgia Water Wise Council and the Cobb County Extension Service.

About the Clean Water Campaign

The **Clean Water Campaign** is a cooperative, multi-agency public education initiative spearheaded by 20 local governments and managed by the Atlanta Regional Commission. Its mission is to build awareness of water quality problems and solutions in the Atlanta region.

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