



For immediate release

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Xeriscaping: Landscaping that Saves Time and Cost

The Clean Water Campaign will be holding a series of Xeriscaping and Native Plants Workshop in partnership with local governments and University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service Offices to show residents ways to create a healthy landscape that does not require excessive watering.

The term Xeriscape refers to an innovative landscaping practice that conserves water and protects the environment. Pronounced "zera-scape," Xeriscape, was created 1981 in response to a prolonged drought in the United States. It derives from the Greek word "Xeros," meaning "dry." Xeriscape is an approach to water-wise landscaping using appropriate design, soil preparation, irrigation, plant selection, mulching and maintenance. Plant selection is key to Xeriscaping because plants native to Georgia not only survive the extreme conditions of our climate are more pest resistant, and in return prevent water pollution by not requiring additional fertilizer and pesticide.

Last year, water-saving landscaping practices became even more important in the Atlanta region when the Georgia Environmental Protection Division instituted a permanent outdoor watering schedule. The schedule limits outdoor water use year-round, even during non-drought periods. Odd-numbered addresses can water on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. Even-numbered addresses can water on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. No watering is allowed on Fridays. Cindy Daniel with the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District says, "Even in a wet year like this one, it's important to remember watering restrictions. They are not just for drought anymore." She added, "Watering restrictions help to relieve pressure demands on the water systems during peak hours as well as raise awareness of water use."

Any landscape, whether newly installed or well-established, can be made more water efficient by implementing one or more of the seven steps of Xeriscaping. Some examples of the steps include soil improvement and appropriate plant selection. Existing landscapes do not have to be totally redesigned, but can be retrofitted to save water. Significant water savings can be realized by simply modifying your watering schedule, learning how and when to water, using the most efficient watering methods and learning about the different water needs of plants in your landscape. Xeriscaping workshops will be held in the following counties:

- **August 16, 2005 (7:00 PM)** - North Fulton Service Center, 7741 Roswell Road, Atlanta, GA 30350. Speaker: Lynwood Blackmon. Contact: Corlette Dennard at 404-730-8097
- **August 18, 2005 (7:00 PM)** - Cobb County Water Quality Lab Training Room, 662 South Cobb Drive, Marietta, GA 30060-3105. Speaker: Steve Brady. Contact: Jennifer McCoy at 770-528-1482
- **August 18, 2005 (7:00 PM)** - Gwinnett County Justice and Administration Center, 75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville, GA 30045. Speaker: Robert Brannon. Contact: Kelley O'Brien 404-463-3259
- **August 30, 2005 (7:00 PM)** - South Fulton Service Center, 5600 Stonewall Tell Road, College Park, GA 30349. Speaker: Lynwood Blackmon. Contact: Corlette Dennard at 404-730-8097

*The **Clean Water Campaign** is a cooperative, multi-agency public education initiative spearheaded by local governments in metro Atlanta, supported by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and managed by the Atlanta Regional Commission. Its mission is to build awareness of water quality problems and solutions in the Atlanta region. For more information about the Clean Water Campaign, contact Kelley O'Brien at 404-463-3259.*

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