

## Just for Floats!

Did you know that "Jaws" is the most common name for a goldfish?

Did you know that America once issued a 5-cent bill?

Did you know that the ampersand (&) was once a letter of the English alphabet?

Did you know that a duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why?



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# CURRENTS

[www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org](http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org)

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## Proper Management of Fertilizers and Pesticides

Residents of the City of Houston and Harris County take great pride in the appearance of their lawns, and keep them healthy and green; we tend to overuse pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. That means a lot of very toxic substances, plus phosphorus and nitrogen, can make their way into our storm water. Substances that get into the City of Houston and Harris County storm water drainage system flows directly into our bayous, rivers, and ultimately Galveston Bay. If storm water is contaminated, then that's how it stays. Storm water receives no treatment.

to accomplish the purpose, and only apply to affected areas. Buy only the amount you need. Never over-fertilize, especially near ditches, streams, or other bodies of water. And don't fertilize or apply pesticides before an expected rain—the chemicals can wash away into a storm sewer or ditch. Store pesticides and fertilizers in a covered area. And remember, don't rinse application equipment near a storm sewer; let the water soak into your lawn. If pesticide or fertilizer instructions recommend watering after application, use a hose or sprinkler and monitor to prevent runoff.

To reduce the number of pests in your yard select a diversity of plants for landscaping that are resistant to pests and that thrive in our local environment. Natural predators limit pest populations. You can use household alternatives to toxic pesticides, such as spreading a chili powder barrier to prevent ants from entering your yard or house. To discourage mouse or rat populations, secure or remove their food sources. Places birdseed in rodent-proof containers, and never leave garbage accessible to animals or pests. Use mulch to discourage weed growth and pull weeds by hand.

For more information on great lawn care tips, join us on April 8th at Mercer Arboretum for our annual YardWise Course. We have multiple speakers lined up to discuss Mosquito Control and Yard Care, WaterSmart Landscaping 101, Importance of Mulch and Compost in the Landscape, and Alternatives to Pesticides. This six hour course will include a tour of the Mercer Arboretum Gardens. To sign up, please go to our website <http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org/hhw/yardwise.asp>.

Naturally derived botanical pesticides such as rotenone sabadilla and even nicotine are good alternatives to toxic products. If chemicals must be applied, use the least toxic ones

If you have concerns about improper use of fertilizers or pesticides in your community, please express your thoughts to 311 if you live inside the City of Houston or 713-920-2831 for Harris County residents.

## Coming Events

### Saturday, April 8th

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held at the Harris County Annex 13 & Sport Complex located at 17423 Katy Freeway (Enter via Barker-cypress), Houston, TX 77094  
8 AM to 2 PM only

### Saturday, April 8th

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held at the Galena Park ISD parking lot located at 14705 Woodforest Blvd., Houston, TX 77015  
9 AM to 3 PM only

### Saturday, April 29th

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held at the Humble Civic Center located at 8233 Will Clayton Parkway, Houston, TX 77338  
8 AM to 2 PM only



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# New Storm Water Quality Staff Members

Cheryl Burton-Fentress Interview

HCSWQS: What is your new job title?

Burton-Fentress: Household Hazardous Waste Assistant Manager



HCSWQS: What can the public learn from you about Storm Water Quality?

Burton-Fentress: Proper disposal methods of hazardous materials that we use in our homes. When not disposed of properly, these materials can pollute our waterways. Many of these materials can be recycled into other items, which can save energy and landfill space.

HCSWQS: Tell us an interesting personal fact about yourself.

Burton-Fentress: I have a really bad addiction for shoes and purses!

Herman Sanders Interview



HCSWQS: What is your new job title?

Sanders: Public Education Coordinator

HCSWQS: What can the public learn from you about Storm Water Quality?

Sanders: Educating the public is where it all begins. Once the knowledge of how and what kids, residents and industry can do to help prevent polluting our storm drains, then the problem becomes a little easier to solve.

HCSWQS: Tell us an interesting personal fact about yourself.

Sanders: I'm very fascinated by the myth of Atlantis.



"When the well's dry, we know the worth of water."  
- Benjamin Franklin, (1706-1790), Poor Richard's Almanac.

# On the Horizon -

The Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Mobile Unit

What is the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Mobile Unit? It is a team of trailers that will allow Harris County to conduct small, localized household hazardous waste events designed for transporting hazardous household items such as lawn and garden chemicals, paint products, household chemicals, and automotive fluids to a HHW facility for proper disposal.

Gail Moncla, the HHW Manager was asked why the mobile unit is needed. Moncla explains, "The mobile unit will make the collection of HHW from rural areas more economical than hiring an outside vendor to provide collection and disposal services for County residents." By making collection events more accessible to residents of Harris County they'll be given the opportunity more frequently

to dispose of their household hazardous materials

When HHW Assistant Manager Cheryl Burton-Fentress was asked what the mobile unit will be comprised of she explained, "The Mobile Unit will be a team of two trailers, one is a 36' gooseneck trailer and the other is a 14' flat-bed trailer." Burton-Fentress goes on to say, "Each trailer will transport a different type waste. Between both trailers, they should be able to service 75 - 100 households per event. This would be about 10,000 pounds on the average."

HHW expects to have a fully functioning mobile unit for use by the summer. A news conference is being planned for fall 2006. Expect an update on the HHW Mobile Unit in future editions of Currents. ♦



# NEWS SPLASH!



YardWise Course

The YardWise program is a FREE annual course available to all Harris County residents interested in learning more about environmentally responsible yard care. The course is being held on Saturday, April 8, 2006 at Mercer Arboretum located at 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble, TX 77338. For more information please call (713) 290-30000 or visit [www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org/hhw/yardwise.asp](http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org/hhw/yardwise.asp) to sign up today!

Call for Volunteers!

Would you like to work with us at our community events? We are always looking for passionate volunteers who are interested in helping us further our cause. Opportunities are available year-round. We'll provide you with all the tools you'll need to be a successful volunteer. Great for high school and college students who need volunteer hours, but all ages welcome! Join us! To add your name to our volunteer roster, please contact Herman Sanders at 713-290-3077 or [hsanders@swq.hctx.net](mailto:hsanders@swq.hctx.net).

