

Just for Floats!

Did you know that the Sargasso Sea does not have a coastline?

Did you know that one in every ten people in the world lives on an island?

Did you know that the petals of the world's largest flower are half meter (1.5 feet) long?

Did you know that a fresh egg will sink in water, but a stale one won't?



Harris County
Storm Water Quality Section
9800 Northwest Freeway, Suite 305
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Coming Events

Saturday, September 30th

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held at the Tomball Community College located at 30555 Tomball Parkway, Tomball, TX 77375
9 AM to Noon only.

Saturday, October 7st

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held in the City of Baytown located at 1200 Lee Drive, (corner of Lee Drive & Riggs Street)
Baytown, TX 77520
8 AM to 2 PM only

Saturday, October 21st

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held at the Barbara Bush Library located at 6817 Cypresswood Drive, Spring, TX 77379
8 AM to 2 PM only

Saturday, October 21st

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held at Crosby High School located at 14703 FM 2100, Crosby, TX 77532
9 AM to 3 PM only



STORM WATER QUALITY

Harris County Storm Water Quality Section

CURRENTS

www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org

Volume 7, September 2006

Why Watersmart?

From sprinkler to storm drain, from bayou to bay, the water used to maintain your yard remains untreated. What you do to your lawn and what runs off your yard determines the health of Galveston Bay. If you think your contribution to water pollution is insignificant, add your runoff to that of your neighbors and combine that with the rest of the Galveston Bay watershed. The result is runoff pollution – the number one source of water pollution in most of our bayous.

Unfortunately many homeowners continue to damage our water by adding more fertilizer and pesticides than warranted. During rainfall or over-watering, excess fertilizer and pesticides run untreated directly into our bays and bayous. Every year algae blooms from excess fertilizer remove precious oxygen from our water resulting in fish kills. Many pesticides are toxic to aquatic life and they may also accumulate in the food chain. It is best to be prudent in their use, or perhaps not use them at all.

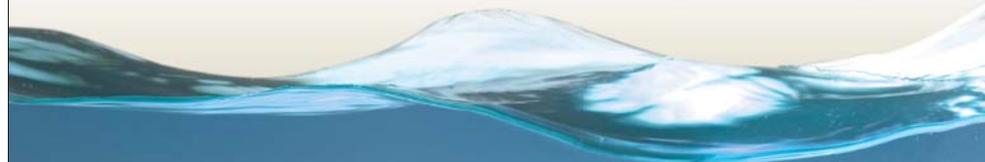
Certain varieties of plants are suited to the Upper Texas Gulf Coast Area and thus require less water and fewer fertilizers and pesticides. Many plants are native to this area and have been thriving here for centuries. Other non-native plants and heirloom varieties have been successfully adapted to the Gulf Coast.

“A WaterSmart yard utilizes plants and practices that require less water plus little or no fertilizers and pesticides.”

A WaterSmart yard utilizes plants and practices that require less water plus little or no fertilizers and pesticides. With minimal grass cover and maximum use of native and adapted plants, the WaterSmart landscape is beautiful and easy to maintain and environmentally friendly. By converting your lawn one section at a time you can create a landscape that helps preserve the bay area and gradually reduces your maintenance time. For more information on WaterSmart practices please visit www.watersmart.cc or www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org.

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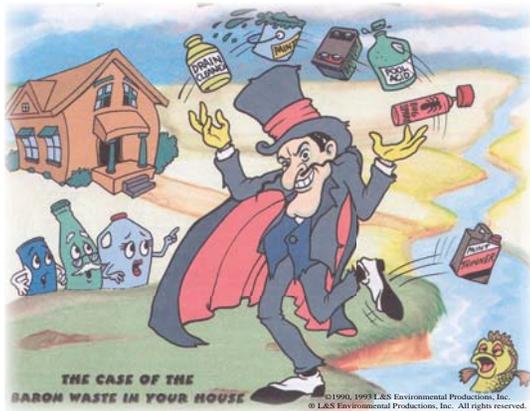
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Storm Water Quality Takes the Baron to Local Elementary Schools

What do recycling, household hazardous waste, storm water drains, worms, and a Baron all have in common? You may not know, but your children are learning! They are all part of the Beat the Baron Waste® program that Storm Water Quality has been presenting to Harris County 3rd through 5th grades since fall 2004.

The Baron is the main character in the Beat the Baron Waste® program that educates students about which materials in our homes are considered household hazardous waste and why, the benefits of recycling certain items, why only water should go into the storm drains, and other interesting



environmental information. The program also teaches students the consequences of not recycling, improper disposal of hazardous materials from our homes, and what occurs when the storm drain is

point presentation discusses recycling, storm drains and household hazardous waste. The students get to participate in a fun, interactive classroom quiz before getting to see the worms at work.

Teachers are given a goody bag with a Beat the Baron Waste® educational binder that is TEKS approved. Each child receives a special surprise in addition to the educational materials that may be used at home or in the classroom.

This spring, 1,686 students attended one of the 51 classes that Harris County presented in 14 area elementary schools.

The program has received great reviews from both students and teachers.

You may request the Beat the Baron Waste® program at your elementary school by going to www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org/kids or by calling Cheryl Burton-Fentress at 713.290.3094. ♡

used as a garbage can. At the end of the presentation, they get to observe worms making compost from newspaper, fruits and vegetables.

The presentation is 45 minutes long and is free to all Harris County classrooms. Students are shown a 10 minute video about water content and treatment. A power



"If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water."
- Loran Easley

Texas Recycles Day is November 15th!

"Growing Recycling in Texas" is the theme for Texas Recycles Day for 2006, with an emphasis on composting and using compost. Composting is nature's way of recycling.

In Texas, more than 20 million tons of compostable organic materials like yard trimmings, wood chips, food waste, and paper go into landfills every year. When these materials decompose, methane (a powerful greenhouse gas) is released.

In urban areas of Texas, as much as half of the water supply is used for landscape and garden watering. Using compost and mulch helps the soil absorb and retain moisture, which can reduce watering requirements by fifty percent and reduce runoff into lakes and streams. Mulch and compost also insulate grasses and other plants against extreme heat and cold, and slowly release nutrients that promote plant growth and resistance to pests and diseases.

Statewide events highlight numerous solutions for simple and inexpensive waste reduction such as, composting

and recycling. Texas communities use these events as an opportunity to raise public awareness on the economic and environmental benefits of waste reduction and recycling. Events will be held statewide from mid-October through November 15th.

Plan an event now, and help us keep Growing Recycling in Texas!

Recycling Facts:

- In 1990, Texans had 790 active landfills but only 190 by 2002
- In 2003 Texans threw away 29.07 million tons of waste
- By using mulch and compost on lawns and gardens, Texans could reduce the need for watering by 30 to 60 percent
- One gallon of oil can contaminate up to one million gallons of drinking water

Sources for these facts can be found at www.TexasRecyclesDay.org. ♡



NEWS SPLASH!

Paint Disposal Guide Available!
The new edition of the Paint Disposal Guide is available upon request. If you need to know how and where to dispose of any sort of paint, the Paint Disposal Guide is what you need! Call us to request yours today! 713.290.3000.

Learn to be YardWise!

The "YardWise" program is a FREE course available to all Harris County residents interested in learning more about environmentally responsible yard care. We have two courses scheduled: 1) Doss Community Center on October 12th at 1:00 PM and 2) Armand Bayou Nature Center November 17th at 10:00 AM. This class is a shorter version of our annual spring YardWise class, which is a full day. Participants will experience a classroom session that features lectures, slides, and some field instruction.

For details or to register, please contact Herman Sanders at 713.290.3000 or hsanders@swq.hctx.net or sign-up online by going to <http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org/hhw/yardwise.asp>.

