

This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

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Cobb's Sustainable Landscape Class

A Partnership to Educate from the
Grassroots

Water Smart Innovations

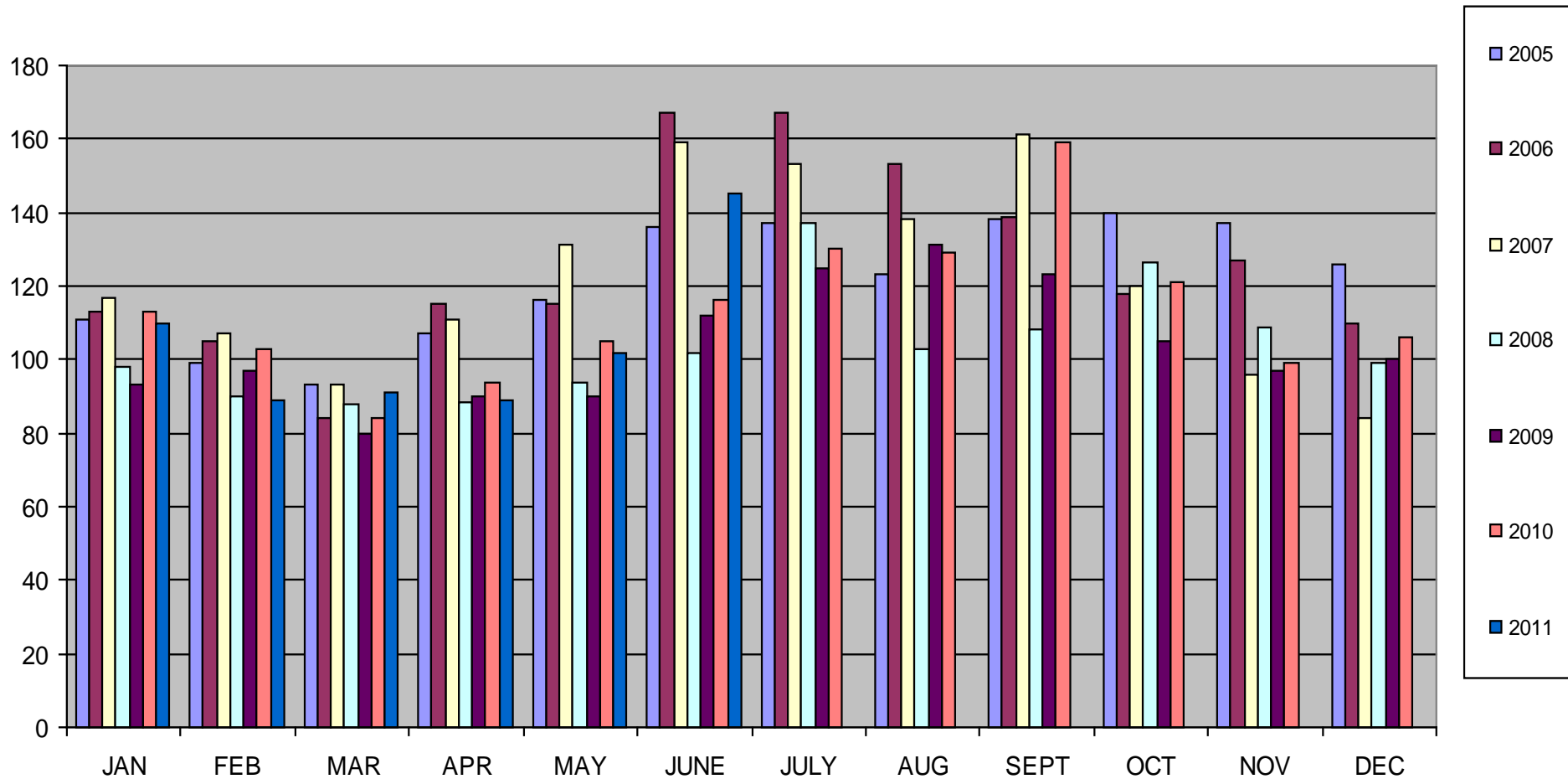
October 6, 2001

Overview of Cobb County

- One of the largest counties comprising metro Atlanta
- 700,000 residents
- 175,000 accounts
- 94% residential
- 2nd highest per capita income in Atlanta
- 3rd highest seasonal water use
- Peaking typically 1.6 (prior to economic collapse)
- 2006 highest seasonal peak, exceeded our wholesaler's withdrawal permit
- Unusual topography makes outdoor use a significant issue

Cobb's Water Use

Per Capita Comp 05-11



Why?

- A politician called my boss
- We had a grant for a suspended project that had to be used
- The stormwater educator and I were talking to the same people
- The right people never show up at meetings and seminars
- Conservationists notoriously let the perfect be the enemy of the good

What

- A very targeted class – Environmental Best Practice Basics
- Very specific audience - Field Crews
- No talking heads: peer to peer presentations
- No booklets or charts
- Hands on
- Walk away with the tools that you were taught to use in class
- Stolen goal “First Do No Harm”

Who?

- Cobb County Water System
 - Stormwater
 - Water Efficiency
- Cobb County Extension
- Local Green Industry Leaders in sustainability
 - White Oak
 - Brickman Group
 - Highgrove Partners
- Ewing Irrigation

Approach

- Hands on displays for the participants to visit and touch
- Presentations on each topic by landscapers and irrigation professionals
- Real world scenarios
- Focus on basic best practices
- Walk away with tools they take right out of class into the field

Logistics

- Limit class size due to cost and nature of class
- Class had to be taught late fall early winter
- Class was free
- Chose topics based upon prevalence and benefit
- Used Ewing Irrigation to determine content of tool kit
- Set a 3 hour time limit - limited attention span
- Carrot for participation: Participants listed on Cobb Water's website on irrigation pages

Costs and Tools

- Cost for the program \$6,150.00
 - \$5969 – Tool kits
 - \$181 – Food and miscellaneous
- Tool Kits
 - Solenoid troubleshooting tool
 - Station Master
 - 2.5 200# SS GLY LM 1/4 GAUGE
 - Pressure gauge adapter
 - Swivel adapter
 - Brass Pitot Tube
 - Tool Bag

Topics Covered

- Basic Site Preparation for Planting
- Planting Best Practices –
 - Right Plant Right Place
 - Sun vs. Shade
 - Slopes
 - Water needs
- Water Management – Irrigation
 - Troubleshooting
 - Adjusting pressure & repairing head
 - Scheduling
- Maintenance
 - Debris management
 - Mulch
 - Mowing
- Where do I go for More Training and Info?

What Worked?

- The peer to peer approach
- The incentive to be listed on our website
- The hands on approach
- The choice to give tools instead of text
- The narrow focus
- The scheduling – 3rd week of November
- The coordination with our partners and presenters
- Provided continuing ed. resources

Lesson's Learned

- Need to charge a small fee to ensure attendance
- Need to set up a way to follow up with participants
- Need to offer in Spanish
- Better outreach and coordination with the professional green industry organizations
- Better screening of participants

Thanks to Our Partners

- Ewing Irrigation
- Highgrove Partners
- Brickman Group
- White Oak Landscaping
- The University of Georgia

Questions? Preguntas?

Kathy Nguyen

Senior Project Manager

Cobb County Water System

770-419-6244

Kathy.nguyen@cobbcounty.org