

This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

watersmartinnovations.com





Do You Have a Blue Thumb?

A Landscape Water Efficiency Campaign

Presented at Water Smart Innovations

October 5, 2011



REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY



FREE Water Wise Tips and Services: rwah2o.org or call us at: **888-WTR-TIPS** (888-987-8477)

While many of you felt this...



***“U.S. endures
second hottest
summer on record”***

NOAA, September 8, 2011

We felt this...



“June off to wild start with tornadoes, hail, rain in Sacramento region”

Sacramento Bee, June 2, 2011



REGIONAL WATER EFFICIENCY PROGRAM



The Situation

- Typically hot, dry climate and long summer
- Surrounded by two beautiful rivers
- Recent wet winters and cool summers
- Water is relatively inexpensive



Opportunities

Focus on outdoor water efficiency:

- Adjust schedule according to season
- Reduce watering to prevent runoff
- Use low water-use plants in yard
- Replace lawn with low water-use plants
- Check irrigation system for leaks monthly
- Fix irrigation problems monthly

BLUE THUMB

BeWaterSmart.info

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[Home](#) [Ambassadors](#) [Thumbs Up](#) [Take the Pledge](#) [Blue Thumb Blog](#)

LASTEST BLOG

- [Diamond \(s\) Can Be a Water-wise Girl's Best Friend](#)
- [Who's In Your Garden And Why We Care](#)
- [Green Gardeners, Blue Thumbs And "Black Thumbs"](#)
- [Evidence Is In: Dogs Make Poor Water Managers!!](#)

SEE THE BLUE THUMB PSA.

Starring Mayor Kevin Johnson, Elissa Lynn, Dinger and Chris of the Sacramento River Cats and six other local folks who have earned their Blue Thumb.

[See the Blue Thumb PSA here >](#)



Do you have a Blue Thumb?

Welcome to the site that celebrates Sacramento-area residents who have earned their **Blue Thumb**. From stopping runoff to using a shut-off nozzle on their hose, they've made a personal pledge to use water efficiently—and happen to have a beautiful yard or garden to show for it.

They understand that most water use occurs outdoors, and that's where our largest opportunity to be efficient occurs. With the Sacramento region's hot, dry climate and long summer season, more than 65 percent of a household's yearly water consumption typically goes toward landscape irrigation. Of that, 30 percent is lost due to overwatering or evaporation.

If you crunch the numbers, the potential for savings is huge. By using water efficiently and eliminating water waste outdoors, Sacramento-area residents could collectively save almost 115,000 acre feet of water per year!

That's enough water to meet the drinking water needs of more than 135,000 families for a year

x 135,000
FAMILIES



Or...to fill nearly 1.5 million backyard swimming pools

x 1.5 MILLION
BACKYARD SWIMMING POOLS





© AWWA


[Home](#) [Ambassadors](#) [Thumbs Up](#) [Take the Pledge](#) [Blue Thumb Blog](#)

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EARN A COOL PRIZE

Take the Blue Thumb pledge and complete the form to receive:



Blue Thumb garden gloves

Take the Pledge

It's easy to earn your Blue Thumb. You don't have to rip out your entire lawn and replace it with low-water use plants (though we wouldn't cry if you did). There are lots of every-day things you can do to use water efficiently outdoors.

To earn your Blue Thumb, check out the list and [pledge to complete at least five actions by clicking the checkboxes](#). Then, fill out the form that appears and we'll send your prize.

REGISTRATION

My Pledge

- Reduce each irrigation cycle by 2 minutes (five stations - watering three times weekly) / Save 80 gallons per day
- Plant low-water use trees and plants / Save 30 to 90 gallons per day - per 1000 square feet
- Water your yard early in the morning or later at night / Save 50 gallons each time you water
- Add 2-3 inches of mulch around trees and plants to reduce evaporation / Save 20 gallons each time you water per 1000 square feet
- Quickly repair leaks and broken sprinkler heads / Save 20 gallons per day per leak
- Install a water-efficient drip irrigation system for your trees
- shrubs and flowers / Save 15 gallons each time you water
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways - sidewalks and patios / Save 5 gallons per minute
- Use an auto shut-off nozzle on your hose / Save 5 gallons per minute
- Adjust sprinklers to prevent overspray and runoff (this also prevents washing fertilizers and pesticides into the storm drain - which leads directly to our creeks - streams and rivers) / Save 40 gallons each time you water



City of Sacramento Department of Utilities

Great ideas for ways to save water, cut down on yard waste and keep that green lawn! Spare the Water Sacramento!



Feed Your Lawn the Natural Way With a Mulching Mower | Blue Thumb www.bewatersmart.info

There are some pesky myths about mulching blades and mowing lawns that we believe might be hindering some of you Blue Thumbs from taking that itsy bitsy (we're talking small and easy here) step of trading out your regular lawnmower blade for a mulching blade—or a mulching mower if you are so inclin

May 10 at 10:50am · Like · Comment · Share

George Zipay likes this.



CITRUS HEIGHTS WATER DISTRICT

waterline

In This Issue:

- Tips for Summer Water Savings
- 2011 Water Supply Update
- Water Conservation Poster Contest Winners
- Interview with Lonnie Moore After 31 Years of Service

Summer 2011 | Volume 20 | Number 2

Citrus Heights Resident Helps Neighbors Save

Neighbors help neighbors use less water, or that's how Jerry Roach sees it after discovering that his neighborhood uses more water than most. The Citrus Heights resident has embraced outdoor water conservation and sees a nice reduction in his water bill, while still enjoying a beautiful lawn and yard. He's happy to share the secrets of his success with his neighbors so that they can save water and money too.


Jerry began with focusing on his outdoor irrigation system. "I think most of us are over-watering," he says. "I experimented with cutting back and still have a nice green lawn and well-watered plants."

In fact, outdoor irrigation makes up more than 65 percent of a household's yearly use; of that, 30 percent can be lost due to over-watering or evaporation.

Jerry adjusts the timers for his irrigation system seasonally, making sure it turns on in the morning (not too early, so that he can see if any of the heads are broken). How much water is too much? One clue is if water is running off to the street instead of soaking into the ground. For residents with steep driveways, Jerry recommends watering for less time but more frequently, to avoid runoff.

The biggest water hog, though, is a broken irrigation system, so Jerry has his professionally tuned-up once a year.

If you want to reduce your outdoor water use, what's a good way to get started? Jerry recently took the Blue Thumb Pledge (BeWaterSmart.info) which has some great tips on easy ways to conserve every day, as well as fun prizes to win. For more conservation tips, visit chwd.org/conservation.

Mission Statement

Quick Links

Sunday, April 17, 2011

- Home
- About SSWD
- Employment
- Rates & Billing
- Finances
- Customer Services
- Capital Improvements
- Meetings
- Calendar of Events
- Publications
- Plans & Reports
- Water Education
- Related Sites

Home > The Blue Thumb Pledge

Take the Blue Thumb Challenge to Use Water Efficiently

Earn great prizes like River Cats Tickets*

Have you earned your Blue Thumb? From stopping runoff to using a shut-off nozzle on hoses, many people have made a personal pledge to use water efficiently and have a beautiful yard or garden to show for it.

They understand that most water use occurs outdoors, and that's where our greatest opportunity to be efficient occurs. With the Sacramento region's hot, dry climate and long summer season, more than 65 percent of a household's yearly water consumption typically goes toward landscape irrigation. Of that, 30 percent is lost due to overwatering or evaporation.

Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) is partnering with the Regional Water Authority and water providers throughout the Sacramento region this spring and summer to encourage customers to earn their Blue Thumb and take the Blue Thumb pledge.

The Blue Thumb pledge asks visitors to identify five actions they're willing to take outdoors, including every day things like using mulch around trees and plants or quickly repairing broken sprinkler heads. By taking the pledge, you can also earn great prizes like River Cats tickets, while supplies last.

Remember that water is a limited resource that shouldn't be wasted. Join your neighbors and take the Blue Thumb pledge today at BeWaterSmart.info.

* While Department Assistant Looking



Water Provider Tools



Media Outreach



Video



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Homepage > VIDEO

Landscape Experts Offer Mom's Day Ideas

POSTED: 10:33 am PDT May 7, 2011
UPDATED: 10:24 am PDT May 7, 2011

Landscape experts offer tips for a lush, green lawn and other landscaping ideas for Mother's Day.

Recommended Videos

Most Read | Most Watched | Most Commented

Media Outreach

Sacramento-Area Residents Honored as Blue Thumb Ambassadors

The Regional Water Authority and local water providers launched their 2011 Blue Thumb Pledge Drive by honoring 11 Sacramento-area residents and organizations as Blue Thumb Ambassadors for their dedication to landscape water efficiency.

Water providers and landscape advisors nominated nearly 40 individuals and organizations. Ultimately, 11 were selected because of their passion for using water wisely outdoors and their work as environmental educators, resources for their neighbors and stewards of local water supplies.

"Sometimes it's difficult to appreciate the need for water efficiency after such a wet winter," said Linda Higgins, RWA's water efficiency program manager. "Our Blue Thumb Ambassadors understand that water is a limited resource that shouldn't be wasted no matter the short-term weather and water supply conditions. They also know firsthand that beautiful landscaping and water efficiency go hand-in-hand."

Blue Thumb honorees range from landscape experts and contractors to a homeowners association and park district, and stretch from Rocklin to Sacramento to El Dorado. Read their stories on the Blue Thumb website at BeWaterSmart.info.



Blue Thumb Ambassadors are honored during a pre-game ceremony at a Sacramento River Cats baseball game.

Partnership Hosts Blue Thumb Blog

The term "Green Thumb" is used to describe someone with a natural skill for gardening. Now there's a new resource for gardeners to help them develop a "Blue Thumb" — a talent for creating a beautiful, water-efficient landscape.

In the new Blue Thumb blog, landscape and irrigation experts Cheryl Buckwalter of Landscape Liaisons and Vicky Bartish of EcoLandscape California share their personal and professional insights and answer questions on landscaping and watering submitted by readers.

The blog at bewatersmart.info/blue-thumb/blog is hosted by the Regional Water Authority in partnership with local water providers.



Vicky and Cheryl are the Blue Thumb bloggers.



Advertising and PSAs





Blue Thumb Blog

Home Ambassadors Thumbs Up Take the Pledge [Blue Thumb Blog](#)

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MEET THE BLUE THUMB BLOGGERS

Vicky Bartish and Cheryl Buckwalter



They're here to help you develop a "Blue Thumb"—the skill and talent for creating a beautiful, water-efficient landscape.

Blog



Send us your most vexing questions about landscaping and watering, as well as your photos and video. We welcome all of it here at the Blue Thumb blog, where Cheryl and Vicky share their personal and professional approach to creating and maintaining beautiful landscapes that also happen to use less water.

1 2 »

Diamond (s) Can Be a Water-wise Girl's Best Friend

Today my fellow blogger Cheryl and I had the distinct pleasure of doing a radio interview with Dave Diamond of Salem Radio's "Community Today" public affairs program. Although we have done other radio and television interviews for the Blue ...

[Continue reading →](#)

Who's In Your Garden And Why We Care

I knew a woman who had a greenhouse window in her m... a tiny dish of water tucked discretely among them. When

Green Gardeners, Blue Thumbs And "Black T...

Writing this blog is a great learning experience— seeing water-efficient gardens, irrigation systems, and water con... from gardeners of all levels and are happy ...

Evidence Is In: Dogs Make Poor Water Manag...

We recently heard from the owner of a naughty five year... likes to chew on (operating) sprinkler heads—NO! NO! F... dental work these days, ...

Fatal Run-off Attacks Young Tomato Plants As They Sleep



May is Water Awareness Month

Ask us about water-efficient products for your home

Earn your Blue Thumb at BeWaterSmart.info



In partnership with Lowe's and the Regional Water Authority

Partnerships:
Water
Awareness
Month



TOP 10 PRODUCTS

for Saving Water at Home

Available at



Inside Your Home

WaterSense labeled products are at least 20% more water-efficient without sacrificing performance or quality. Learn more at www.epa.gov/watersense

- 1 WaterSense labeled toilets
- 2 WaterSense labeled showerheads *New!*
- 3 WaterSense labeled bathroom sink faucets and aerators



Outside Your Home

Most water use—and water waste—occurs outside the home. The following products can help maximize landscape water efficiency:

- 4 **Mulch**
Adding 2–3 inches of organic mulch reduces evaporation and can save 20–30 gallons each time you water (per 1,000 square feet)
- 5 **Automatic shut-off nozzle for hoses**
This simple tool can save 8–18 gallons of water per minute
- 6 **Low water-use plants and trees**
Installing low water-use plants can save 30–60 gallons each time you water (per 1,000 square feet)
- 7 **Rotary sprinkler nozzles**
High-efficiency sprinkler heads help reduce water waste by limiting irrigation run-off
- 8 **Drip and inline irrigation kits**
Starter kits make it easy to install a water-efficient drip irrigation system
- 9 **Automatic hose timer**
Hose timers can automatically turn drip or hose-end sprinklers on or off
- 10 **Rain sensor**
Rain sensors save water and money by stopping the irrigation system from watering in the rain



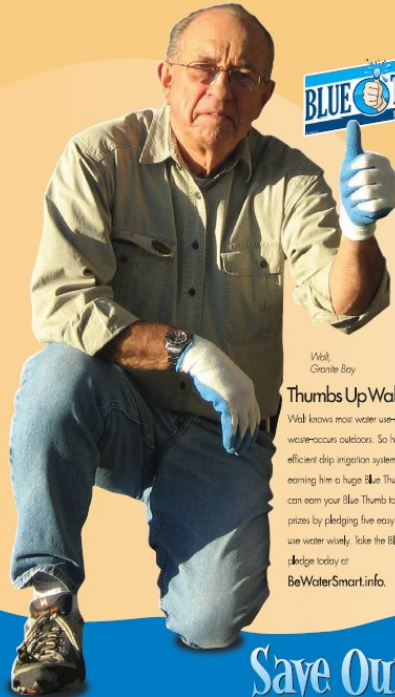
BeWaterSmart.info

In partnership with The Home Depot and the Regional Water Authority

Partnerships: Water Awareness Month



How to save water outdoors



Walt,
Granite Bay

Thumbs Up Walt!

Walt knows most water use-and waste-occurs outdoors. So he installed an efficient drip irrigation system on his property, earning him a huge Blue Thumb up. You can earn your Blue Thumb too and great prizes by pledging five easy actions that use water wisely. Take the Blue Thumb pledge today at BeWaterSmart.info.

- Water your yard in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler.
- Install a weather-based irrigation controller.
- Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered (not the sidewalk or street) and fix broken sprinklers.
- Consider replacing part of your lawn with water-efficient plants and landscaping.
- Call your water service provider for a free water-wise house call. You can learn about rebates, get assistance with setting sprinkler timers, receive advice on water-efficient plants and more.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways, sidewalks, patios and walkways.
- Wash cars/boats with a bucket, sponge and hose with self-closing nozzle.

20% by 2020

California communities now are required by state law to reduce urban per-capita water use by 20 percent by 2020. Do your part today and tomorrow to stretch every drop.

Save Our WATER



Save Our Water is a statewide public education program designed to help Californians rethink the way we use our water everyday. Working with local water agencies around the state, Save Our Water aims to make water conservation a way of life, just like recycling and conserving energy. Learn more ways to save at saveourh2o.org.



bewatersmart.info
saveourh2o.org

Sponsored by Save Our Water and the Regional Water Authority March 2011

Partnerships: Sacramento River Cats

How to save water outdoors



April, Elk Grove

Thumbs Up April!

April knows most water use-and waste-occurs outdoors. So she started lots of beautiful BeWaterSmart plants in her yard, earning her a huge Blue Thumb up. You can earn your Blue Thumb too and great prizes by pledging five easy actions that use water wisely. Take the Blue Thumb pledge today at BeWaterSmart.info.

- Water your yard in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler.
- Install a weather-based irrigation controller.
- Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered (not the sidewalk or street) and fix broken sprinklers.
- Consider replacing part of your lawn with water-efficient plants and landscaping.
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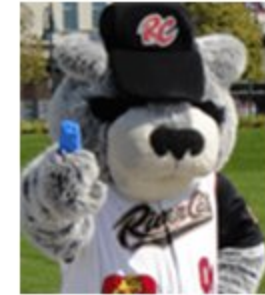


bewatersmart.info
saveourh2o.org

Sponsored by Save Our Water and the Regional Water Authority March 2011



Partnerships: Sacramento River Cats



**Dinger did it!
You can too!**

Take the Blue Thumb pledge to use water efficiently and earn great prizes at the Sunday, April 10, game. Three lucky fans will be selected for a garden hose limbo contest on the field, and one will win a wheelbarrow of water-saving goodies, compliments of the Regional Water Authority. Learn tips for using water efficiently outdoors at BeWaterSmart.info.

Take the Blue Thumb Pledge!



www.BeWaterSmart.info



Choose the actions you'll take to use water efficiently outdoors.

- 1** Reduce each irrigation cycle by 2 minutes
Save approximately 80 gallons per day
- 2** Plant low-water use trees and plants
Save 30–60 gallons each time you water (per 1,000 square feet)
- 3** Water your yard early in the morning or later at night
Save approximately 25 gallons each time you water
- 4** Add 2–3 inches of mulch around trees and plants to reduce evaporation
Save 20–30 gallons each time you water (per 1,000 square feet)
- 5** Quickly repair leaks and broken sprinkler heads
Save 20 gallons per day per leak
- 6** Install a drip irrigation system for your trees, shrubs and flowers
Save 15 gallons each time you water
- 7** Use a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways, sidewalks and patios
Save 8–18 gallons per minute
- 8** Use an automatic shut-off nozzle on your hose
Save 8–18 gallons per minute
- 9** Adjust sprinklers to prevent overspray and runoff
Save 12–15 gal



Collateral

Preliminary Results

- Media exposure
- Web site visitors
- Impressions and added value
- Pledges and estimated water savings
- Other

Questions?



Thank You!

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REGIONAL WATER EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

