

Meeting the Growing Demand for Water through Conservation Education

- Population growth, drought, and increasing water demands have stressed Texas' water supply.
- Water demand in Texas was projected to increase by 17% between 2010 and 2070.
- The 2012 State Water Plan includes more than 500 water management strategies developed to balance the projected water demand and supply.
- Municipal water conservation is expected to account for approximately 7% of new water supplies by 2060. Part of this conservation would be achieved through education.

AgriLife Extension's Response

- In 2011, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service joined the *40 Gallon Challenge*, a program that calls on residents and businesses to reduce their average water use by 40 gallons per household or business each day. The program began as a volunteer campaign to increase water conservation.
- The *40 Gallon Challenge* teaches and encourages people to adopt new water-saving techniques and practices, such as repairing leaky faucets, turning off water between rinsing dishes or while brushing your teeth, reducing irrigation runtimes, and replacing inefficient toilets and showerheads with low-flow devices.
- The *40 Gallon Challenge* now boasts more than 10,400 participants in 48 states who have either adopted or plan to adopt water conservation strategies. Their efforts add up to a daily water savings of over 1.7 million gallons nationwide.



- Through the *40 Gallon Challenge* program, AgriLife Extension has also provided residential water education to more than 1,050 people attending 28 programs across the state.

Economic Impacts

- The economic benefit of the *40 Gallon Challenge* program is measured in terms of water savings and water-cost savings associated with new, efficient water-saving practices.
- Texas participants have pledged to adopt practices that would save an estimated 246.1 million gallons of water annually—and more counties are implementing the program each week. Using an average municipal water price, the water-cost savings to Texas participants as a whole is estimated at \$886,000 a year.
- In addition to these water-cost savings, the ultimate societal benefit to Texas is more efficient use of our scarce water resources.