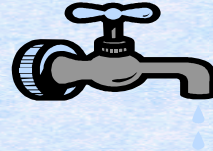


# Water Watch



May 2006

## ATASCADERO MUTUAL WATER COMPANY



### Water Wise Landscape Strategies A Workshop Series

Once again, the Atascadero Mutual Water Company and Partners in Water Conservation will offer a **FREE** summer workshop series designed to maximize outdoor water efficiency and prevent high summer water bills. Space is limited. Call 461-7217, ext. 17, to reserve a seat.

#### Drip Irrigation: A Hands-On Approach

Learn how to design, build, and operate water-saving drip systems. This workshop will be both outdoors and indoors.

**June 15th, 6:00-8:00 pm**  
AMWC Office  
5005 El Camino Real, Atascadero

**July 13th, 6:00-8:00 pm**  
Templeton Community Center  
601 South Main Street, Templeton

**July 15th, 9:30-11:30 am**  
Paso Robles Library, Conf. Room  
1000 Spring Street, Paso Robles

#### The Seven Principles of Sustainable Gardening

Learn how to create and maintain a beautiful Central Coast-friendly landscape.

**June 22nd, 6:00-8:00 pm**  
Templeton Community Center  
601 South Main Street, Templeton

**June 24th, 9:30-11:30 am**  
Paso Robles Library, Conf. Room  
1000 Spring Street, Paso Robles

**July 20th, 6:00-8:00 pm**  
AMWC Office  
5005 El Camino Real, Atascadero

#### Plant Selection for North County Landscapes

Learn which plants are best suited to our climate as well as strategies to best address issues affecting landscapes locally.

**August 8th, 9:30-11:30 am**  
Templeton Community Center  
601 South Main Street, Templeton

**August 10th, 6:00-8:00 pm**  
AMWC Office  
5005 El Camino Real, Atascadero

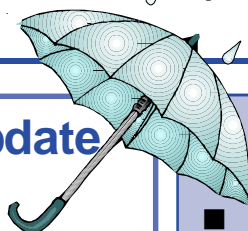
**August 12, 9:30-11:30 am**  
Paso Robles Library, Conf. Room  
1000 Spring Street, Paso Robles

### Atascadero Rainfall Update 21.27 inches\*

With the amount of rain this season, wait until your lawn begins to dry in the late spring before turning your irrigation back on.

An easy way to determine if your lawn needs to be irrigated is to check the soil moisture with a soil probe or moisture meter (available at your local hardware store).

\*Recorded at the AMWC Facility Yard on Sycamore Road (as of 4/30/06).



### Inside

- Water Quality and Pesticides
- The 1st Annual "North County Autumn Garden Tour"
- Water Conservation Programs
- How to Control your Irrigation Controller
- Urban Water Management Plan
- AMWC Shares History at Colony Days



## Mark Your Calendars!

# The 1st Annual North County Autumn Garden Tour “A Celebration of Our Landscape”

Sunday, October 8th

The Autumn Garden Tour will showcase several gardens in the Atascadero and Templeton area. The variety of gardens on the tour will feature both newly planted and mature sustainable landscapes. Tour participants will receive information on the gardens, including homeowner successes and challenges. The tour cost, \$10.00, will include light refreshments, a raffle, and lots of great information to take home from local organizations. More information to come this summer!

**Participating organizations, including AMWC, that promote sustainable living, include:**

**Atascadero Native Tree Association**

[http://madronelandscapes.com/anta/about\\_ANTA.htm](http://madronelandscapes.com/anta/about_ANTA.htm)

**Master Gardeners Program-San Luis Obispo**

<http://cmgn.ucdavis.edu/County/SanLuisObispo/>

**Mediterranean Garden Society, Central Coast Chapter**

<http://www.mediterraneangardensociety.org/branches-us-cal-central.html>

**Multiflora Garden Club**

<http://www.californiagardenclubs.org/html/montanadeoro.html>

**San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden**

<http://www.slobg.org>

**Slow Food USA, San Luis Obispo**

<http://www.slowfoodusa.org>

**Templeton Community Services District**

<http://www.templetoncsd.org/refuse.html>

## Conservation & Sustainability

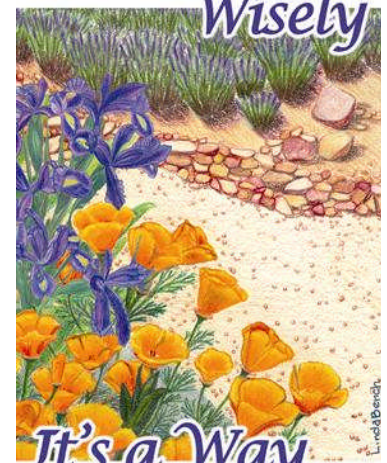
Viable tools for meeting our community's water needs

Each year over 50% of the water produced by AMWC is used on landscaping, with most of this water being used in the four months between May and August. To help offset the significant stress placed on our limited water resources by landscape irrigation, AMWC offers a range of conservation programs and FREE information. The programs are aimed at decreasing high summer water use, which saves you money while conserving water. The programs include:

- Seminars on drip and efficient irrigation practices, sustainable landscaping, and plant selection for North County landscapes
- FREE Home Water Surveys for qualified AMWC customers
- Lending library with videos and literature on sustainable landscape design and plant selection
- Water efficient technology incentive programs
- Presentations on water resources to classrooms, clubs, and groups

For more information on Conservation Programs call 461-7217, ext.17

Use Water  
Wisely



It's a Way  
of Life



# Water Quality and Pesticides

Reducing pesticide and fertilizer runoff from our landscapes into our creeks is essential to protect our finite water resources and our local ecosystems. A recent study entitled “The Quality of Our Nation’s Waters” found that insecticides are detected more often, and usually in higher concentrations, in urban streams as opposed to agricultural streams. More than half of the pesticides causing water quality problems are used in urban areas – by residents, home gardeners, and pest control professionals in and around homes, schools, and businesses.

## How You Can Help

The *Our Water, Our World* campaign provides the public with information about less toxic pest management and less toxic pest controls, including comprehensive information on rose care, ant home invasions, and dealing with yellow jackets. The *Our Water, Our World* information sheets draw from many disciplines to find sensible solutions to pest problems. IPM (Integrated Pest Management) is a strategy that emphasizes less toxic controls for keeping pests at acceptable, low levels.

## Integrated Pest Management combines:

- Monitoring pest populations
- Identifying beneficial organisms such as ladybugs
- Choosing the right plant for the right place
- Sensible fertilizing programs
- Physical barriers to common pests like snails and ants
- Using pesticide solutions as the last resort and choosing the least toxic first



Keep your garden healthy and your home pest-free without resorting to chemical pesticides. Remember that when you apply pesticides, you are treating the *symptom*, rather than the *cause* of pest problems.

**Beneficial Insects:** You can attract and keep a wide variety of beneficial insects in your garden, such as the Praying Mantis, by including flowering plants that are rich in pollen and nectar.

**Slug and Snail Tip:** Moisture makes an area much more attractive to snails and slugs. Avoid overwatering and use drip emitters to deliver water only where it is needed.

*Our Water, Our World* information sheets are available at Miner’s Ace Hardware, 9370 El Camino Real, Atascadero, or online at [www.ourwaterworld.org](http://www.ourwaterworld.org).

## Urban Water Management Plan

*A Conservation Plan for Our Finite Water Resources*

AMWC looks ahead to efficiently plan for your future water supply. The 2005 Urban Water Management Plan provides an overview of water supply sources, conservation measures, programs, and incentives to ensure the wise and beneficial use of water resources.

For more information about the plan, which is updated every five years as part of the California Water code, please contact [jljen@atash2o.com](mailto:jljen@atash2o.com).



AMWC staff share Water Company history with the public at the 2005 Colony Days Tent City



**Atascadero Mutual Water Company**  
**P.O. Box 6075**  
**Atascadero, CA 93423**



*Printed on Recycled Paper*

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## Take Control of Your Controller!

When programmed correctly, irrigation controllers are an efficient tool for saving time, water, and money. Unfortunately, most irrigation controllers simply get turned on in the spring and turned off in the fall, rather than being adjusted to match the weather conditions.



A simple way to improve irrigation efficiency with your controller is by adjusting the number of watering days (up or down) as the weather changes rather than adjusting watering duration or cycle. For example, in the spring, water one or two days a week using a watering duration that achieves adequate moisture without runoff. As the days get hotter and watering needs increase, gradually increase the number of days you water each week. You can expect the number of watering days to peak in late July and early August, Atascadero's hottest months. Then, as the days begin to cool and shorten, begin reducing the number of watering days each week. It's that simple! There's no need for a complete reprogramming of your controller to adjust to changing irrigation needs.

Remember, irrigation controllers without rain sensors or soil moisture meters will water your landscape - even when it is raining or if the ground is saturated! If rain is in the weekly forecast, identify your landscape's need for irrigation, spot water if necessary, and turn your controller to the **Rain Pause** or **System Off** position.

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## Free Home Water-Use Survey

Our goal is to help you improve your landscape irrigation efficiency.

An AMWC auditor will:

- Check your water pressure
- Check your toilet for leaks
- Inspect your drip and sprinkler systems for leaks, breaks, clogs, and other problems
- Provide a written evaluation and suggested irrigation schedule for your landscape

To participate in AMWC's Home Water-Use Survey, call 461-7217, ext. 17, to schedule an appointment.

**Atascadero Mutual Water Company's monthly Board of Directors meetings are normally held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, at 6:30 pm, at the AMWC office located at 5005 El Camino Real, Atascadero. AMWC's Board of Directors invites and encourages shareholders to attend. Please call 466-2428 to confirm meeting dates and times.**