Landscape water conservation is not just a drought issue, it is also a supply issue. During irrigation season, water use increases by 35 to 75% which means water providers need to have the water resources and treatment capacity for this huge increase. As the population increases more water is required to meet water use demand. Unfortunately, EPA research shows 50% of water applied for urban irrigation is wasted because of poor system maintenance and inefficient programming.

Most homeowners do not understand how an irrigation system and irrigation controller work. Master Gardeners have a tremendous opportunity to provide homeowners with unbiased information homeowners can understand and use immediately to conserve water, save money and maintain a beautiful green landscape.

Automatic irrigation systems are a convenient method to irrigate and maintain landscape beauty and investment. However, most homeowners tend to overwater their landscapes and create runoff. Runoff waste valuable potable water, strains water treatment plants and supplies, and contaminates water resources. Irrigation efficiency and other landscape water conservation practices are the keys to protecting water resources, maintaining a beautiful landscape and extending your community's water supply. Water conservation is the least expensive method to make water resources sustainable.

Homeowners do not want to waste water or receive high water bills, but most homeowners just do not know how to determine how long to run their irrigation system, how to set and adjust their irrigation controller for different seasons, detect leaks, how to fix common irrigation problems or convert to drip irrigation. Texas AgriLife Extension can provide this information to homeowners through presentations and demonstrations by you once you finish this training.

The Master Gardener Specialist – Irrigation Efficiency training will cover hands-on practices for determining irrigation efficiency, setting controllers, setting a cycle and soak schedule, make minor irrigation repairs, system trouble shooting, catch-can test, converting spray irrigation nozzles to water conserving heads, converting spray irrigation to drip irrigation and other water conservation practices.

Master Gardener Irrigation Efficiency Specialists will volunteer 20 hours above their current volunteer obligation, train Master Gardeners in their county, present the information to at least 3 other groups and do a catch can demonstration for Master Gardeners, a garden club, neighborhood association or civic organization.

Registration
Only 15 participant spots are available for this training. Registration is first come/first served basis.

Submit your registration forms as soon as possible at http://wateruniversity.tamu.edu/courses/

Payment and forms must be in our office by March 19, 2018. No refunds will be given after March 22. For more information contact Dotty Woodson, d-woodson.tamu.edu
Tuition $250.00
Registration fee of $250.00 per person that includes:
- Irrigation Efficiency Master Gardener Specialist Manual
- Power Points, evaluations, and report form for public presentations
- Three lunches (Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday) Please let us know about any special dietary needs
- Snacks and drinks will also be provided each day

Reimbursement $50.00 for State Master Gardener Coordinator
Once training and volunteer hours are complete, reimbursement is available
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1-rxf7suh-MV21EN1g5QWJKV1U/view

Irrigation Demonstration Box (Optional) $250.00
Irrigation demonstration box is available at an additional cost. Each box has over $250.00 of equipment. This demonstration box may be purchased by the County Master Gardener Association to keep at the county office or by the individual Master Gardener. We want to make this offer separately from tuition to keep down the cost of the training.

Travel
Participants will need to provide their own travel and hotel arrangements. If you are looking to car pool or for a roommate, let us know. Dress appropriately for outdoor activities. A listing of surrounding hotels will be provided with receipt of the registration form.

Master Gardener Specialist – Irrigation Efficiency
March 26, 27, 28, 2018

Location: Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center
17360 Coit Road
Dallas, TX 75252

AGENDA
March 26, Monday
9:00 am
Overview: Why We Are Here. Awareness, Expectations, Obligations and Limitations

I. Landscape Irrigation and Water Issues

Learning Objective: Understand state and regional water supply problems and the relationship and importance of landscape irrigation conservation
A. State and Regional water planning and most recent projections
B. State laws, regulations and licensing certification programs related to landscape irrigation
C. Local ordinances and programs

12:00 noon Lunch provided

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Success Story - Bexar County Master Specialist – Irrigation Efficiency

Classroom Session of Basic Irrigation Components

II. Basic Irrigation System Troubleshooting as related to Water Conservation
Learning Objective: Know how to identify the most common problems and landscape irrigation systems from a water conservation perspective
A. General overview of application devices and their operation
B. Field exercises on how to identify and document common problems that affect water use efficiency (“system troubleshooting”)
C. Adjustments that can easily be done by a homeowner

March 27, Tuesday
9:00 – 12:00 noon
Field/Site Session of Basic Irrigation Components

II. Basic Irrigation System Troubleshooting as related to Water Conservation
Learning Objective: Know how to identify the most common problems and landscape irrigation systems from a water conservation perspective
A. Field exercises on how to identify and document common problems that affect water use efficiency (“system troubleshooting”)
B. Adjustments that can easily be done by a homeowner
C. Catch can test to determine precipitation rate

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm Lunch provided

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Water Utility Representative

2:00 pm – 4:00
Classroom Session

III. Producing an irrigation schedule for a home landscape
Learning Objective: How to measure the precipitation rate of sprinklers to use along with ET to produce an irrigation schedule, including run times and number of irrigation runs per week
A. Concepts of ET, crop coefficients and soil-water-plant relations
B. Software and web-based tools for producing irrigation schedules

March 28, Wednesday
9:00 am – 12:00 noon
Classroom Session

IV. Setting Irrigation Controllers
Learning Objective: Learn what types of controllers are available and how to use/program them
A. Overview of types of controllers
B. Programming electronic (non-mechanical) controllers
C. Operation and management of ET (“Smart”) controllers

V. Landscape Management Practices that Encourage Water Conservation
Learning Objective: Learn how soil preparation, plants selection and mulch will make a difference for irrigation efficiency

VI. Drip irrigation
Learning Objective: Learn how drip irrigation is more efficient, easy to install or convert a regular irrigation system to drip

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm Lunch provided

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Resources
Power Points and Fact Sheets
Irrigation Demonstration Boxes
Mission/Charge
Accountability
Evaluation