

Rainwater harvesting and turf management training April 18 in Lockhart

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LOCKHART – Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service’s Healthy Lawns and Healthy Waters Program is hosting a residential rainwater harvesting and turf management training April 18 in Lockhart.

The free event will be from 1-5 p.m. at the Lockhart State Park, 2012 State Park Road.

The training is offered in collaboration with the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership.

Seating is limited. Attendees are requested to RSVP online at

<https://hlhw.tamu.edu/workshops/2019/apr-18-lockhart/> or to contact John Smith, AgriLife Extension program specialist, College Station, at johnwsmith@tamu.edu or 979-845-2761.

The Healthy Lawns and Healthy Waters Program aims to improve and protect surface water quality by enhancing awareness and knowledge of best management practices for residential landscapes, Smith said.

Dr. Becky Grubbs, AgriLife Extension turfgrass specialist, College Station, said attendees will learn about the design and installation of residential rainwater harvesting systems, appropriate turf and landscape species based on local conditions and other practices.

“Management practices such as using irrigation delivery equipment, interpreting soil test results and understanding nutrient applications can help reduce runoff and make efficient use of applied landscape irrigation water,” Grubbs said.

Dr. Diane Boellstorff, AgriLife Extension water resource specialist in the soil and crop sciences department, College Station, said proper fertilizer application and efficient water irrigation can protect and improve water quality in area creeks and collecting rainwater for lawn and landscape needs reduces stormwater runoff.

Reagan Hejl, research associate in the soil and crop sciences department, College Station, said participants can have their soil tested as part of the training. The soil sample bag and analysis are free to Healthy Lawns and Healthy Waters Program participants.

Residents can pick up a soil sample bag with sampling [instructions](#) at the AgriLife Extension office in Caldwell County, 1403 Blackjack St. Ste B in Lockhart. Bags containing residents' soil samples may be brought to the training.

Hejl said soil samples will be delivered to the AgriLife Extension Soil, Water and Forage Testing Lab in College Station for routine analysis, including pH, conductivity, nitrate-nitrogen and other parameters. He said the training will include information on how to understand soil test results and nutrient recommendations so residents can interpret results once the analysis is mailed to them.

Stephen Risinger, watershed coordinator for Plum Creek Watershed, will discuss updates on watershed protection plan activities to improve and protect water quality in Plum Creek.

For more information about the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan, go to <https://www.gbra.org/plumcreek/>.

Funding for the Healthy Lawns and Healthy Waters Program is provided in part through Clean Water Act 319 grants from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The project is managed by the Texas Water Resources Institute, part of Texas A&M AgriLife Research, AgriLife Extension and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M University.