

Prairielands eLine

The Newsletter of the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District

Spring 2022 | Vol. 8, Iss. 2

Texas Well Owner Network “Well Educated” Workshop Hosted by Prairielands GCD Scheduled for May 4, 2022

A Texas Well Owner Network (TWON) training has been scheduled for May 4 in Cleburne for residents of Johnson, Ellis, Hill, and Somervell Counties. The program, known as Well Educated, is free and open to the public and will be held Wednesday, May 4 from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. at the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District office located at 208 Kimberly Dr., Cleburne, TX 76031. The workshop is for private well owners who want to become familiar with groundwater resources, septic system maintenance, well maintenance, water conservation, water quality and water treatment. Please visit our website and social media for updated details about the event.

Participants also have the option to have their well water tested for nitrates, total dissolved solids, and bacteria. Well owners who would like to have their well water tested can pick up two sample containers and collection instructions in the week before the event from the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District Office, 208 Kimberly Dr., Cleburne; AgriLife Extension office for Hill County, 126 S. Covington St., Hillsboro; AgriLife Extension office for Ellis County, 701 S. IH 35 East, Waxahachie; AgriLife Extension office for Johnson County, 109 W. Chambers Street, Cleburne; or AgriLife Extension office for Somervell County, 1405 Texas Drive, Glen Rose.

Water sample drop-off will be the day before the event, Tuesday, May 3, from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District Office or the AgriLife Extension offices in Hill, Johnson, Somervell, or Ellis counties. Screening costs \$10 per sample, due when samples are turned in either by cash or check made out to Prairielands GCD. The Wednesday, May 4 meeting will include information explaining the results.



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Native Plant Gardens in Hill County Provide Rest and Replenishment for Pollinators and People



Just like people rely on rest areas to refresh and sustain us during long journeys, so do monarchs, which need areas rich with milkweeds and nectar-producing plants to keep them fed during their 2,500-mile migration between Mexico and Canada.

To help meet the needs of both kinds of weary travelers, the Native Plant Society of Texas, in partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, created four monarch waystations at highway rest areas between Austin and Dallas along Interstate 35, also known as the official “Monarch Highway”. Monarch waystations are patches of habitat that provide resources for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration. The

monarch waystations feature hundreds of Texas native nectar plants, including critically important milkweeds.

Four sites were selected for implementation, including two matching safety rest areas in Bell County and two matching rest areas in Hill County. The waystations consist of approximately 1,000 square feet in each of the two Bell County rest areas and approximately 2,000 square feet in each of the two Hill County rest areas. The waystations also include educational signage describing the monarch life cycle, migration pattern and the relationship between monarchs and native plants. One of the hopes is that travelers will be inspired by the beautiful gardens and return home to plant native plants for pollinators.



Native Landscaping Workshop - April 23, 2022

Prairielands GCD will also be hosting an upcoming presentation on TexasSmartScape™ landscape design principles with hands-on design lessons and activities on April 23, 2022 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Participants will learn about utilizing plants adapted to the Texas heat that are drought tolerant, pest and disease resistant, pollinator-friendly, help conserve water, reduce stormwater runoff, prevent water pollution, and save time and money. Register online at www.prairielandsgcd.org/education/



Reminder: Meter Accuracy Verification of Permitted Wells Required Every Five Years



As a courtesy to permittees, the District would like to provide a reminder that per District Rule 3.7, any well, exempt or non-exempt, that is equipped with a variable frequency drive capable of being set at a level that would increase the maximum production capacity of the well higher than the maximum production capacity authorized in the approved well registration must be equipped with a flow restrictor, such as a dole valve, restriction orifice plate, or similar device that mechanically restricts the maximum production capacity authorized in the approved well registration.

A well that is equipped with a variable frequency drive prior to January 1, 2022 must comply with this rule no later than July 1, 2022. Any alternative method for demonstrating that a well equipped with a variable frequency drive will not be operated at a capacity that is higher than the capacity authorized in the well registration must be approved by the Board.

This notice is to serve as a reminder of these items listed in the District Rules to allow plenty of notice for permittees to make necessary arrangements to fulfill these requirements. To view a full version of the District Rules, please visit www.prairielandsgcd.org/about/rules-and-bylaws/. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Heath, Field Operations Coordinator, at 817-556-2299.

Prairielands GCD General Manager Recognized by Texas Water Conservation Association



Kathy Turner Jones was recognized on March 9 at the Texas Water Conservation Association's Annual Convention in Fort Worth for her service as the association's president for 2021-2022. TWCA is an association of water professionals and organizations in the state of Texas working to promote sound water policy for the state. TWCA's membership is made up of diverse entities and individuals all connected to the surface water and groundwater industries in some way. The association is also affiliated with the National Water Resources Association. This affiliation enables TWCA to participate in activities on the federal level pertaining to water resources and to secure prompt consideration of Texas water projects requiring federal assistance or participation. TWCA's mission is to build consensus, educate members and policymakers, and advocate on water issues.

TWCA General Manager, Stacey Allison Steinbach (left), and Kathy Turner Jones at the TWCA Annual Convention.

Texas 4-H Youth Water Ambassador Program

Applications for 2022-2023 Now Open

Applications are now open for the 2022-2023 cohort of Texas 4-H Youth Water Ambassadors. Now in its fourth year, the 4-H Water Ambassadors Program continues to grow in number and is gaining recognition and support from the Texas water industry. To date, 110 youth have participated in the Program representing more than 65 counties. The District is proud to support this youth leadership organization and provide an opportunity for young people to nurture their passion and knowledge for management of natural resources in Texas.

Founded in 2017, The Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program provides high school youth an opportunity to gain advanced knowledge and develop leadership skills related to the science, technology, engineering, and management of water across the state. The District currently has five ambassadors representing Hill, Johnson, and Somervell counties.

Through the program, ambassadors gain insight into water law, policy, planning, and management as they interact with representatives from state water agencies, educators, policy-makers, and water resource managers. Ambassadors also gain an appreciation for the complexity of managing Texas surface and groundwater resources, its importance to local, regional, and state economies, and the importance of protecting this valuable resource for future generations.

Water Ambassadors commit a minimum 40 hours of service over a 12-month period following a Leadership Academy. Service hours include delivering water education at local 4-H clubs, schools, and community events. Many ambassadors have been accomplishing this goal through virtual presentations and meetings.



Please visit www.prairielandsgcd.org/education/texas-4-h-water-ambassadors/ for more information!

Eligibility:

- Be in high school or entering high school in the 2022/2023 academic year
- Be at least 14 years of age by August 31, 2022
- Be a current 4-H member, or be willing to join a local 4-H club if selected

Expectations:

4-H Water Ambassadors accept the responsibility of educating youth and adults in their communities. They commit to advancing their water knowledge throughout their 12-months of service. Those selected will participate in the summer 4-H2O Leadership Academy (June 12-17) and commit to a minimum of 40 hours of education/service.

How to Apply:

Visit <https://www.texas4hwaterambassadors.com/application> for instructions.

Deadline to apply is May 15

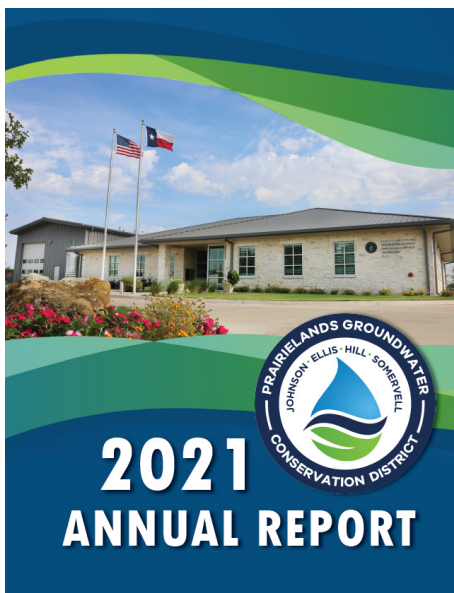


Rainwater Harvesting 101 Workshop Planned for May 7

Prairielands GCD will be hosting another Rainwater Harvesting 101 workshop on May 7, 2022 for local residents to learn more about the basics and benefits of rainwater harvesting. Participants will join District staff for an educational presentation on rainwater harvesting, followed by assembling their own 55 gallon rain barrel to take home with them.

Presentation topics include the basic components of a rainwater harvesting system, benefits and uses of rainwater harvesting, where to put your rain barrel to capture the most water, and how to make the most of a rainwater harvesting system by implementing rain gardens and efficient irrigation systems. To assemble their rain barrels, participants will install ball-valve spigots towards the bottom of the barrel for outflow of the collected rainwater, and also fasten on screens to the openings of the rain barrel to keep out mosquitoes, debris, and leaves. Attendees of the workshop will be able to take these barrels home and implement them right away just in time for the spring and early summer rainshowers. To learn more about rainwater harvesting and to register for the workshop, please visit www.prairielandsgcd.org/education/rainwater-harvesting/. Please register for the event by May 5.

Year in Review: 2021 Prairielands GCD Annual Report Now Available



The District's Annual Report is intended to give an annual update on Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District's progress on each of the objectives and standards included in the District's management plan. Topics covered in the annual report include well registration, annual groundwater production amounts by county and user group, preventing waste of groundwater, monitoring drought conditions, regional water planning, and education initiatives. Printed copies are available at the District office, but for your convenience a digital copy is available on the District's website at www.prairielandsgcd.org/about/management-plan/.

About Prairielands GCD

The Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District was created in response to a finding by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality that groundwater shortages were expected in Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell counties over the next 25 years. The TCEQ finding required local residents to create a groundwater conservation district, or else TCEQ would mandate one. Enabling legislation for the Prairielands GCD was passed in 2009.

The Mission of the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District is to develop rules to provide protection to existing wells, prevent waste, promote conservation, provide a framework that will allow availability and accessibility of groundwater for future generations, protect the quality of the groundwater in the recharge zone of the aquifer, insure that the residents of Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell Counties maintain local control over their groundwater, and operate the District in a fair and equitable manner for all residents of the District.

Upcoming Events and Meetings

April 15	Good Friday PGCD Office Closed	April 23	Native Landscaping Workshop 10:00 a.m. 208 Kimberly Dr Cleburne, TX 76031	May 16	PGCD Board Meeting 9:00 a.m. 208 Kimberly Dr Cleburne, TX 76031
April 18	PGCD Board Meeting 9:00 a.m. 208 Kimberly Dr Cleburne, TX 76031	May 7	Rainwater Harvesting Workshop 10:00 a.m. 208 Kimberly Dr Cleburne, TX 76031	May 30	Memorial Day PGCD Office Closed

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