



Department of  
Watershed Management  
Protecting Our Future

January 2008

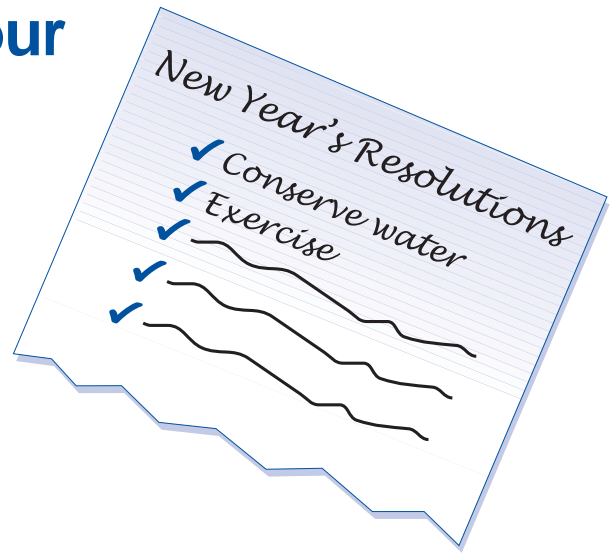
*Happy New Year!*

# Make Conservation Your New Year's Resolution

Make 2008 the year you embrace water conservation. With Metro Atlanta in a Level 4 drought, and meteorologists forecasting a warm, dry winter and spring, water conservation must be a choice each of us makes every day.

Why not add a couple of conservation resolutions to your list this year? If you need some help getting started, consider the following:

- ✓ Take shorter showers. Cutting your shower by one to two minutes can save hundreds of gallons of water every month.
- ✓ Don't let the water run when you shave or brush your teeth.
- ✓ Use your dishwasher or clothes washer only for full loads.
- ✓ Don't wash your car. Make a dirty car your symbol of conservation.
- ✓ Install a low-flow showerhead. Older showerheads typically release between 5-7 gallons of water per minute. Low-flow showerheads release 2.5 gallons or less per minute, yet still provide strong water flow.
- ✓ Install a low-flow toilet, and save up to 4 gallons a flush, more if your toilet was manufactured before 1980. Low-flow toilets use from 1.2 to 1.6 gallons per flush, as opposed to standard toilets, which use 3.5 to 7 gallons per flush. The City is launching a rebate program for residents who purchase ultra-low-flow toilets. Information will be available soon on our website, [www.atlantawatershed.org](http://www.atlantawatershed.org).
- ✓ Put aerators on your bathroom and kitchen faucets. Aerators reduce the amount of water flowing to 1.5 gallons per minute, as opposed to the 3-7 gallons per minute released by older, non-aerated faucets.
- ✓ Attach rain barrels to your gutter downspouts to collect gallons of free water that you can use watering plants and even flush-



ing your toilet. You can make your own rain barrel (a set of instructions is available on our website at [www.atlantawatershed.org/pdf/WaterConserBroc.pdf](http://www.atlantawatershed.org/pdf/WaterConserBroc.pdf)), or you can buy rain barrels at a number of local hardware stores and online.

For other water conservation tips, visit [www.atlantawatershed.org/drought](http://www.atlantawatershed.org/drought).

## A Drought-Resistant Garden for Downtown's Hurt Park

Atlanta artist Pandra Williams, with the help of Georgia State University's grounds crew, has planted a collection of native plants in Hurt Park, which borders GSU. The garden is part of a GSU art program and gallery exhibit entitled "Urban Intervention: The Beltline."

The 200-foot-by-50-foot green space includes 14 plant species native to the area, all of which are drought-resistant. However, even drought-resistant plants need watering until they are well-established. GSU is researching ways to collect graywater from the university's HVAC units as a potential water source. For more information, visit [www.reconstructingatlanta.com](http://www.reconstructingatlanta.com).

### Important Numbers to Remember

Customer Service: 404-658-6500  
Customer Service Fax: 404-658-6637  
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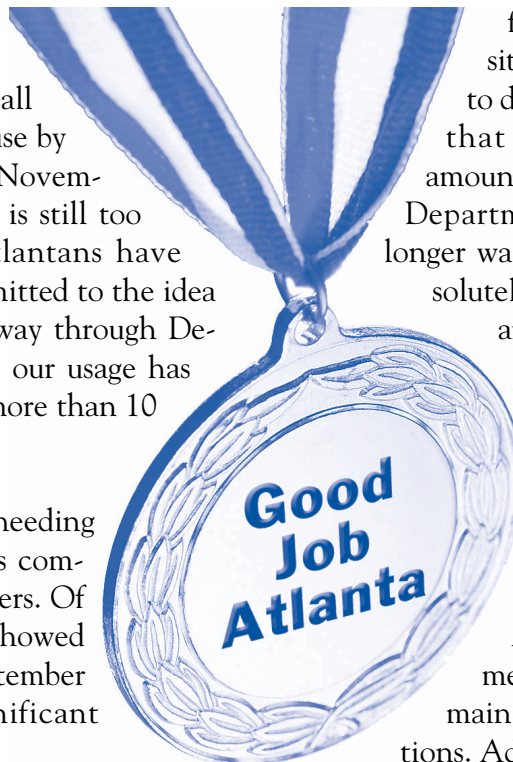
# Atlantans Rise to the Conservation Challenge

When the State declared a Level 4 drought in September, Mayor Shirley Franklin asked all Atlantans to cut their water use by 10 percent each month from November through March. While it is still too early to declare victory, Atlantans have shown themselves to be committed to the idea of conservation. In fact, halfway through December (as of December 17), our usage has actually declined by slightly more than 10 percent.

Clearly, Atlanta residents are heeding the call. But so are the City's commercial and industrial customers. Of the top 50 users, all but four showed reductions in usage from September to November, many by significant amounts.

The City is doing its part as well. Atlanta is spending \$1 billion on water infrastructure to repair and replace leaking water mains, service lines and meters. The City is at the end of the first year of a three-year project to replace all residential water meters with an Automated Meter Reading system that will eliminate leaks and ensure accurate billing.

Other Departments also are making conservation a critical part of their business. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Af-



fairs is seeking alternative sites for major events, so as not to damage grass and vegetation that would need significant amounts of water to recover. The Department of Public Works no longer washes its vehicles unless absolutely necessary (Public Works and the Department of Watershed Management must wash sanitation trucks and sewer vehicles, respectively, in the interests of public health and safety.)

And Watershed Management has severely curtailed its main and hydrant flushing operations. Additionally, the Department has crafted an agreement with Trees Atlanta, under which the organization captures water used in the remaining flushing operations to use in watering newly planted trees.

All Atlantans should pat themselves on the back. But this is no time to become complacent. The drought persists, and our lakes are still perilously low. Mayor Franklin is asking everyone, "How low can you go?"

Let's see what we can do!

## Get Help for Damaged or Clogged Sewer Pipes

DWM's Care & Conserve assistance program offers help to families whose sewer laterals, the lines that run from the home to the City's sewer, are clogged, broken or otherwise damaged.

The City is responsible for maintaining the sewer and drain lines located in the public right-of-way, but has no responsibility for lines on private property. The Care & Conserve Program allows the City to provide assistance to customers who meet income and other requirements. Broken sewer lines also waste water, a serious issue in this Level 4 drought.

To qualify for the Care & Conserve program, individuals must:

- Fall at or below the federal poverty guidelines;
- Own the property that sits atop the clogged or damaged lateral;
- Be current with their water/sewer bills; and
- Have not previously received assistance through this program.

For more information, call Southeast Energy Assistance, the organization that manages the program for the City, at 404-885-1877.

