

Summer  
2025

INSIDE:  
Summer Gardening  
Upcoming Events  
Work with Us



water  
SOURCE

ATHENS WATER  
FESTIVAL



POWER UP  
WITH WATER  
ON SEPT. 6!

## WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATORS

The team at the J.G. Beacham Water Treatment Plant plays a critical role in ensuring that our community's drinking water meets the highest quality standards before it reaches your faucet. The plant operates around the clock – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year – and always requires two operators on site to keep things running smoothly.

Plant Operator Chris Dehring answered some questions about what it's like working to ensure Athenians are getting the best quality water.

"My favorite part of this job is responding to changes in the system. In order to achieve the best quality drinking water, we have to monitor a lot of



chemical and mechanical pieces of the puzzle – keeping them in balance is rewarding!"

Plant operators work 40 hours a week across four days, with each shift beginning with a hand-off to ensure a smooth transition between crews. Daily responsibilities include conducting hourly chemical analyses of water samples, monitoring flows and pressures in the system, and making changes to the system as needed.

Newly hired operators immediately begin working towards a license in water treatment plant operations. This involves a combination of on the job experience at the plant, textbook learning, and classes. Continuing education is a big part of this job, even after an operator has gained their license.

According to Dehring, one interesting thing about being a plant operator has to do with making the water we drink aesthetically pleasing.

"This means that we make sure the water is crystal clear and has no taste or odors. The aesthetics of the water doesn't make water safer to drink, just nicer to drink!"

We appreciate the work all our plant operators do to make our drinking water safe, clean and nice to drink!

**Thank you for your service!**

Left to right: **Chris Dehring, Forest Hawk, Bryce Moore, and Dustin Bailey**



**Join the team at the  
J.G. Beacham Water  
Treatment Plant!**

**Athens-Clarke County  
Public Utilities is  
currently hiring Water  
Treatment Plant  
Operators. Apply at:  
[accgov.com/jobs](http://accgov.com/jobs)**

# Water wise tips for summer *gardening*

Your home's landscaping is one of the biggest water users. In fact, water used on your lawn and garden can account for as much as half of your summertime water bill! By following these tips, you can drastically reduce your water use while enjoying a beautiful yard and productive garden.

## Deliver Water Directly to the Roots

Sprinklers aren't very efficient – only between 40% to 50% of the water makes it to the plant's roots. Drip irrigation and soaker hoses minimize evaporation loss, keep the spaces between plants dry, and limit weed growth. WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers reduce over-watering – plants are watered only when they need it: [epa.gov/watersense/watersense-labeled-controllers](http://epa.gov/watersense/watersense-labeled-controllers)



## Choose H2grOw Gardens

Turf grass is one of the thirstiest and most labor-intensive plants you can have in your yard. Replace turf with H2grOw garden beds full of hearty, native, and colorful perennials. Choose one of the four professionally designed gardens at [acgov.com/H2grOw](http://acgov.com/H2grOw)



Bee balm is part of the H2grOw collection.

## Collect Rainwater

Rainwater is free, and in many ways, it's the best choice for your landscape plants as it contains nitrogen from the atmosphere, an essential nutrient for plant growth. You can use a rain barrel or a cistern to collect water from your home's downspouts – a 1,000-square-foot roof can collect 625 gallons of water from just an inch of rain!



## Mulch Your Plants

Water evaporates easily from bare soil. Applying 6–8 inches of organic mulch – wood chips, pine straw, or straw – to a garden bed can block weeds and reduce evaporation. Many organic mulches also hold small amounts of water, which increases the humidity around plants.

## SEPT 6 ATHENS WATER FESTIVAL



Dive into the ultimate adventure at the Athens Water Festival. Water is your quest during this day filled with power-up splash zones and watery obstacle courses. Enjoy games, bubbles, and a magic show – there's something for every age! Don't forget your water bottle and bathing suit for playing in the spray of water trucks.

**When:** Saturday, September 6, 10:00 AM–2:00 PM

**Where:** Sandy Creek Park

**More info:** Park entry is \$2.00 per person; the event activities are free. [AthensWaterFestival.com](http://AthensWaterFestival.com)



## Annual River Cleanup

Join hundreds of Athenians to help protect Georgia's water. Wade into local rivers, lakes, and streams as part of the annual statewide clean-up.

**When:** October 11

**Registration:** open mid September at [acgov.com/riversalive](http://acgov.com/riversalive)

OCT 11

## Imagine A Day Without Water

Contests, social media, and events across the country highlight how water is essential and invaluable.

**When:** October 16

**Where:** Stay tuned for local events at [ThinkAtTheSink.com](http://ThinkAtTheSink.com)

OCT 16



## little lily lookout



Little Lily is hidden in this newsletter. If you can find her, you might win a goodie bag! Enter by September 15 at [acgov.com/LittleLilyLookout](http://acgov.com/LittleLilyLookout).



## When to Water this Summer

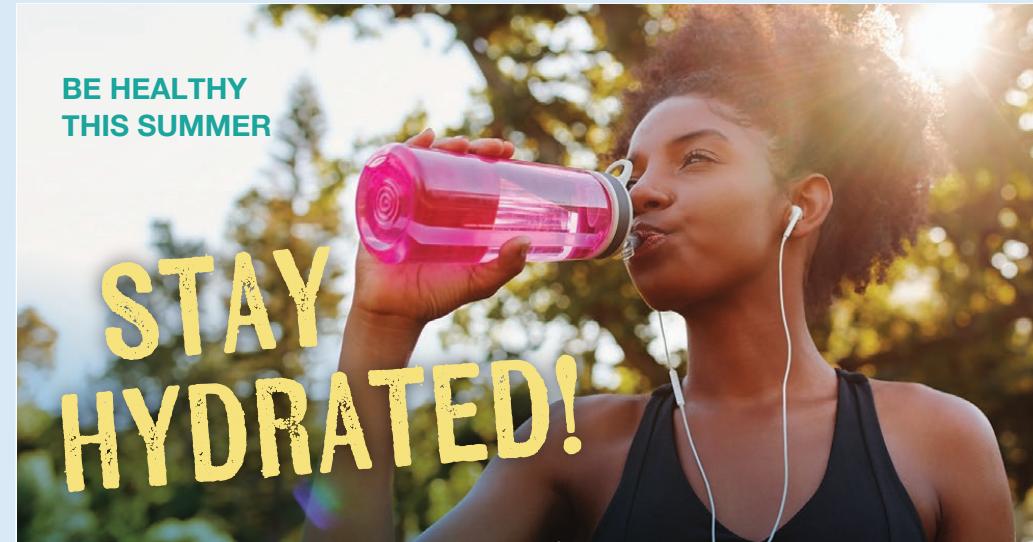
Did you know that even in non-drought times, there is an outdoor watering schedule? In order to reduce water loss through evaporation, the Georgia Water Stewardship Act regulates outdoor watering. To conserve water, especially during hot summer months, outdoor watering is allowed between 4:00 PM and 10:00 AM.

During times of drought, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) places extra restrictions on watering. Visit [ThinkAtTheSink.com](http://ThinkAtTheSink.com) to stay up to date on the latest drought status.



## BE HEALTHY THIS SUMMER

# STAY HYDRATED!



Summertime in Georgia brings soaring temperatures and humidity, so it's important to drink plenty of water. According to the World Health Organization, we lose about a pint of water through sweating on an average day, even when sitting in a cool room. While exercising in the heat, we can lose more than two and a half gallons of water a day!

## Tips for staying hydrated this summer:

- Drink water – about 8 ounces, or one cup – each hour during the day, starting when you wake up. You should drink more if you are very active or sweat a lot.
- Consume caffeine and sugary drinks in moderation. Too much can lead to dehydration.
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. Foods containing high water content can help you stay hydrated and replenish electrolytes.
- Check your pee! You can determine your hydration levels by noticing the color of your urine. If it appears clear or only slightly yellow, you're probably well hydrated. Deep yellow or orange urine means you need to drink more water.
- Drink when (or before) you feel thirsty!



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# GET LEAK ALERTS!

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water use



Evaluate  
your bill



Pay bill by  
credit card

Sign up at [accgov.com/WaterSmart](http://accgov.com/WaterSmart)



WaterSmart



Public Utilities

[accgov.com/publicutilities](http://accgov.com/publicutilities)

[ThinkAtTheSink.com](http://ThinkAtTheSink.com)

[facebook.com/lilyanne.phibian](https://facebook.com/lilyanne.phibian)

[x.com/AccWaterWarrior](https://x.com/AccWaterWarrior)

[instagram.com/lilyannephibian](https://instagram.com/lilyannephibian)

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**Water Bill Questions**

706-613-3500

**Administration**

706-613-3470

**Water Conservation**

706-613-3729

**To Report a Water Leak**

706-613-3495

**Emergencies**

706-613-3481

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