

TEXAS WATER: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

The League of Women Voters (LWV) and the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) invite the public to attend a day-long forum to learn about the challenges Texans face regarding water resources and how to assure there will be enough water for future needs throughout the state. The forum will be held on Saturday, Sept. 24, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. at SAWS headquarters, 2800 Highway 281 North, San Antonio, in Customer Service Building 2.

Speakers with expertise from the entire region, including water professionals, environmentalists, and public officials will give their viewpoints regarding the challenges and possibilities of managing water resources. The agenda will include time for participants to ask questions and express their own concerns and possible solutions.

Questions to be addressed by various panels reflect concerns common to areas of Central Texas. How can Texas best manage our water resources, especially in times of recurrent drought? How can the state prepare for increasing demands on water resources because of population growth? What problems are associated with transferring water from one area to another? How can the rights to groundwater be balanced between landowners and the whole community? What are some of the processes being used in our region to protect water resources?

Speakers will be representing various communities in the region, including Uvalde, Wimberley, Blanco, San Marcos, Victoria, and rural areas, as well as San Antonio. The forum is part of a state-wide LWV study of water resources, and is a follow-up to a regional forum held last fall. The Sept. 24 forum will address issues not covered in the previous forum, but relevant to the statewide water study being conducted by the League of Women Voters.

The registration fee for the forum is \$15, payable at the door, and includes a box lunch. Please pre-register by Saturday, Sept. 17 to reserve a lunch, by contacting kathyhunt@suddenlink.net or 361-573-1317.

AGENDA

Texas Water: What You Should Know

Sat, Sept 24, 2011

San Antonio Water System headquarters, 2800 Hwy 281 North, San Antonio

Purpose: To consider the competition for water in Texas, including governmental policy, public interest rights, and water resource protection concerns.

9:30 Registration/ Coffee

10:00 Welcome & Introductory Remarks

10:15 “Managing Limited Water Resources: Challenges & Possibilities”

Speaker 1: Representative from SAWS

To address: What are the major challenges to managing water resources in Central Texas? How do the differences in the way surface water and groundwater are regulated affect the ability to manage water resources? How can we plan for a future that includes population growth and recurring droughts?

Speaker 2: Representative from the environmental community

To address: The effects of population growth and climate change on the environment, especially water resources. Possibilities for changes in state water policies and possible lifestyle changes that individuals may need to adopt.

Questions from audience

11:25 “Water Transfers: From areas of surplus to areas of scarcity”

Speaker 1: Representative from SAWS

To address: What is the current process for determining where SAWS will seek water to be brought to San Antonio and the guidelines that they use? Could state policy regarding water transfers be improved and how?

Speaker 2: Con Mims, Executive Director, Nueces River Authority

To address: How does the current process for water transfers work from the standpoint of the “area of surplus?” What is his opinion regarding instituting a state agency to regulate all water transfers, establishing an exchange agency that lets prices float with the market, or retaining the current system?

Questions from audience

12:10 Lunch break

12:55 “Groundwater Rights and Right of Capture: SB 332”

Speaker: Greg Ellis, water attorney

To address: Background regarding SB 332, and explanation of the legal implications of the passage of SB 332 regarding groundwater rights of property owners vs. authority of groundwater districts.

Questions from audience

1:30 “Deciding Desired Future Conditions for Groundwater”

Speaker 1: Ron Fieseler, Groundwater Management Area 9

To be addressed: Explanation of Desired Future Conditions and the impact on water resources.

Speaker 2: David Baker, Wimberley Valley Watershed Association & former Hays Trinity GWDC board member.

To be addressed: Background regarding the challenge that the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association has mounted to the DFC set by GMA 9.

Questions from audience

2:35 “Working together to protect water resources: the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program (EARIP)”

Speaker 1: Dianne Wassenich, San Marcos River Foundation

To be addressed: Explanation of the EARIP. Meeting the needs of the endangered species in the springs, along the rivers, and in the estuaries.

Speaker 2: Jerry James, City of Victoria

To be addressed: Meeting the needs of downstream communities.

Speaker 3: Tom Taggart, City of San Marcos

To be addressed: Meeting the needs of spring communities.

Speaker 4: Adam Yablonski, representing agricultural stakeholders

To be addressed: Meeting the needs of agriculture.

Speaker 5: Representative from SAWS

To be addressed: Meeting the needs of the San Antonio metropolitan area.

Questions from audience

3:55 Next steps and Evaluations

4:15 Adjourn