



Mammen Family Library – Water Conservation Workshops

These workshops were developed in response to common questions and concerns about various topics related to water conservation, rain gardens, grass, water quality, pollinators, planting & pruning, and ecological issues. The workshops provide overviews (with questions and answers) for hill country residents to better understand water conservation needs.

Scheduled are 14 sessions, 1.5 hours each from 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm, beginning Monday June 8th and continuing every Monday (except Labor Day) through Sep. 14th

June 8 – Aquifers

Dr. Sunn & Dr. Grainger

We'll discuss aquifer types, current Comal County water table levels, our two types of aquifers, common misconceptions about aquifers, rates at which groundwater moves through an aquifer, depletion and replenishment rates, and natural filtration.

June 15 – Rain Harvesting

Dr. Grainger & Dr. Sunn

Learn how to capture rain for potable or irrigation purposes. We'll discuss understanding rainwater needs, storing rainwater, assessing a rainwater collection area, filtering leaves & debris, water filtration, monitoring the water level, and caring for your system.

June 22 – Drip Irrigation

Dr. Sunn

We'll show you how to install a system from the spigot out to the garden. You do not need special, dedicated water pipes. Bit by bit, fitting by fitting, we'll discuss installing the system components as you watch and learn.

June 29 – Rain Barrels and Wicking Gardens

Dr. Grainger & Dr. Sunn

The basics and benefits of rain barrels; we'll build a rain barrel on site. We'll give the barrel away to a lucky attendee and discuss how you can build your own rain barrel with basic supplies and some simple steps. The session also includes a demonstration on building wicking containers. Two units will be built in the workshop & will be given to an attendee.

July 6 – Lawns & Native Grasses

Brittnay Meyer

Find out how much water your lawn and native plants need to thrive and how often to get water to them. We'll cover the basics of proper lawn maintenance, fertilizing, mowing, and watering a beautiful, water-efficient lawn.

July 13 – Find and Fix Leaks at Home

Dr. Larry Sunn

This workshop will guide you through the process of finding common household water leaks, as well as providing tips for optimizing indoor water efficiency. You'll learn how to check your toilet for leaks, inspect common places you may find leaks, and how to find "sneaky leaks."

July 20 – Buzz of Beekeeping**Charlie “Bee” Agar**

If you are curious about what’s involved for those folks who keep bees, then this is a great introductory class for you. The class is designed for beginners, so no prerequisite knowledge is required. You can walk in knowing absolutely nothing about bees and walk out “bee-aware” or ready to get started with your own backyard beehive. No bee suit is needed!

July 27 – Pollinators – Bees, Butterflies, & Hummingbirds**Joanne Hall**

Discover the best native plants to attract butterflies and beneficial wildlife to your yard. This session is presented from an artistic and scientific point of view and is designed to appeal to all levels of pollinator gardening.

August 3 – Rain Gardens, & Prairie Ponds**Dr. Steven Grainger**

In this session we’ll discover design techniques used for planning, building, and maintaining a rain garden. This session will cover some background science, site investigation, design, plant and material selection, as well as installation.

August 10 – Xeriscaping with Native Plants**Craig Brusca**

Xeriscaping in the Texas Hill Country focusing on native plants can be challenging yet it offers a unique opportunity to cultivate a stunning landscape while markedly reducing water use. This session delves into planning, soil, plant selection, irrigation needs, mulch, and maintenance so you can experience a successful and rewarding water-conserving landscape.

August 17 – Composting**Dr. Steven Grainger**

Compost is a natural, dark brown, humus-rich material formed from the decomposition or breakdown of organic materials such as leaves, grass clippings, and vegetable food scraps. Procedures for composting are discussed, along with options for establishing a compost container, bin, or pile.

August 24 – Trees & Bushes: What to Know**Adrian Valdez**

This workshop is about trees and bushes, their differences and similarities; as well as structural nuances that require different care techniques. Our introduction to pruning strategies sets us up for applying the techniques in class in next week’s session.

August 31 – Applied Planting & Pruning**Adrian Valdez**

This applied workshop will focus on the essentials of when and how to prune trees and shrubs. We’ll cover—and you’ll make—proper pruning cuts, we’ll discuss different forms of pruning, and most importantly, pruning plants at the correct time.

September 7 – Labor Day**No Class****September 14 – Wildfire Home Protections****Dayziah Petruska, Texas Forest Service**

Creating a defensible space in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) is a critical, proactive measure to protect homes from wildfires by creating a buffer that slows fire spread and reduces radiant heat. Learn this process for managing vegetation and materials adjacent to your home and nearby structures.