

## Irrigation classes slated for April in El Paso

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April 3,  
2015

EL PASO — Two irrigation courses for professionals and others will be held in April in El Paso, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service instructors.

The first, the Landscape Irrigation Auditing and Management Short Course, will be held April 14-15 at the Tech2O Center, 10751 Montana Ave.

Classes will be held from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. on April 14, and from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. on April 15. Cost of the course is \$265.

The second course, the Drip Irrigation Workshop, will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 16 at the same location. Cost of this course is \$165.

Both courses are taught by two instructors, Charles Swanson, an AgriLife Extension irrigation specialist, and Dr. Guy Fipps, an AgriLife Extension specialist and irrigation engineer, both from College Station.

“These courses are designed for Texas licensed irrigators, technicians and inspectors to get the required continuing education units to renew their licenses,” Swanson said. “However, other groups such as city or utility park employees can attend and benefit greatly from these classes. Even if not licensed, anyone who works with or manages landscape irrigation systems can benefit from these trainings.”

The courses are conducted by the Texas A&M School of Irrigation’s Irrigation Technology Program, in cooperation with El Paso Water Utilities and AgriLife Extension for El Paso County.

The two-day Landscape Irrigation Auditing and Management Short Course – or LIAM – on April 14-15 teaches students how to conserve water through landscape irrigation auditing, Swanson said.

The course covers eight steps of auditing, including prioritizing audit sites, conducting field tests to measure system performance, calculating irrigation schedules and producing audit reports.

Students gain hands-on experience by performing two actual audits that include system troubleshooting, testing individual station performance, and identifying soil types and effective root depth.

Registration and completion of the course includes copies of the LIAM software and manual, Swanson said. The software is available to students upon completion of the class and is not for sale.

Students who complete the two-day auditing course will have the option to become a Texas Certified Landscape Irrigation Auditor through the Environmental Protection Agency’s WaterSense Program. The certification exam is offered at the end of the second day at a cost of \$75.

The Irrigation Workshop on April 16 provides an overview of drip irrigation systems, their design and management, as well as a review of their hydraulics.



Two irrigation courses will be held in April in El Paso. The Landscape Irrigation Auditing and Management Short Course will be held April 14-15. The Drip Irrigation Workshop will be held April 16. (AgriLife Extension photo courtesy of Charles Swanson)

“Instruction is provided on the types of drip products available in landscape applications and how to evaluate their performance characteristics and quality,” Swanson said. “Topics include the advantages and disadvantages of drip irrigation in landscape applications and product selection.”

Instruction is also provided on design and management considerations for different plant materials and soils, as well as filtration and clogging control, he said.

“We also teach how to determine proper spacing of drip tubing and tapes, and how to select system components based on manufacturers product specifications.”

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has approved the LIAM course for 16 hours of continuing education units for licensed irrigators, irrigation technicians and irrigation inspectors.

The Drip Irrigation Workshop has been approved by the commission for eight hours of continuing education units for licensed irrigators: four hours in introduction to landscape drip irrigation and four in the fundamentals of irrigation system hydraulics.

Swanson suggests students bring materials for taking notes and, while not necessary, they can bring laptop computers for use in the classes. For the LIAM short course, students should dress appropriately for outdoor field work, including rain gear.

For registration information, contact the AgriLife Conference Services at 979-845-2604 ☐ 979-845-2604 or online at <http://agriliferegister.tamu.edu>. For information on the program and course contents, contact Swanson at 979-845-5614 ☐ 979-845-5614.

The course and schedule information is available at the Texas A&M School of Irrigation webstie at <http://irrigation.tamu.edu> .