

July and August trainings designed for professional irrigators

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Irrigators, irrigator technicians and irrigation inspectors will receive hands-on and classroom instruction at trainings offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in July and August. (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service photo by Charles Swanson)

COLLEGE STATION – Currently, 785 public water systems in Texas have mandatory water-use restrictions in place with an additional 387 utilities following voluntary restrictions, according to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

“That is 25 percent of the state’s water systems with restrictions,” said Charles Swanson, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service irrigation specialist, College Station.

“Many people and municipalities are looking for ways to conserve water, particularly irrigation professionals seeking ways to make the best use of irrigation water for public parks, sports fields, landscapes and golf courses,” Swanson said.

To bring professionals up to date on the latest methods to make best use of their resources, four trainings will be conducted in July and August by Swanson and Dr. Guy Fipps, AgriLife Extension irrigation engineer, College Station.

Three of the trainings will be held in College Station and one in Dallas. The College Station courses will be held in Room 317 of Scoates Hall on the Texas A&M University Campus. The Dallas course will be held in the Education Building at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, 17360 Coit Road, Dallas.

Continuing education units will be offered for irrigators, irrigator technicians or irrigation inspectors licensed by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

The names, dates, locations and descriptions for the trainings are:

– Irrigation Troubleshooting and Performance Testing, July 30, College Station. The course will consist of hands-on training in how to program irrigation controllers, electrically troubleshoot controllers and valves, properly install rain sensors, determine sprinkler precipitation rates and create good irrigation schedules. Cost is \$165. Eight continuing education units offered.

– Solar and Wind Pumping Workshop, July 31, College Station. The workshop will teach how to design solar- and wind-powered pumping systems used with irrigation systems.

“This course is for those who have alternative sources of water that they want to use for irrigation such as pumping rainwater, air conditioning condensate or storage ponds, but not ready access to electricity,” Fipps said. Cost is \$165. Eight irrigation continuing education units offered.

– Irrigation CAD Workshop, Aug. 12-13, College Station. The workshop will provide hands-on instruction on how to use computer aided design software, commonly known as CAD, to produce efficient and professional irrigation designs that meet the state irrigation rules and requirements. Students will become proficient using ProContractor Studio by Software Republic, one of the most widely used irrigation programs in the state, according to Swanson. Cost is \$295. Sixteen irrigation continuing education units offered.

– Landscape Irrigation Auditing and Management Short Course, Aug. 27-28, Dallas. The two-day course focuses on identifying common irrigation problems, determining irrigation system performance in the field and conducting three irrigation audits using catch cans. The collected information is used to create seasonal irrigation schedules and calculate potential irrigation water savings. Students in the course will have access to Texas Landscape Irrigation Auditing Software and have the option of becoming WaterSense Certified Landscape irrigation auditors by taking the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Water Sense Approved Certification Exam. The cost of the course is \$265. The certification exam cost is \$75. Sixteen irrigation continuing education units offered.

All courses are approved by the Texas Commission for Environmental Quality for continuing education for licensed irrigators, irrigation technicians and irrigation inspectors, Swanson said. Attendees can also receive continuing education through the Texas Nursery Landscape Association.

To register, go to <http://agriferegister.tamu.edu/irrigation>.

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