



# **DURHAM CITIZENS' NEWSLETTER**

News and Information from the City of Durham

FY 2010 - 2011 No. 5 - March - April - Office of Public Affairs

101 City Hall Plaza - Durham, NC 27701 - Phone (919) 560-4123 - Fax - (919) 560-4949

## **Warmer Weather Can Lead to Wasteful Watering**

Even when water supplies are adequate, conservation is a wise use of a precious resource. Conservation can contribute to a healthy environment, reduce water bills and ensure an adequate water supply for years to come.

As spring approaches, the Department of Water Management reminds customers that Durham has year-round restrictions for outdoor irrigation that allow all customers to water up to three days per week based on address.

- Customers with odd addresses may water on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.
- Customers with even addresses may water on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- No watering is permitted on Monday or any allowed day between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

These restrictions only apply to automated irrigation systems and hose-end sprinkler devices; hand-watering is not limited. Temporary outdoor watering licenses are available for establishing new landscapes that allow customers to water more frequently than permitted by the schedule.

In addition to these restrictions, automated irrigation systems are required to have a rain or moisture sensor installed and activated. These sensors help prevent automated systems from irrigating while it's raining or just after. These devices help save water and protect landscapes from being overwatered. Rain sensors can be easily installed and are available through local home improvement stores or local irrigation professionals.

By following this schedule, you can help Durham reduce demand on local water supplies. For a copy of the WaterWise Landscaping Guide, call conservation staff at (919) 560-4381. For information on ways to save water and lower water bills, visit [www.DurhamSavesWater.org](http://www.DurhamSavesWater.org) or following us on Facebook (search Durham Saves Water).

## **Transform Your Yard into a Water-Wise Yard**

Whether you're developing a new landscape or revitalizing an existing one now is the time to make your yard or garden more water efficient.

Start by identifying features and use areas. This will help determine which areas get more wear, which spots make for great viewing areas, and which might need less water. Identifying these locations can aid in plant selection and help with plant groupings. To reduce watering and maintenance group plants with similar watering requirements together. This allows you to provide just enough water to keep them healthy.

An important step to remember is to improve your soil. Carefully prepared plant beds can reduce water usage by almost half. Good soil absorbs and holds moisture better and encourages plants with deep roots that can access moisture, even when topsoil is dry.

Another way to save water is to cut back on grass. Start by giving up turf areas that don't get much use, such as those near foundations, along medians, or on slopes. Replace these turf areas with groundcover, flower gardens, ornamental shrubs, and shade trees that are water-wise and drought resistant.

Inefficient irrigation is the biggest culprit of water waste in the yard. Whether using automatic irrigation or watering by hand, it is important to only provide the amount of water needed to support plant growth. Here are some additional watering ideas:

- Morning is the best time to water.
- Put a rain gauge in your yard – you can adjust the amount of watering you do based on natural rainfall. Gauge how much water your sprinklers put out.
- If you have an automatic sprinkler system, install a rain sensor or moisture sense shutoff device.
- Use a rain barrel to collect rainfall and runoff from downspouts.

For details on water wise gardening, request our WaterWise Landscaping & Watering Guide by e-mailing <mailto:savewater@durhamnc.gov> or call (919) 560-4381. For more ways to save water, visit [www.DurhamSavesWater.org](http://www.DurhamSavesWater.org).

## Customer Billing and Services To Modify Friday Hours

The Department of Water Management's Customer Billing Services section will change its Friday operating hours as of March 11.

Representatives will provide routine services such as setting up new accounts, answering billing questions and reconnecting services beginning at 10 a.m. on Fridays. Customer Billing Services will use Friday mornings, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. to focus on improving billing processes and conduct staff training as the City prepares to implement monthly billing. Customers may continue to pay their bills at City Hall during normal operating hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The City's online payment system at [www.durhamnc.gov](http://www.durhamnc.gov) will remain available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Bull City Connector Linking Downtown, Campus Connections

Park your car and let the Bull City Connector take you where you want to go! It's a convenient, fare-free, and frequent bus service connecting visitors, business travelers, students, and downtown workers to key destinations in and around



Durham, including Duke University, Durham's historic downtown, Ninth Street and Golden Belt. Whether you're looking for dining, entertainment or conducting business, this environment friendly bus service offers an alternative way to get to where you're going. For information and a route map, visit <http://www.bullcityconnector.org>.

## **Subscribe to the City Manager's Report**

Receive the latest information and important City news via e-mail with the City Manager's Report. The report from City Manager Thomas J. Bonfield highlights the latest happenings in Durham City Government. To subscribe, visit [www.durhamnc.gov/managersreport](http://www.durhamnc.gov/managersreport).

## **Spanish-Language Programming Now Airing on DTV8**

Spanish-speaking residents of Durham can now tune in daily for Spanish-language educational programming on DTV8, the City of Durham's government television channel on Time Warner Cable channel 8. Nightly from 8:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., viewers can enjoy consumer protection programming on topics ranging from mortgage help to preventing identity theft to keeping children safe online. The programming was provided by the Federal Trade Commission. The Spanish-language programming is also available to watch "on demand" on the City's [website](#). For more information or for a complete schedule of DTV8 programming, visit the [website](#).

## **Durham Celebrates the Earth in May**

The City of Durham and Keep Durham Beautiful, Inc., will host the annual Earth Day Festival on May 1 from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Durham Central Park on Foster Street. In addition to great food and music, participants will learn ways to help Durham "go green." Vendors and volunteers are needed. For information, call 560-4355 or visit [www.durhamearthday.org](http://www.durhamearthday.org).

## **Bimbé Cultural Arts Festival Set For May 14**

Durham Parks and Recreation will host the 42nd Annual Bimbé Cultural Arts Festival on May 14 from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the CCB Plaza, 201 N. Corcoran St. Bimbé has been a Durham tradition since 1969. There will be weekday activities May 10-13. Vendors and volunteers are needed. For information, call (919) 560-4355 or visit [www.durhamnc.gov/bimbe](http://www.durhamnc.gov/bimbe).

## **Durham Senior Games**

The Mature adults age 55 or better will display their athletic and artistic abilities at the Durham County 2011 Senior Games and Silver Arts competition April 30 - May 14. The games will be held at various Durham locations. Registration will be open through April 8. For information, call (919) 354-2710, ext. 27351 or visit [www.DPRPlayMore.org](http://www.DPRPlayMore.org).

## **Toilet Rebate Program Still Available**

The City of Durham is offering rebates valued at \$100 for qualified water customers who replace their existing toilets with EPA WaterSense labeled High Efficiency Toilet (HET) models. Any toilet that meets the criteria and is purchased after January 1, 2008, is eligible for the rebate. Rebates will be applied as credits to customers' water bills. For information and the rebate form, visit [www.DurhamSavesWater.org](http://www.DurhamSavesWater.org).

## **Durham ... Beyond the Headlines**

It's that time of year, when organizations are looking for speakers. The City of Durham is available to talk to you on a wide variety of topics about your city. For us, it's simple. We want to build strong partnerships with our residents by providing presentations on topics ranging from where your tax dollars go, our water quality, code enforcement in neighborhoods, to parks and recreation and the list goes on... Frankly, we want to be your best resource for getting answers to important questions about Durham. Call us at 560-4123 or email us at [speakersbureau@durhamnc.gov](mailto:speakersbureau@durhamnc.gov). We're waiting ...

## **Your City - Your Channel**

DTV8 provides programming to keep Durham informed on the important issues and services involving citizens every day. City government produced programs include scheduled meetings of the Durham City Council and the Durham Planning Commission. The City also produces "City Hall This Week," a program dedicated to informing citizens on what is going on inside Durham's city hall, and "CityLife," a show featuring information on current City issues and upcoming events. For a programming schedule, or to watch DTV8 live on the Web, visit [www.durhamnc.gov/dtv8](http://www.durhamnc.gov/dtv8).

## **Notice Under the Americans with Disabilities Act**

Persons who require assistance should call (919) 560-4197, TTY (919) 560-1200, or e-mail [ADA@durhamnc.gov](mailto:ADA@durhamnc.gov) no later than 48 hours before the event.