APPENDIX J – General Water Conservation Materials

GRAND OPENING
of the Water-Wise
DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

at Dunne Park
(Corner of 6th & Powell)
Downtown Hollister
Friday, September 17th @ Noon

The Demonstration Garden serves as a practical teaching tool for all water users.

More than 50% of residential water use is for landscape purposes.

Learn how you can reduce water use in your yard!

Water Resources Association
San Benito County
www.wrasbc.org
(8310 637-4378

San Benito
COUNTY FAIR

"LET'S STIRRUP SOME FUN!"

Friday, October 1st– Sunday, October 3rd

The Water Resources Association will be hosting a booth.
Learn how you can help conserve and protect our water supply.
There will also be information about the Hollister Urban Area Water and Wastewater Master Plan that is being implemented by the San Benito County Water District, the City of Hollister and the Sunnyslope County Water District and San Benito County. This plan will provide a long term vision to guide water resource improvements to the Hollister Urban Area.

There will be a drawing for prizes plus free giveaways!

Water Resources Association
San Benito County
www.wrasbc.org
(8310 637-4378

ATTENTION LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONALS

Tuesday, December 7th - Thursday, December 9th

FREE LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION EFFICIENCY CLASSES

Tuesday, December 7th

Basic Soil, Plant & Water Relationships - Landscape (1 day)

This one-day training session prepares landscape professionals for the basic concepts and terminology encountered in evaluating irrigation systems.

Wednesday, December 8th • Thursday, December 9th

Landscape Irrigation Auditor Training

(1.5 days + .5 day if taking CLIA test.)

This training session prepares landscape professionals to perform site inspections, evaluate irrigation systems, and develop efficient irrigation schedules for drip, bubbler, microspray and sprinkler systems. Several hours of the course are spent in the field performing "landscape irrigation audits" and at the computer generating irrigation schedules with the Landscape Water Manager software. Benefits from audits include water and cost savings, as well as improved landscape health and appearance.

Sponsored by:

The Water Resources Association San Benito County

831.637.4378 • www.wrasbc.org

A locally-based agency focused on water resource management in San Benito County, representing the City of San Juan Bautista, City of Hollister, Sunnyslope County Water District and the San Benito County Water District

ATTENTION AGRICULTURAL PROFESSIONALS

FREE WATER EFFICIENCY CLASSES

Growers, field operators, engineers and staff are the targeted audience.
A Spanish translator will be on hand for those that speak Spanish as their first language.

Wednesday, February 23rd

BASIC PIPELINE HYDRAULICS

Pipe materials and sizes, energy equation, friction and elevation changes, basic spreadsheet operations.

Thursday, February 24th through Friday, February 25th

BASIC PUMPS/FILTRATION/MAINTENANCE ON DRIP SYSTEMS

Pump curves, pumps in series and parallel, system curves, efficiency definitions and evaluation techniques.

To reserve a seat, call WRASBC

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The Water Resources Association San Benito County

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Toilet Giveaway!

FREE

Saturday, February 5, 2011
8am-Noon
San Benito County Water District
30 Mansfield Road, Hollister, CA

This program is for:

- Replacing toilets older than 1992.
- Water customers of the City of San Juan Bautista, City of Hollister, Sunnyslope County Water District and customers in Zone 6, San Benito County Water District.
- Toilet(s) provided are plain white, round-front model, seat and wax ring included.
- Participants need to provide a photo ID and a copy of their water bill and have 45 days to return their old toilet (March 22nd) after picking up their new toilet.

If the toilet being replaced is not older than 1992 and/or the old toilet is not returned, you will be charged.

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STOP RUNNING TOILETS!

CALL FOR A **FREE** LEAK CHECK TODAY

Water Resources Association

San Benito County

(831) 637-4378

For more information on programs and rebates visit:

www.wrasbc.org

A non-profit corporation focused on water resource management in San Benito County, representing the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope County Water District and San Benito County Water District

May is:
Water Awareness Month
Water Resources Association
San Benito County

Come by our booth at
The EXPO and JOB FAIR - May 14th
Veterans Memorial Bldg, 7th & San Benito St., Hollister

CALL 637-4378 for the programs below:

CALL THE WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION FOR A FREE HOME WATER SURVEY.

The survey includes:

- ✓ Leak check
- ✓ Showerheads and faucet aerators
- ✓ **Irrigation check**
- ✓ Suggested watering schedule
- ✓ High-quality hose nozzle
- ✓ Water softener assistance

ALL FREE!!!

- **Replace your old Toilet, the largest water user inside your home.** If your home was built before 1992 and the toilet has never been replaced, then it is very likely that you do not have water efficient 1.6 gallon per flush toilets. A family of four could potentially save over 14,000 gallons of water per year by replacing their older inefficient toilet.

THE WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION HAS TWO PROGRAMS TO ASSIST QUALIFYING RESIDENTS IN REPLACING THEIR OLDER, INEFFICIENT TOILETS (Pre-1992):

- ✓ Free Toilet Giveaway – Saturday, May 9th
- $75 Toilet Rebate

- **Replace your Clothes Washer, the second largest water user in your home.** **Energy Star™ rated washers use 35-50% less water and 50% less detergent. ($100 rebate)**

- **GET THE SALT OUT!** **($100-$300 rebate)**
  Help reduce the salt load to our sewer plant and groundwater supply by upgrading your pre-1999 water softener to a newer system, converting to an offsite service or by demolishing your old water softener with no replacement.

- **Plant low water consuming plants!**
  The WRA has literature and reference books to assist you.

- **TEACHERS!** **A Water Conservation Specialist is available to give presentations to your students. Teach your students about the Water Cycle and learn about our local water supply. Fieldtrips to the local treatment plant are available and all programs can be customized for your class.**

WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION OF SAN BENITO COUNTY
(831) 637-4378 **www.wrasbc.org**

The Water Resources Association is a non-profit corporation focused on water resource management in San Benito County, representing the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope County Water District and San Benito County Water District.

Checklist for a Water-Efficient System

Water Resources Association San Benito County

The following are a list of components or practices for optimal water efficiency:

Irrigation System/Component

- ☐ Install a rain sensor shut-off device to prevent watering during and after rain.
- ☐ Install a smart technology such as a weather-based irrigation controller or soil moisture sensor.
- ☐ Install drip or low volume irrigation emitters.
- ☐ Ensure overlapping, head to head coverage for efficient and uniform water distribution.
- ☐ Ensure your standard controller has the following capabilities:
  - ☐ Add zones/wiring
  - ☐ Multiple watering cycles and programs
  - ☐ Seasonal adjustments
  - ☐ Interval watering days
- ☐ Ensure that the application rates are adjusted to avoid runoff.
- ☐ Plan zones according to plant type and their water needs. For example, turf areas are on a separate zone from flower or shrub beds and watered accordingly.
- ☐ Install your irrigation system to meet the design criteria using the direct knowledge of the site conditions. For example, install sprinkler heads according to the plant type and size and shape of the landscape.
- ☐ Install low angle nozzles in the windy areas to lessen water loss.
- ☐ Adjust sprinkler heads as needed to avoid overspray.
- ☐ Use the proper pipe sizing to ensure uniform operating pressure and even water application.
- ☐ Install check valves to prevent low head drainage in sloped areas.
- ☐ Install a flow sensor to automatically shut off a system in the event of a break.
- ☐ Ensure correct pressure and flow rates are applied to avoid misting or fogging, using pressure regulating devices when applicable.

Practices

- ☐ Develop written operation and maintenance instructions including:
  - ☐ Watering schedule
  - ☐ Seasonal adjustments
  - ☐ Winterizing
  - ☐ Spring reactivation
- ☐ Set the schedule to irrigate using short cycles to allow water to soak in, to avoid runoff.
- ☐ Use matched precipitation nozzling.
- ☐ Perform a water audit.

Remember that it is important to routinely check for damaged sprinkler heads, inadequate coverage, clogged nozzles, and leaks. Regularly scheduled assessments can help you do this. Your next assessment should take place on_____.

Water Conservation is Everyone's Concern

Our rainfall totals for this year have been outstanding. This has really helped with our local groundwater supply. However, surface water deliveries to our county are still way below our historical averages.

The Delta is the hub of the Central Valley Project, the system of pipes, canals and reservoirs that brings surface water to San Benito County. A federal judge imposed pumping restrictions on how much water could be delivered through the Delta intending to protect the smelt, salmon, steelhead and sturgeon that all reside in the Delta during certain stages in their lives. This ruling has really impacted the water delivered not only in San Benito County, but throughout the Central Valley and beyond.

The problems in the Delta will be with us for many years and water deliveries will be lower than our historical averages until there is a solution. This will cause local growers and municipalities to rely more on our local groundwater supply. Relying on groundwater could cause a state of over draught for our groundwater basin. Even during wet years, like we've had this year, it's a good idea to conserve water because it costs money to pump and treat water. **The most immediate thing any of us can do is use our local water supplies as efficiently as possible.**

Call the Water Resources Association for a **free** Home Water Survey.
The survey includes:

- ✓ **Leak check**
- ✓ **Showerheads and faucet aerators**
- ✓ **Irrigation check**
- ✓ **Suggested watering schedule**
- ✓ **High-quality hose nozzle**
- ✓ **Water softener assistance**

ALL FREE!!!

Call the Water Resources Association of San Benito County to schedule your free appointment today.

(831) 637-4378

Did you know that over 50% of all residential water use is dedicated to landscape irrigation? Of this amount, another 50% is wasted due to improper irrigation scheduling or poorly maintained irrigation systems. Call the Water Resources Association to have your irrigation system inspected before the peak irrigation season starts. We'll make recommendations and design a watering schedule for your landscape. It's all FREE!!

Landscaping is a major consumer of residential water. What can you do to reduce outside water consumption without sacrificing an attractive landscape?

1. **Water early in the morning or evening.**
   If you sprinkle your lawn under the hot midday sun, you'll lose as much as 30% of your water to evaporation.

2. **Several short watering sessions are better than a single long one.**
   Lawns can only absorb water so fast. It's better to water your lawn for three 10-minute sessions—with each session a half-hour apart—than it is to water steadily for 30 minutes and cause runoff.

3. **Keep grass at least two inches high to shade roots and hold moisture.**

4. **Aerate lawns regularly and use mulch around plants to reduce evaporation.**

5. **Water trees slowly, deeply and infrequently to encourage deep rooting.**

6. **Change your irrigation timer with the seasons.**

   Did you know that your landscaping needs different amounts of water during spring, summer, and fall? For example, in April, your landscaping will only need about half the water it uses in July. And many types of landscaping require no irrigation during the winter months. A free residential water survey can help you set up a seasonal watering schedule.

Visit the Water Resources Association website to read about our programs and to learn more water saving tips.

www.wrasbc.org

Do Not Flush Your Medicines Down the Toilet!

• A recent study shows that 80 percent of US streams contain small amounts of human medicines.

• Sewage systems cannot remove these medicines from water that is released into lakes, rivers or oceans.

• Fish and other aquatic animals have shown adverse effects from medicines in the water.

• And, even very small amounts of medicine have been found in drinking water.

• Keep medicine in its original child-resistant container.

• Scratch or mark out the patient information on the label.

• Place some water into solid medications, such as pills or capsules.

• Then add something nontoxic and unpalatable such as sawdust, kitty litter, charcoal, Comet® or powdered spices (like, cayenne pepper).

• Close and seal the container lids tightly with packing or duct tape.

• If discarding blister packs of unused medicines, wrap in multiple layers of duct tape.

• Place medicine containers in durable packaging that does not show what's inside (like, a cardboard box).

• Place in the trash close to garbage pickup time.

• Remember to keep medicines away from children and pets.

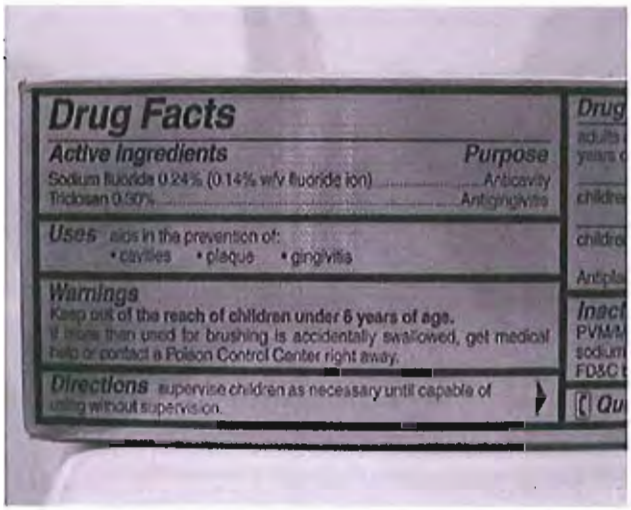
Other ways to properly dispose of unused medicine:

• **Household Hazardous Waste Collection**: John Smith Landfill, 2650 John Smith Road, Hollister 9:00 a.m. – 12 Noon every third Saturday of the month. Call 636-4110 for more information.

Please Do Not Use Products Containing Triclosan

There is a disinfectant showing up in hundreds of common consumer products that is raising serious cause for concern. The chemical, triclosan, is a synthetic, broad-spectrum antimicrobial agent that in recent years has exploded onto the consumer market in a wide variety of antibacterial soaps, deodorants, toothpastes, cosmetics, fabrics, plastics, and other products. Studies have increasingly linked triclosan to a range of health and environmental effects, from skin irritation, allergy susceptibility, bacterial and compounded antibiotic resistant, and dioxin contamination to destruction of fragile aquatic ecosystems.

Common household products containing triclosan.



Close-up of a popular toothpaste label, which lists triclosan as an active ingredient.

Alternatives to Triclosan

When used in hospitals and other health care settings, or for persons with weakened immune systems, triclosan represents an important health care and sanitary tool. But outside of these settings, it is unnecessary, and the constant exposure to triclosan becomes a health and environmental hazard. The best solution to preventing infections is good old soap and water. Here are some guidelines on keeping clean without antimicrobials:

1. Wash hands frequently and thoroughly. Regular soaps lower the surface tension of water, and thus wash away unwanted bacteria. Lather hands for at least 10 to 15 seconds and then rinse of in warm water. It is important to wash hands often, especially when handling food, before eating, after going to the bathroom, and when someone in your house is sick.

2. Dry hands with a clean towel to help brush off any germs that did not get washed down the drain.

3. Wash surfaces that come in contact with food with a detergent and water.

4. Wash children's hands and toys regularly to prevent infection

Because triclosan has become so ubiquitous in soaps and toiletries make sure to read all ingredients when buying these products. There are also some essential oils that have antimicrobial properties, such as Australian tea tree oil, grapefruit seed extract, and pine oil.

Water Resources Association of San Benito County

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637.4378

www.wrasbc.org

*Information on medicine disposal from – California State Board of Pharmacy

*Information on Triclosan from - National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides

WATER RESORCES ASSOCIATION
SAN BENITO COUNTY

VISIT THE WATER WISE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN AT DUNNE PARK. THE GARDEN IS LOCATED ON THE CORNER OF 6TH AND POWELL.

GET IDEAS ON HOW YOU CAN LOWER YOUR WATER BILL AND CONSERVE WATER BY USING DROUGHT TOLERANT OR NATIVE PLANTS, DRYSCAPING, EFFICIENT IRRIGATION SYSTEMS AND MULCH.

CALL THE WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION TODAY TO GET ON THEIR EMAIL LIST FOR FUTURE EVENTS. GARDENING CLASSES, TOILET GIVEAWAYS, OUTREACH EVENTS AND MORE.

CALL 637-4378

Water Resources Association
San Benito County

Recommended Residential Watering Schedule

**irrigation times may vary depending on rainfall amounts*

Spring (April-June) 8-10 minutes 2x per week
Summer (June-September) 10-15 minutes 3x per week
Fall (September-start of rainy season) 10-12 minutes-
2x or 3x per week

The rainy season generally starts in November. Turn off irrigation controllers at that time until March. Have the WRA inspect your irrigation system before the peak irrigation season begins.

Water Resources Association
San Benito County
30 Mansfield Road
Hollister, CA 95023
www.wrasbc.org

637-4378

GET THE SALT OUT!!

Replace or Remove Your Currently Working Pre-1999 Water Softener and Receive up to a $300 Rebate!!!!

The discharge of salt brines from the regeneration of water softeners into the wastewater collection system has a negative impact on recycled water and wastewater effluent. Higher salinity increases treatment costs and reduces the potential for reuse of wastewater for non- potable irrigation and industrial purposes. It can also impair a wastewater treatments agency's ability to comply with discharge standards for total dissolved solids (TDS).

The Water Resources Association has received a state grant that supplements local funds. These funds are to assist water softener owners in demolishing, switching to an off site regeneration service or upgrading to newer technology to help reduce the salt load on our wastewater systems and groundwater supply.

Remove and <u>do not replace</u> your pre-1999 water softener and receive $300 (special rules apply)

Remove your pre-1999 water softener and replace with a tank exchange service and receive $250

Remove your pre-1999 water softener and replace with a Demand Initiated Regeneration water softener and receive $150

This program is available to customers of the City of Hollister, Sunnyslope County Water District, the City of San Juan Bautista and the San Benito County Water District (Zone 6 ONLY).

For Details Call The Water Resources Association: 637-4378 or visit us at www.wrasbc.org

Funds are limited and special rules apply

WATER SOFTENER ISSUES SAN BENITO COUNTY

Water Resources Association
San Benito County

There is more to water softeners than just soft water. Water softeners reduce the "hardness" of the water, which can have several benefits for consumers: smaller amounts of soap and detergents (non-synthetic) are necessary for laundry and cleaning processes; reduced staining, spotting, scaling; bathing and showering feelings; increased fabric life; and energy saving in water heating due to less scaling.

How does a water softener work?
A diagram and explanation of how a water softener works is on the back of this page.

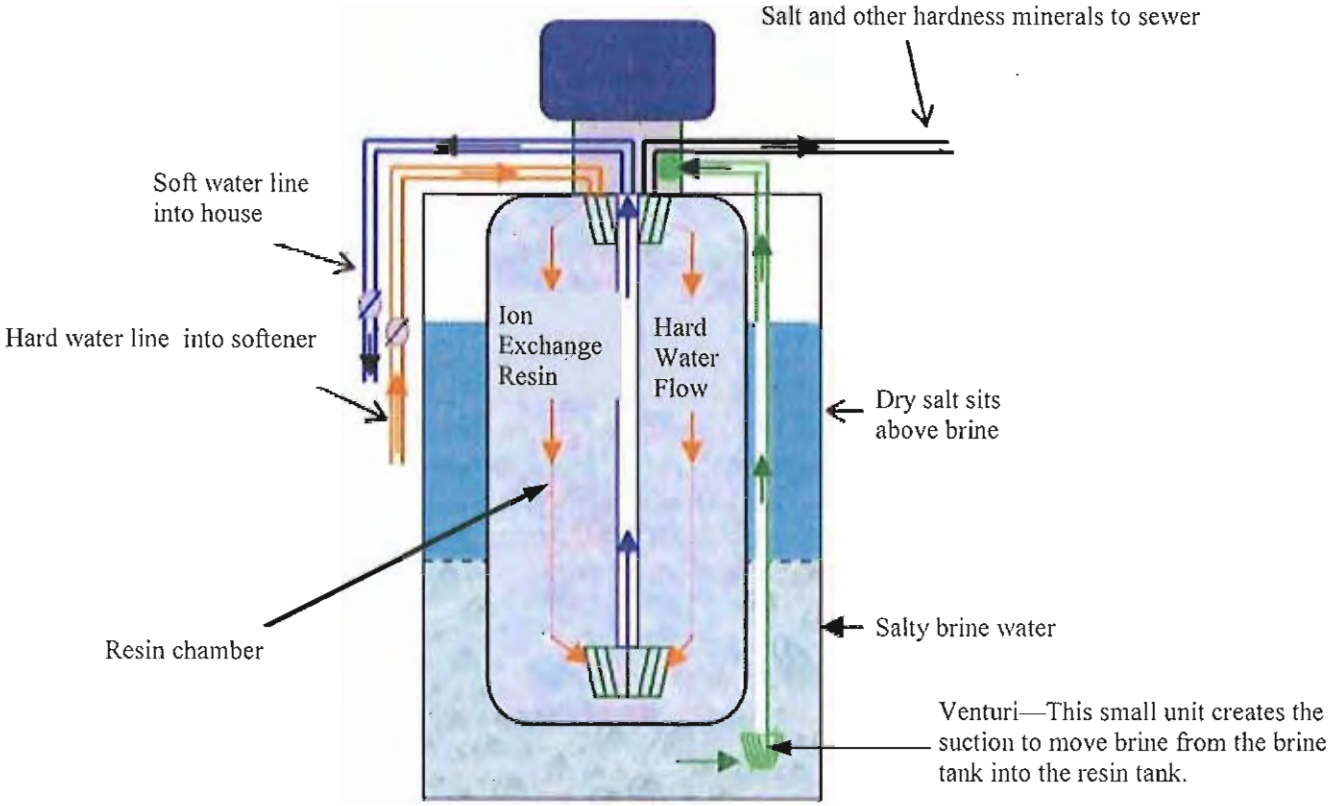
The Problem
The discharge of salt brines from the regeneration of water softeners into the wastewater collection system has a negative impact on recycled water and wastewater effluent. Higher salinity increases the treatment costs and reduces the potential for reuse of wastewater for non-potable irrigation and industrial purposes. It can also impair a wastewater treatment agency's ability to comply with discharge standards for total dissolved solids (TDS) which is a measure of the total concentration of dissolved minerals in water, including concentrations such as sodium, calcium, magnesium, potassium, and anions such as chloride, sulfate, and many others. A typical wastewater treatment facility removes very little of these mineral concentrations from the waste stream and they are passed back into our groundwater supply.

Results of Noncompliance
Every wastewater treatment facility in the State must meet strict limits issued by the State and Federal agencies on the amount of TDS and mineral concentrations before reclaimed wastewater can be introduced back into the environment. If a wastewater treatment facility is found to be in violation of it discharge limits by these agencies significant fines may result. These fines are ultimately passed onto the consumer. **One of many contributing factors to this problem is salt brine from water softening units.** If you use a water softener it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to make sure you are operating your water softening unit as efficiently as possible. YOUR INDIVIDUAL ACTION and the collective efforts of others in our community will help reduce the salt content in our local wastewater and water supply.

Possible Solutions
Finding practical, cost effective solutions to this problem has been difficult. So, if you decide to use a water softener you should determine if a softener is necessary. Water with a measured hardness of less than 50 mg/l is considered soft. Generally, water 50 to 150 mg/l is suitable for use in most homes and it is not necessary to use a softener. Our local water hardness ranges from these lows to a very high hardness content and can fluctuate seasonally. That's why it's very important to check with your local water provider for the hardness in your area before you consider purchasing a water softener. If you find that a softener is necessary then operate it as efficiently as possible. A possible solution, which may not solve but can greatly reduce the problem, is to ***use less salt***. Most softener owners use at least twice as much salt to soften water as is necessary. By adjusting your softener to use the proper amount of salt per regeneration required to soften your water may greatly reduce the amount of sodium or chloride being used and subsequently discharged to the sewer. You also may want to consider switching to potassium chloride from sodium chloride in your softener. This substitution will help with the sodium problem, however, the downside of potassium chloride is it will add to any chloride problem and cost more than sodium chloride. It has also been found that many softeners are set to recharge or backwash too frequently. By adjusting the backwash cycle to the appropriate time period between each backwash can significantly reduce the amount of sodium or chloride being discharged into the sewer system. Instead of a daily or every other day recharge cycle, a five-day cycle may be used to achieve the proper softening level. Consider converting your water softener to an offsite regeneration service that disposes the brine water in a commercial setting that is more efficient than a residential customer is able to achieve. Another way to help with the problem is to convert your older, pre-1999 water softener to a Demand Initiated Regeneration (DIR) softener that regenerates soft water on demand rather than a preset time/day when no soft water may be needed. **(See back page for rebate information)**

Conclusion
The solution to the salinity problem in water supplies is going to be a very long, difficult and costly process. But everyone can help by using the least amount of sodium possible or finding more environmentally friendly ways to soften water.

For more information on water softeners contact:
The Water Resources Association at 637-4378 or visit www.wrasbc.org.



How A Water Softener Works

A typical water softener softens water by an ion exchange, which involves the exchange of the hardness minerals, chiefly calcium and magnesium, for sodium or potassium minerals. The exchange takes place by passing water containing hardness minerals over ion exchange resins in a tank. As the calcium and magnesium contact the resin in their travel through the resin tank, they displace sodium or potassium ions. The displaced sodium or potassium ions pass down into the water; thus, the softener delivers "soft" water.

The resin must be periodically recharged with sodium or potassium. A concentrated solution of sodium or potassium chloride is passed over the resin displacing the calcium and magnesium. The displaced calcium, magnesium, and chloride along with some sodium and potassium are referred to as brine and are passed out of the resin chamber and into the drain. After leaving the drain, the brine goes into a sewer or septic tank and then into our groundwater supply. The sodium and potassium in the "soft" water also flows into the sewer or septic tank and into our water supply after being used for bathing, clothes washing, dish washing, toilet flush, etc. The addition of sodium and potassium chloride results in an increase in the minerals in our already poor quality water supply to be used over and over again.

Operate Your Water Softener Efficiently And Help Get The Salt Out!

The Water Resources Association has a $150 rebate for those people who own a currently working pre-1999 water softener and are upgrading to a more efficient Demand Initiated Regeneration (DIR) water softener or to an offsite service with a minimum 1-year service contract. A **FREE** service is also offered where a technician will come to your home to assist you to be water efficient as well as efficient with the operation of your water softener **Call today!!! (831) 637-4378**

Drought Survival

Watering Your Lawn

WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION OF SAN BENITO COUNTY

30 Mansfield Road
Hollister, CA 95023

Phone: 831-637-4378
Fax: 831-637-7267
E-mail: snovack@sbcwd.com.
www.wrasbc.org

Lawns are Water Guzzlers

Lawns are generally the single biggest water user for a typical property. That means they offer the greatest potential for water savings. A 500-square-foot lawn can use more than 18,000 gallons of water per year! If the only time you walk on your lawn is when you are mowing it, consider eliminating it & re-landscaping with permeable paving materials and plants appropriate for our local climate.

Maintaining a Lawn During a Drought

If you have good reasons to keep your lawn, here are some simple maintenance practices that will help it survive the drought.

Mow lawns 2½-to-3 inches high. Taller grass blades will promote deeper roots and the taller grass will shade the soil, resulting in less water evaporating from the soil.

- Mow weekly so that you don't remove more than the top one-third of the grass blades.
- Keep lawn mower blades sharp. Dull mower blades shred grass tips, causing the lawn to look brown.
- Don't fertilize. Actively growing plants use more water, and fertilizers can damage already stressed root systems.
- Trim the grass adjacent to sprinkler heads to ensure the sprinkler spray is not blocked.
- Never mow your lawn when the soil is wet. This will result in soil compaction.
- Keep foot and equipment traffic on the lawn to a minimum. Drought-stressed turf is more easily damaged by traffic.
- Leave clippings on the lawn as you mow. This will feed small amounts of nitrogen back to the soil.
- Be willing to accept a less than lush lawn during the drought.

Watering a Lawn During a Drought

Managing the water that you apply to your lawn is essential. Here are a few tips:

- Reduce the watering schedule. During normal years, lawns only require water two to three days per week in spring and fall and three to four days per week in the middle of summer. However, during the drought, lawns can survive on considerably less water. Depending on your reduction goal, reduce the number of watering days per week; reduce the minutes of watering per day; or reduce both. The lawn won't look its best, but it will survive.
- Check your sprinkler heads every few weeks to make sure they are operating properly. Repair broken, bent or sunken heads and clogged nozzles. Adjust the spray pattern to prevent sprinklers from watering pavement.
- Water early in the morning between 3AM and 8AM. The temperatures are cooler, wind is calm and there is little evaporation.
- Watch your lawn rather than a calendar. If your lawn takes on a blue-grey tone or the grass blades don't spring back after you walk on it, it is time to water.
- To eliminate runoff and water waste, use the cycle and soak method of watering. For spray head sprinklers, water in three cycles, 3-6 minutes per cycle. For rotor heads, water in three cycles, 10-12 minutes each cycle. Space each watering cycle about an hour apart to allow the water to soak in.
- Make scheduling changes to your sprinkler timer every week based on the lawn's condition and your reduction goal.
- Hand-water small dry spots rather then turning up the watering schedule.
- Lawn areas in shade (north/east side of the house) will generally require 50 percent less water than lawns on the sunny side of the house. Adjust your watering schedule accordingly

Volume 7 Issue 1
Fall/Winter 2010

Water Conservation Update

Water Resources Association of San Benito County

Call the WRA and ask for a FREE Home Water Survey.

The survey includes:

√Irrigation check

√Assistance with your irrigation controller

√Suggested watering schedule

√Leak check

√High-quality hose nozzle

√Showerheads and faucet aerators installed

√Water softener assistance

Learn to save money by conserving water!

New Ways to Think about Landscaping

As our population continues to grow and our available water sources continue to shrink, it is crucial that we develop our local, non-imported water. One source of local water can be found through conservation.

Many of the effective methods of conservation will require more than policies and ordinances to effect change. It will require a shift in our social perception. Grass lawns that require 80 inches of water per square foot per year in an area that only receives 11 inches of rain per year isn't sensible.

The American ideal of lush green lawn was brought over from England. Then hybrids such as Bermuda or Bluegrass were developed. Once these lawns were transported into the arid southwestern U.S., this ideal was no longer practical. Large water systems had to be designed and constructed to deliver huge quantities of water to areas that could not naturally sustain such a water-thirsty plant.

There are less thirsty species of grass lawns available than the traditional lawns that are installed in most homes across America. Buffalograss is one type and is pictured in the two photographs above on the left. Buffalograss is the only native North American turfgrass. Buffalograss prospered on the Great Plains for centuries before being discovered as a turfgrass. The evolution of Buffalograss has developed it into a turf that is one of the most heat, drought, and cold tolerant turfgrass species. One type of Buffalograss was developed specifically for California. This type of Buffalograss is called UC Verde. The developer and patent holder is UC Davis.

This grass thrives in neutral or alkaline clay soil, even heavy clay soil that is found in our area. A lush Buffalograss turf requires only 50% of the water requirements as does Bluegrass.

The closest distributors for UC Verde in California is Florasource, who has an office in Salinas and Takao Nursery in Fresno. The Water Resources Association anticipates having a workshop in the future where a representative will come to our county to talk about this turf.

continued on back page ⟶

Water Resources Association
30 Mansfield Road
Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 637-4378
www.wrasbc.org

Representing the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope County Water District, and San Benito County Water District.

San Benito COUNTY FAIR

'Let's Stirrup Some Fun!'
Friday, October 1st– Sunday, October 3rd

The WRA will be hosting a booth at this event. Learn how you can help in conserving and protecting our water supply. The San Benito County Water District will also be there with information about the Hollister Urban Area Water and Wastewater Master Plan that is being implemented by the County, the City of Hollister and the Sunnyslope County Water District

Get a $100 Rebate When You Purchase a Energy Star® Rated High-Efficiency Clothes Washer
(One per household)

FREE Toilets!

Replacement program for homeowners with high-consumption toilets older than 1992.

Call or visit the WRA Website for details.

Water Softener Replacement Program
$150 -$300 Rebates

Help reduce the salt load to our sewer system and groundwater supply!

Rebates are available for customers of the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope County Water District and the San Benito County Water District (Zone 6) who already own a currently working water softener installed prior to 1999. The rebate for upgrading to a new, Demand Initiated Regeneration (DIR) water softener is $150, converting to an offsite water softening service is $250 and for demolishing a pre-1999 water softener with NO replacement the rebate is $300 (special rules apply).

PROGRAM ENDS DECEMBER 2011

ALL REBATE FORMS AVAILABLE AT:
www.wrasbc.org

(Go to "Programs" Link Top Left Hand Corner of Home Page)

In our area of the state approximately 50% of water used in a single-family home is used for outdoor irrigation. This means there is ample opportunity to increase our landscape irrigation efficiency to help conserve our local water supply.

It is time to stop wasting water, money and time on traditional grass lawns and other high-water consuming plants. Replacing lawns and plants with California-friendly and native landscaping is one way to help reduce our dependence on imported water. In addition to water savings, conversion to drought tolerant landscapes creates habitat for wonderful garden creatures, such as hummingbirds and butterflies, reduces urban runoff that carries pollution into the storm drains and ultimately into the ocean, creates outdoor living space and reduces time, money, maintenance spent on caring for grass lawns.

The best time to install native plants is during the California rainy season that stretches from October through March. This helps plants get established before the weather gets dry again.

If you or anybody you know is interested in converting an existing landscape or planting a new drought tolerant landscape the first thing to do is to educate yourself. The Water Resources Association can assist you with the following offerings:

- **Water Wise Demonstration Garden at Dunne Park**, Hollister (Corner of 6th and Powell).
- **The Water Resources Association of San Benito County** and the public library have books on drought tolerant plants and other landscape topics to assist you. Call 637-4378
- **Gardening classes** will be offered in the spring of 2011 by the Water Resources Association. Call 637-4378 to have your name placed on a contact list to be notified of upcoming events.

Local landscape suppliers:

- **Hollister Landscape Supply**. 2490 San Juan-Hollister Rd. They can assist you with drought tolerant or native plants and landscape materials.
- **Brigantno's Irrigation,** 910 Prospect, Hollister They can assist you with your irrigation question and needs.
- **Pacific Interlock Pavingstone, Inc.** 1895 San Felipe Road, Hollister. Pavers and other hardscape material.
- **West Coast Rubber Recycling** 1501 Lana Way, Hollister. (recycled landscape cover)

TURN OFF YOUR IRRIGATION SYSTEM FOR THE WINTER—STARTING NOVEMBER 1ST

Volume 6 Issue 2
Spring/Summer 2010

Water Conservation Update

Water Resources Association of San Benito County

May 2010 is Water Awareness Month

Let the WRA help you be "aware" of your water use

Call the WRA and ask for a FREE Home Water Survey.

The survey includes:

√Irrigation check

√Suggested watering schedule

√Leak check

√High-quality hose nozzle

√Showerheads and faucet aerators installed

√Water softener assistance

Learn to save money by conserving water!

Residential Landscape - Peak Irrigation Season Begins!

Over 50% of residential water is used for landscape purposes. Of this amount, another 50% is wasted due to improper irrigation scheduling and leaky or unmaintained irrigation systems. Let the WRA assist you in using this resource efficiently. Call the WRA for a FREE Home Water Survey. A technician will visit your home and provide you with recommendations and a suggested watering schedule all for FREE! In addition, he'll check your entire house for leaks, install new showerheads, faucet aerators and provide you with a high-quality hose nozzle with an automatic shut-off.

WATER USE EFFICIENCY IDEAS-RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPES

IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

Read your irrigation controller (timer) manual to understand its features. Learn how to adjust the controller and change the setting when plants need less water. Replace lost manuals— many can be downloaded from the manufacturer's website. You will need the model number of the controller.

Change the controller battery at least once a year to preserve the schedule in case of a power failure. A power failure may cause the controller to revert to the default setting which will probably not water the correct amount.

Adjust the sprinklers so that they don't spray pavement, fences, and buildings. Install a rain shut-off device. Check for leaks, sprinkler head misalignments, broken pipes, and other system problems at least twice a month. If your automatic irrigation system normally runs at night or when you are unable to observe the system's operation, run the system manually for a short time during daytime. Always repair with correct parts.

Observe for signs of irrigation system problems such as dry spots, ponding, erosion, and soggy spots. These indicate the system may need adjustment. Water trees and shrubs less frequently than lawns, deep soak occasionally to promote deep rooting. Check soil moisture below surface with a soil probe or large screwdriver. Don't assume the plants need water just because the soil surface looks dry. Water only during night and early mornings to minimize evaporation and don't water when windy or raining. Water shady areas less frequently and use a hose that shuts off automatically.

continued on back page→

Water Resources Association
30 Mansfield Road
Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 637-4378
www.wrasbc.org

Representing the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope County Water District, and San Benito County Water District.

Spotlight on San Benito County Trade Show and Job Expo

"Building Business in 2010"
Veteran's Memorial Building
Thursday, May 13th

The WRA will be hosting a booth at this event. Learn how conserving water can increase your bottom line and enhance the image of your business in our community.

Get a $100 Rebate When You Purchase a Energy Star® Rated High-Efficiency Clothes Washer
(One per household)

Next FREE Toilet Giveaway!
Saturday, May 22nd

Replacement program for homeowners with high-consumption toilets older than 1992.

Call or visit the WRA Website for details.

Water Softener Replacement Program
$150 -$300 TO
GET THE SALT OUT!

Rebates are available for customers of the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope County Water District and the San Benito County Water District (Zone 6) who already own a currently working water softener installed prior to 1999. The rebate for upgrading to a new, Demand Initiated Regeneration (DIR) water softener is $150, converting to an offsite water softening service is $250 and for demolishing a pre-1999 water softener with NO replacement the rebate is $300 (special rules apply).

Help reduce the salt load to our sewer system and groundwater supply!

ALL REBATE FORMS AVAILABLE AT:
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(Go to "Programs" Link Top Left Hand Corner of Home Page)

PLANTS
Prune only to rejuvenate and restore the health of the plant. If you must prune heavily to keep a plant small, consider replacing it with a plant that will mature at a smaller size.

Add compost to improve soil and spread mulch over garden beds to slow evaporation and reduce weeds. Clean filters in sprinkler heads and drip systems regularly.

Use sprinkler heads with matched precipitation rates; don't mix types of sprinklers on one line.

WATERING
Keep a written record of last year's watering schedule near the controller unit and use it to base this year's schedule. If you think the landscape needs less water than it received last year, shorten the run times, or lengthen the time interval (days) between run times.

Adjust irrigation controllers with the seasons. For example, start out in spring with about 50% of the water that will be used in summer. Be sure to turn the controller down in fall and off (if possible) in winter. Use the water budget or seasonal adjust feature (%) on the controller to make adjusting easier.

Use low output sprinklers such as drip, soaker hoses, and microsrpray whenever possible.

Use "cycle and soak" or multiple run times on the sprinkler controller.

Dividing the total watering time into shorter increments allows water to soak in. **Set a goal of no runoff.**

RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPES
Design new landscapes with natives or ornamental plants from a similar climate. Consider renewing existing landscapes with water wise plants.

Replace "space-filler" lawns with rock gardens, mulched areas, or ground covers. Reduce lawn area to the size your family actually uses.

In dry weather, place a saucer under potted plants to hold water for plants to drink when the soil dries out.

Use lower water-use grass types such as Hybrid Bermuda, St. Augustine grass and Dwarf Tall Fescues on new and rehabilitated lawns.

Use a higher setting to mow lawns so that the longer grass blades can shade the soil and roots. Remove the collection bag when mowing to grass cycle the clippings. Grass clippings will decompose quickly, returning nutrients that would otherwise be thrown away. Aerate lawns and remove thatch as necessary.

HARDSCAPE
Sweep sidewalks, patios and driveways instead of hosing them down.

Use a bucket and automatic shut off sprayer when washing cars and boats or go to a car wash that recycles wash water.

Use permeable paving wherever possible to allow rain to soak into the ground rather than run off. Use pool and spa covers to reduce evaporation.

MAY IS WATER AWARENESS MONTH!

Volume 6 Issue 1
Fall/Winter 2009

Water Conservation Update

November is the time to turn off your irrigation system for the winter.

Need help with your irrigation controller? The WRA can help!

Call the WRA for a FREE Home Water Survey. The survey includes:

√Leak check

√Showerheads and faucet aerators installed

√Irrigation check

√Suggested watering schedule

√High-quality hose nozzle

√Water softener assistance

Learn to save money by conserving water!

Water Resources Association of San Benito County

FREE Water Management Classes

The San Benito County Water District, acting as the lead agency, secured a grant through the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) Field Services Program. This program is available to water agencies that contract with the USBR. Contractors compete for grant funds by submitting proposals that focus on the efficient use of water. Each proposal is evaluated and only those that are deemed to have the greatest chance of success are funded. This award will help fund water management classes for agricultural water customers, urban landscape professionals and residential water users. Instructors from the Irrigation Training and Research Center (ITRC) at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo will come to our county to provide instruction. These classes will be coordinated and partially funded by the Water Resources Association San Benito County. **All classes are free to the public.**

Ag Customers (February 2010)

Basic Soil, Plant & Water Relationships-Agriculture (1 day)

Texture and structure
Water holding capacity, retention
Intake rates
Evaporation
Transpiration
Soils classification
Measurement of soil moisture and tension

Irrigation Scheduling, Salinity & Drainage (2 days)

ETo and crop coefficients
Practical irrigation scheduling
How efficiency and uniformity influence scheduling
Drainage concepts and layouts
Salinity
Leaching requirements, reclamation

Ag waiver credits: 14 hours

Basic Pipeline Hydraulics (2 days)

Pipe materials & sizes
Energy equation, friction, elevation changes
Basic spreadsheet operations

The classes will be limited to 20 people per class and a Spanish translator will be on hand.

(continued on back page)

Water Resources Association
30 Mansfield Road
Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 637-4378

Representing the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautista, Sunnyslope County Water District, and San Benito County Water District.

San Benito County Fair 2009
"Your Old Time Town and Country Fair"
October 2nd-4th Bolado Park

The San Benito County Water District and the Water Resources Association will be sharing a booth at the fair this year. Come by and see us! Learn how saving water helps our community and saves you money.

Learn about water and the issues facing our county. Don't take this precious resource for granted.

Be Water Wise!!

Get a $100 Rebate When You Purchase a Energy Star® Rated High-Efficiency Clothes Washer

FREE Toilets!

Replacement program for homeowners with high-consumption toilets older than 1992.

Call or visit the WRA Website for details.

PLEASE

DO NOT FLUSH YOUR MEDICINES DOWN THE TOILET

Treatment plants do not remove these medicines from water. These medicines could end up in our groundwater supplies.

Drop-off locations:

Penny Wise Drug Store
549 San Benito St., Hollister
Monday through Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. – 12 Noon

Household Hazardous Waste Collection
John Smith Landfill
2650 John Smith Road
Hollister
831-636-4110
Third Saturday of every month
9 a.m. – 12 Noon

ALL REBATE FORMS AVAILABLE AT:
www.wrasbc.org
(Go to "Programs" Link Top Left Hand Corner of Home Page)

FREE Water Management Classes continued:

Landscape Professionals (December 2009)

Basic Soil, Plant & Water Relationships (1 day)

Soil texture and structure
Water holding capacity
Retention, intake rates
Evaporation
Transpiration
Measurement of soil moisture and tension

Landscape Irrigation Auditor (2 days)

Prepares landscape professionals to perform site inspections, evaluate irrigation systems, and develop efficient irrigation schedules for drip, bubbler, microspray and sprinkler systems. Benefits from audits include water and cost savings, as well as improved landscape health and appearance.

Residential Customers (April 17, 2010)

Residents will learn how to select drought tolerant and native plants for San Benito County. Planting techniques and irrigation strategies will also be discussed.

An irrigation professional will demonstrate how to efficiently design/retrofit landscape irrigation systems using drip, micro and spray heads. This workshop will also demonstrate some of the newer and innovative irrigation technologies.

All classes are limited to 20 students and are available on a first come, first serve basis. Lunch or snacks will be provided at each class. Specific dates will be announced in the local newspapers and through associated agencies and water providers.

For more information call:
Shawn Novack,
Water Conservation Program Manager
(831) 637-4378

Water Softener Replacement Program
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Help reduce the salt load to our sewer system and groundwater supply!

Volume 5 Issue 2
Spring /Summer 2009

Water Conservation Update

Water Resources Association of San Benito County

May starts our peak irrigation season. Check your irrigation system for leaks!

Need help with scheduling your sprinkler system?

The WRA can help

Call the WRA for a FREE Home Water Survey. The survey includes:

√Leak check

√Showerheads and faucet aerators

√Irrigation check

√Suggested watering schedule

√High-quality hose nozzle

√Water softener assistance

Learn to save money by conserving water

Help our community

Water, it's in the news a lot these days. We hear about other regions of the state and their water woes, but what is the current water situation in San Benito County?

Our county "imports" some of it's' water by way of the State and Federal Water Projects that run through the center of our state. 75% of precipitation in our state falls north of Sacramento, more than 75% of the demand for water is south of the capital city. The 600-mile system of dams, reservoirs, canals, pumps and pipelines delivers Northern California snow melt and rainfall to various parts of the state, including San Benito County.

Because California is experiencing its third year of below average rainfall, these supplies are extremely low. In addition, California's Delta has a host of problems including the decline of native plant and animal life, pollution, and an aging infrastructure. The most well -known threatened Delta species is the Delta smelt, the focus of recent federal court action which dramatically affected California's water supply by limiting pumping of water through the Delta.

Due to the drought and the environmental problems mentioned above, deliveries of water from this system have been dramatically reduced for this year and the foreseeable future.

What is being done to fix the problems in the Delta?

The governor released the Delta Vision Strategic Plan in October 2008. This Plan lays out a strategy to improve the Delta's environmental health and water conveyance system.

It will take many years before the Delta and the water conveyance system it supports to improve. Until then, our local water supply will continue to be reduced from our normal levels.

Groundwater Supplies

The San Benito County Water District's Annual Groundwater Report for Water Year 2008 found that our groundwater is in relatively good supply and found very little change from the previous year. This lack of increase in groundwater pumping is most likely due to several factors including the loss of big contracts for lettuce growers in San Benito County, fallowing of fields, change in crop selections to less water-intensive crops (e.g., onions and garlic), and a lack of groundwater infrastructure to provide increased supply. However, with the dramatic decrease of allocations this year from the State and Federal Water Projects and continued lack of rain, it is expected that much more groundwater will be pumped from the ground this year. (**article continued back page**)

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Residential Lawn Watering Guide

Available on the WRA Website. This new guide will take the guesswork out of how much water you should apply to your lawn. Go the WRA Website and click on "Programs" to download your copy !

Get a $100 Rebate When You Purchase an Energy Star © rated High-Efficiency Clothes Washer

FREE Toilets! Replacement/rebate program for homeowners with toilets older than 1992. Call for details.

WATER AWARENESS MONTH

The California Water Awareness Campaign is a yearlong effort by organizations throughout California to heighten public awareness of water and the role water agencies and allied entities play in conservation, management, water supply, water quality and distribution. The campaign focuses on the month of May each year with the observance of Water Awareness Month. **Call us for a FREE leak and irrigation system check!**

Actions that can save water, money and energy:

1. Stop those leaks!
2. Replace your old pre-1992 high-consumption toilets. This is the largest water user in your home.
3. Replace your older clothes washer with a Energy Star ® high-efficiency clothes washer. Energy Star ® rated clothes washers use 30-50% less water than older machines.
4. Plant the right plants with proper landscape design & irrigation. Select plants that are appropriate for our local climate.
5. Water only what your plants need. Most water is wasted in your garden by watering when your plants do not need the watering or by not maintaining the irrigation system.
6. Replace your pre-1999 water softener. (see article)

Continued from front page-

Other Issues

The quality of our local groundwater supply is poor. This water is high in Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) or mineral content. These minerals can inhibit plant growth and cause a host of other problems for farmers and urban dwellers. High salinity contained in this water also limits the options available for recycling water following wastewater treatment.

What is being done locally to improve this water and increase our water supply?

The City of Hollister, City of San Juan Bautista, San Benito County, Sunnyslope County Water District and the San Benito County Water District are all working on projects to improve our water quality and water supply. The main issues being addressed are:

- Quality of drinking water and recycled water
- Reliability of water supply
- Coordination of water and wastewater system improvements
- Regional balance of water resources including high groundwater areas

Water Softener Demolition-Replacement Program

Many people buy water softeners because our local water supply has a high mineral content or what some people call "hard" water. Installing a water softener compounds the problem because the salt or potassium that is used to "soften" water is flushed down the drain and goes to a wastewater facility. Very little of these minerals are removed before this water is reintroduced back in to our groundwater.

Rebates are available for customers of the City of Hollister, the City of San Juan Bautsita, Sunnyslope County Water District and the San Benito County Water District (Zone 6) who already own a currently working water softener installed prior to 1999. The rebate for upgrading to a Demand Initiated Regeneration (DIR) water softener is $150, converting to an offsite water softening service is $250. or for demolishing their pre-1999 water softener with NO replacement the rebate is $300 (special rules apply).

New technology water softeners remove more grains of hardness per pound of salt then water softeners made before 1999. Less salt, less energy, less water!

Call 637-4378 or visit: www.wrasbc.org