

Water Wiser for Smart Irrigation Month:

Timing is everything! Learn when and how much to water to avoid wasteful runoff and keep a healthy landscape.

Trying to stick to a smart watering schedule got you seeing stars? Gain independence from lawn maintenance; get a WaterSense labeled irrigation controller that uses weather or soil moisture data to help you water more smartly. <https://go.usa.gov/xPwhH>. Think you've tried everything under the sun to cut back on outdoor water use? Check out these watering tips in honor of #SmartIrrigationMonth. <https://go.usa.gov/xPwhT>



HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Serving Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas and 66 Tribes

Helping Kids Learn in a Pollution Free Environment

Ginny Vietti Is the New EPA Region 6 Children's Health Coordinator

We are excited to introduce Ginny Vietti as the new Children's Environmental Health Coordinator for EPA Region 6. Ginny comes from a background in social work and brings extensive experience working on environmental issues with state and tribal governments, non-profit agencies, legislative staff, and at-risk populations from her eighteen years of service with EPA.

Ginny not only has a history of roles in strategic planning, communication, and outreach, but also has experience working with at-risk children and youth. Advocating for kids is one of her biggest passions! Ginny's favorite volunteer role is tutoring lower-income kids through a homework club.

Ginny is a Texas native who is both a Baylor Bear and a University of Texas

Longhorn. She lives in Dallas with her husband and two kids. She loves to travel, run, hike, read and watch her kids in action.

Ginny is excited to begin her role as the Region 6 Children's Environmental Health Coordinator and would love to hear how she can help you! Please email any thoughts, ideas or questions to her at vietti.virginia@epa.gov.

Cleaning up the Nation's Land—What Is the Brownfields Program?

EPA's Brownfields program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. Revitalizing brownfield sites creates benefits throughout the community.

Through fiscal year 2020, on average, \$20.13 was leveraged for each EPA brownfields dollar and 10.3 jobs were leveraged per \$100,000 of EPA brownfields funds expended on assessment, cleanup, and revolving loan fund cooperative agreements.

A [study](#) completed for EPA in 2020 looked at the environmental benefits that accrue when brownfield sites are used for redevelopment. The study found that when housing and job growth is accommodated by redeveloping existing brownfields sites, the expansion of paved impervious surfaces and average vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita/per job are reduced as compared to accommodating the same amount of growth on previously undeveloped sites.

Key findings of the study:

Brownfields are often "location-efficient" due to their central location and connections to existing infrastructure.

Of the jobs and housing growth expected between 2013-2030, 11-13% could be supported on brownfield sites.

Redeveloping brownfields reduces the amount of impervious surface expansion by 73-80%.

Redeveloping brownfields reduces residential VMT resulting from new growth by 25-33%.



Redeveloping brownfields reduces jobs-related VMT resulting from new growth by 9-10%.

These reductions produce important environmental benefits, including improved water quality associated with reduced runoff from stormwater and nonpoint pollutant sources, and improved air quality associated with reduced greenhouse gas emissions from vehicle travel.



Learning About Water Savings

Saving water isn't rocket science. Learn how WaterSense labeled products make conservation simple.

August 23-27 Is World Water Week

If you need an educational



The most common health effects (or symptoms) caused by extreme heat include the following. 1-Heat cramps are muscle spasms, often in the abdomen, arms, or calves, caused by a large



How often must school custodial staff complete the 2-hour or 14-hour asbestos awareness training under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)?

Learning Links– Saving Water at Home

activity for the kids to do this summer, send them on a water-saving mission by finding pesky leaks in their homes that could be wasting water! <https://go.usa.gov/xPwSz>

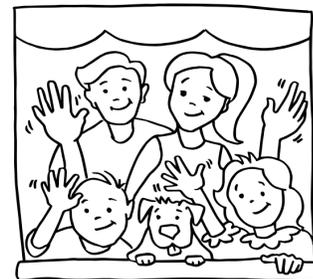
Save Water at Home Coloring Book

This coloring book can be used as a way to help kids learn about water savings while having fun at home during school breaks or as an at-home learning too.

Earth Day is Every Day

Water is such a precious resource that we all need to do our part to save it. Kids can learn simple tips to start saving water, complete a puzzle game, and become an Earth Day Detective looking for leaks in and around their house at our WaterSense for Kids website: www.epa.gov/watersense/watersense-kids

Save Water While You're HOME



A Water Conservation Coloring Book
Visit www.epa.gov/watersense for more kids activities and tips.

Notes for Nurses—Extreme Heat

loss of salt and water in the body. Heat cramps can occur from prolonged exposure to extreme heat combined with dehydration, and they commonly happen while participating in strenuous outdoor activities such as physical labor or sports. 2-Heat exhaustion is a severe illness requiring emergency medical

treatment. It can occur from exposure to extreme heat over an extended period of time (usually several days), especially when combined with dehydration. 3-Heat stroke is the most serious medical condition caused by extreme heat, requiring emergency treatment. Heat stroke (or hyperthermia) occurs

when the body can no longer regulate its temperature, and its temperature rises rapidly—up to 106°F or higher. Heat stroke usually occurs as a progression from other heat-related illnesses, such as heat cramps or heat exhaustion. It can also strike suddenly without prior symptoms, however, and it can result in death without immediate medical attention.

Custodians Closet—Asbestos Removal in Schools and Training Requirements

40 CFR part 763.92(a) requires local education agencies to train custodians and maintenance workers “within 60 days after commencement of employment.” Although the asbestos in schools rule does not require refresher training for custodial staff and maintenance workers, the OSHA construction standard regulations (29 CFR 1926.1101(k)(9)(ii)) and OSHA regulations for most other occupational

exposures (29 CFR 1910.1001(j)(7)(ii)) contain a requirement for annual refresher training. The EPA Asbestos Worker Protection Rule (40 CFR part 763.122) applies these OSHA regulations to state and local government employers who are not otherwise regulated by OSHA's asbestos standards.

AHERA required EPA to promulgate regulations (e.g., the Asbestos-

Containing Materials in Schools Rule) requiring local educational agencies to inspect their school buildings for asbestos-containing building material, prepare asbestos management plans and perform asbestos response actions to prevent or reduce asbestos hazards. AHERA also tasked EPA with developing a model plan for states for accrediting persons conducting asbestos inspection and corrective-action activities at schools.

National Oceans Week, June 8-10

Did you know that there was a National Marine Sanctuary near Louisiana and Texas? One hundred miles off the Texas and Louisiana coasts is the only sanctuary in the Gulf of Mexico. Located near the EPA Region 6 states is the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary. This marine sanctuary is home to an ecosystem created by water from 31 states and Canada and flowing into the Gulf of Mexico.

Its deep water habitat includes salt domes, which are underwater mountains, and the reef-building corals that live on top of those

formations. Those who visit for sportfishing and diving can see coral heads bigger than cars and a bounty of wildlife including whales, sea turtles, mollusks, crustaceans, birds, rays, and hundreds of species of fish. Below the coral cap in deeper water are additional species including gorgonians and black corals.

While the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary offers outstanding recreation, its distant location makes it a major center for research and conservation activities, many of which are supported by the National

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office of Marine Sanctuaries. You can learn more at <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/> and <https://flowergarden.noaa.gov/>.

There are four other places where you can also learn more about the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, which may be closer to home. These places include the Cameron Park Zoo in Waco, Texas, the Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi, Texas, the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and the Children's Aquarium at Fair Park in

Dallas, Texas. These can be reached at the following links: <http://www.cameronparkzoo.com/explore/exhibits/brazos-river-country/>; <https://texasstateaquarium.org/>; <http://www.tnaqua.org/>; and <http://www.childrensaquariumfairpark.com/exhibits-offshore-zone.html>.



Why Sun Safety Education?

To help educators raise sun safety awareness, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed the SunWise Program for grades K-8. SunWise Partners sponsor activities that raise children's awareness of stratospheric ozone depletion, UV radiation, and simple sun safety practices. SunWise is a

collaborative effort between schools, communities, teachers, parents, health professionals, environmental groups, meteorologists, education organizations, and informal educational groups. SunWise is intended to actively engage children in the learning process. Its dual focus on health and the environment will help

children develop the skills necessary for sustained SunWise behavior and an appreciation for the environment around them. The program's learning components build on a solid combination of traditional and innovative education practices already in use in many U.S. schools. Through the program, students and teachers will increase their



awareness of simple steps they can take to protect themselves from overexposure to the sun.

World Environment Day is June 5

The theme of this year's World Environment Day is [Ecosystem Restoration](#). Pakistan will act as global host of the day.

World Environment Day 2021 will see the launch of the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, 2021-2030](#).

Ecosystem restoration can take many forms,

such as growing trees, greening cities, rewilding gardens, changing diets or cleaning up rivers and coasts. This is the generation that can make peace with nature.

To learn more about ecosystem restoration and the UN Decade, visit: www.decadeonrestoration.org



CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Best Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Good Idea

Follow CDC, State, and Local Public Health Guidelines

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 is mainly spread through the air. The risk of getting the virus by touching a contaminated surface is thought to be low.



Clean Surfaces with Soap and Water

Normal routine cleaning with soap and water lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19 by removing germs and dirt from surfaces. In most situations, cleaning is enough to reduce risk.



Use EPA-Registered Disinfectants According to Label Directions

Disinfectants further lower the risk of spreading COVID-19 by using chemicals to kill germs. Use disinfectants on high-touch surfaces when you know or suspect someone around you is sick with COVID-19.

Be Careful

Be Careful Using Disinfectants Around People with Asthma

Disinfectants can trigger an asthma attack. If you have asthma, you may need to take extra precautions like avoiding areas where people are cleaning and disinfecting or making sure the space is well ventilated.



Be Careful with Fogging, Fumigating, and Wide-Area or Electrostatic Spraying

Make sure your product's label includes directions for the application method. Follow all directions, including precautions. If a product isn't labeled for these application methods, using it that way might be risky or ineffective.



Be Careful With UV Lights or Ozone Generators

UV lights or ozone generators may be risky or ineffective. EPA cannot verify if or when it is appropriate to use these devices. Check out the guidance at: [go.usa.gov/xHcKj](https://www.epa.gov/xHcKj)

Don't Do It

Don't Ask Children or Students to Apply Disinfectants

Disinfectants are powerful tools for controlling the spread of disease, and they can harm kid's health if used or stored incorrectly. Children and students should not apply disinfectants, and they should be kept out of children's reach.



Don't Ignore the Label Directions

If you don't follow the label directions, disinfectant products may be ineffective or unsafe. Do not apply disinfectants to skin, pets or food. Do not dilute disinfectants or mix them with other chemicals unless the label tells you to. Don't think that twice the amount will do twice the job.



Don't Use Unregistered Disinfectants

If a product says that it kills SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), but it doesn't have an EPA registration number, it may not be safe or effective. Federal law requires disinfectants to be registered with EPA.



For CDC public health guidelines, visit: [go.usa.gov/xHc8g](https://www.cdc.gov/xHc8g)
For information on disinfectants, visit: [epa.gov/coronavirus](https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus)

April 2021

Five Things This Earth Day to Save Water



If you want to celebrate the Earth this year, don't forget to include water. More than 70 percent of the surface of our planet is water, but almost all of that is ocean water so full of salt, so we can't drink it! Because water is such a precious resource, we all need to do our part to save it. Here are five ways you can start saving water on Earth Day—and every day:

1. **Stop the flow.** Water doesn't need to be flowing while you are busy brushing your teeth, so why not turn it off and save a couple gallons? Also, be sure that the faucet is turned off tightly when you're done washing your hands...those drips become wasted gallons.



2. **Loose the hose, reuse those drops.** If you don't drink all the water in your glass, use it to water houseplants or flowers in the garden. Leftover ice cubes can go right into small plant pots; as they slowly melt, they will give the roots just the water they need.

3. **Scrap the rinse, scrape instead.** If you're cleaning up after meals, scrape food scraps into the trash before loading the dishwasher. Washing and rinsing dishes in the sink uses a lot more water than the dishwasher, but only run the washer when it's full.



4. **Take a shower instead of a soak.** A shower uses less water than filling the bathtub; just don't stand under the spray for too long! If you shorten your shower by just a minute, it will save two gallons of water. Use less shampoo, so it doesn't take long to rinse.

5. **Don't use the toilet for trash.** Used paper towels and tissues belong in the garbage. Only flush the three Ps—pee, poop, and (toilet) paper. When you use the toilet as a trash can, you waste anywhere from one gallon of water to three gallons or more!



For more information, fun activities, and even a game you can play while you learn to save water, visit www.epa.gov/watersense/watersense-kids.

Be a Detective for Earth Day!

Word Search

Find the water-saving words listed below.

E R W S E C E P U M R T S W A
 L P W O H Z X J C Y E H N O X
 E M A C P G K Y H C O E L U N
 I P E C K A E L U W D W H T Z
 I V A V S C Y A E R L Y B E U
 L W R R C D F R A T Q C W L M
 B N T A C O N G S K A A T I O
 U S H F F S Q A Y X T P X O O
 V S B R U S H K L E G V H T R
 V S R A W H P E R F A V S I H
 R E H S A W H S I D S N C A T
 E E X C V P Q L Q W B I S O A
 W J Q I I E U L O Q X U E C B
 Q T H U O D Q U V H S X B P K
 E B M U N X N R S X B F U R C

- | | | |
|----------|--------|------------|
| bathroom | brush | dishwasher |
| earth | faucet | garden |
| shower | leak | scrape |
| water | tap | toilet |

Bonus word: landscape

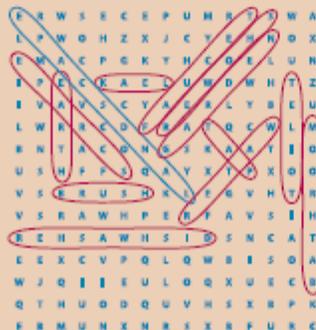
Find the Differences

Circle 10 things that have changed between the top house and the bottom house.



Answer Key

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Black hair | 5. Bar of soap | 8. Trash change |
| 2. Image on TV | 6. Green T-shirt | 9. No drawer |
| 3. Shoe color | 7. Toilet seat down | 10. Emptier dishwasher |
| 4. Blonde hair | | |



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Protecting human health and
the environment.



The EPA has many opportunities to increase the safety and sustainability of your school. Please contact us to schedule a live webinar on any of the subjects below.

Sustainable Management of Food: It's important now more than ever for all of us to not waste food. Learn how our food choices impact the environment and how we can reduce food waste and save money. Stephen Sturdivant, Sturdivant.stephen@epa.gov, 214-665-6673

Recycling: Recycling, along with reduction and reuse, is a great way for your students to participate in your sustainability goals. By providing increased access to recycling receptacles and awareness of recycling best practices, you can reduce your waste and your carbon footprint. Deanna Debose, debose.deanna@epa.gov, 214-665-6461

Safer Choice: Developed to give consumers an easy way to choose products with safer chemical ingredients, the Safer Choice label indicates that a chemical product has met the EPA's rigorous standards for safety, which means the products are better both for the environment and human health. Whitney Lehrer, lehrer.whitney@epa.gov, 214-665-6553

Lead Based Paint: The Renovation, Repair, and & Painting (RRP) Rule helps protect children from exposure to lead based paint dust caused by renovation and repairs conducted in a building built prior to 1978. Our lead-based paint program is here to help answer questions and to provide guidance on the regulation and removal. Mikeal Adams, adams.mikeal@epa.gov, 214-665-6711

Integrated Pest Management: The Region 6 Contact for the Integrated Pest Management Program under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) is Ken McPherson, mcperson.kenneth@epa.gov, 214 665-6754

Pollution Prevention and Source Reduction Assistance Grant Programs: Provide financial assistance to states, universities/colleges and tribes on source reduction and pollution prevention best management practices through technical assistance training and workshops. Annette Smith, smith.annette@epa.gov, 214 665-2127

ODDS AND ENDS

Upcoming Newsletters

In our next issue, the Region 6 Healthy Schools Newsletter in September will highlight the following:

- Pollution Prevention Week,
- National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, and
- America Recycles Week.

Other topics will include National Estuaries Week, Project Green Challenge Month, and National Reuse Month in addition to the quarterly columns on Notes for Nurses, Custodian's Closet, and Learning Links.

Contacts

Disclaimer

Feedback

We would love your feedback on this newsletter or suggestions for future topics. Please email EPA at Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov.

Healthy Schools is published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6 - South Central in Dallas, Texas. Region 6 includes the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas as well as 66 Tribes. For general information about Healthy Schools, to provide feedback on this newsletter, or to be added or removed from the distribution list, please contact Cathy Gilmore, Senior Environmental Employee (SEE) for Healthy Schools at Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov.

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