

11/30/07

Report on the 2007 Water Conservation Challenge

WHAT IS IT?

“The Community Conservation Challenge is an innovative project created by the Concord Public Works and funded in part by the Massachusetts Environmental Trust to raise awareness about the importance of water conservation, and provide an extra incentive for water customers to become more water-efficient. Participating groups also earn money for their conservation efforts.

Teams try to reduce water use from previous summers. Members aggregate water use is tracked from May through October, and compared to the team’s three-year average of water use from a similar period. Every percentage point reduction in water use during May through October will earn the group \$2/person.”

THE LWVCC TEAM

The LWVCC and nine other groups joined the Water Conservation Challenge in May. LWVCC team members were Debbie Barr, Nancy Beeuwkes, Nancy Birchard, Don Bracco, Maribeth Clemm, Nancy Cronin, Louise Haldeman, Anne Rarich, Janet Rothrock, and Shawna Reid.

Other teams were The Willard Aqua-Nauts; West Concord Woman’s Club, Public Works Commission/Planning Board, Organization for the Assabet River, Elm Park Neighbors, Concord Family Network, CCHS Earth Science, Boy Scout Troop 132, and the Board of Selectmen/Finance Committee.

TEAM RESULTS

Mid-way through the Challenge, the LWV team had reduced water use by 5%; however, water use increased at the end of the summer, perhaps due to dry weather through the fall. The LWVCC team ended up with a 4% overall increase in water consumption.

However, Joanne Bissetta, Water Conservation Coordinator, reported that overall residential water use was up 26% for this fiscal year. Given the sizeable increase in town water consumption, she was pleased with the 3% overall reduction in water use by Challenge teams, which saved over 170,000 gallons of water. Ms. Bissetta reports that from May to October, participating families had 10 toilets replaced, 12 had indoor water use audits, and five had irrigation systems audited.

Congratulations to Shawna Reid, the biggest saver of water on the LWVCC team, whose household water use was reduced by 35%, saving 18,700 gallons of water. She was honored at the Water Challenge recognition ceremony at the DPW. In addition, one team member replaced two leaky toilets, and three team members had water use audits.

The Conservation Challenge will be offered again next summer, with the opportunity for more Concordians to actively find ways to save water.

Thank you to the LWVCC members who participated in the Conservation Challenge. We encourage more members to participate on the LWVCC team next year!

Submitted by: Debbie Barr