

Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District's Second Home Composting Workshop

On May 8, 2008 staff from Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District (HSWCD) put on a Water Conservation/Home Composting Workshop. It was well attended and the agenda included two Power Point presentations, special guest speaker, Sara May from Okeechobee, sharing of information by Earth Team volunteers, refreshments and door prizes. Many low-flow shower heads were given away and over 50 composting kits were sold.

This composting workshop was the second event hosted by HSWCD. At the November event, prepared barrels were sold to attendees and staff instructed home owners how to go home and build their own stand. Our 6 Earth Team volunteers came up with a better idea for the second workshop and decided to construct composting "kits." Each kit includes everything that is needed to go home and assemble the entire composting unit. Thanks to their hard work and diligence, over 60 composting kits were available for the May workshop.

The first part of the workshop included a presentation on water conservation followed by a demonstration of the low-flow shower heads that were given away. HSWCD received a grant from the Southwest Florida Water Management District and with the funds, purchased over 1,000 low-flow shower heads. Staff felt that by giving away these water saving devices, the people in Highlands County will be conserving lots of water. To date, we have given away over 900 shower heads.

As you know, we have been experiencing a drought for over 2 years now. It is critical that we all do whatever we can and take steps to conserve this precious natural resource. The shower water you use in your home accounts for about 17% of your indoor water usage. By using low-flow devices, you can cut your shower water usage by 2/3. That's a lot of water to be saving.

The second part of the workshop was all about home composting. The practice of composting not only allows homeowners to have lush, green plants, but it reduces the amount of waste in the household. Composting helps the environment in so many ways and it is the best soil additive around.

After the workshop, attendees who wanted to purchase a kit lined up in their vehicles and our volunteers loaded them up. Over 50 kits were sold and we, at HSWCD, are so excited that so many folks in Highlands County will be composting in the future.

Compete with door prizes, yummy refreshments and lots of information sharing, including vermicomposting (composting with worms), attendees and staff had a great time.

If you didn't get to attend the workshop and you want to start composting, don't worry – we still have a few kits left. If you want to reduce the amount of household waste, help the environment and have green, happy plants, give us a call today at (863) 402-6545 and we'll load you up with a kit.