

# TOWN OF FAIRVIEW ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

## Strategic Planting

Spring is near and for many it's the opportunity to continue building the ideal yard. For some, this means getting the canopy of trees to provide just the right balance of shade and sunlight — for others, it's finding the right combination of flowers and/or plants to compliment the natural beauty that Fairview has to offer. Whatever the case, here are a couple of tips you might find useful when creating your own outdoor paradise.

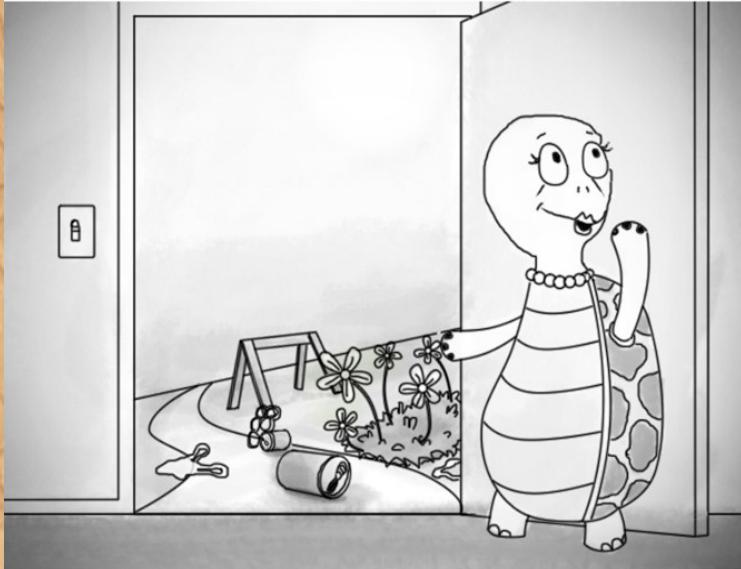
Do not overwater your trees and plants. Overwatering can be as detrimental to the health of your plants and trees as not watering them enough. Roots need oxygen, and overwatering can prevent roots from getting the sufficient amount needed to grow. One way to check if enough water has been provided is by using a trowel to shuffle the dirt about 2" deep and checking if the soil is moist to the touch.

Try to choose native plants and trees. Doing so will require less care and can eventually save you money in the long run. Websites such as [DirtDoctor.com](http://DirtDoctor.com) provide useful information on trees and plants that are native to the area.

Another important consideration when planting trees is the location. Planting large trees near sidewalks or driveways may eventually lead to uneven surfaces which can be hazardous to pedestrians. Similarly, pool owners may want to take caution when planting larger trees as the roots can eventually grow out and cause a decline in the trees health or even degradation in the pools foundation. One solution to this problem is installing a tree barrier which directs root growth downward and prevents the roots from affecting any structures. Things to take into mind before planting a tree: 1) consider the lot size; 2) potential size of the tree; and 3) the span of the roots.



## Tori the Turtle: Stormwater Runoff



"HONEY, DO YOU REMEMBER PLANTING A FLOWER BED OF SODA CANS AND TRASH BAGS BEFORE THE STORM? ALSO...A SAWHORSE?"

## Did you know?

Recycling one aluminum can save enough energy to run a TV for three hours...or the equivalent of a half gallon of gasoline.

## Stormwater Management

With the growth in population, and vast amount of development occurring in the DFW, there has also been a growth in the amount of impervious surfaces. That is, surfaces such as asphalt or concrete that do not absorb water. When it rains, water runs down our driveways, parking lots, roads and highways and into our storm drains. In Fairview, water that is washed into our storm drains is released into our streams and eventually into Lake Lavon.

Pollutants such as empty cans, plastic bags, chemicals, or even construction materials can be washed into our drains if not disposed of properly. By disposing of our trash, using and storing chemicals properly, and educating your friends and family about stormwater management, we can make sure that the only thing going into stormwater drains is water.

### Here are some ways *YOU* can help:

- Clean up trash like soda cans, bottles, plastic bags, and other debris
- Never dump anything into storm drains
- Pick up after your pets
- Wash your car at a commercial carwash
- Tell your friends and family about stormwater management!

## Light Pollution

By: Paul Westbrook, Environmental Management Advisory Committee Chairman

Our dark skies are something that makes Fairview unique and is one of the many aspects that makes us such a beautiful community. An ordinance was passed in 2006 to help protect and preserve our dark skies. The basic premise of the Dark Skies Ordinance is to keep light down toward the ground and not up into the sky or out into your neighbor's view. Citizens with non-conforming lights that were legally installed prior to the passage of the ordinance were directed to shield or adjust their lighting to eliminate glare and prevent light trespass where instances existed. The time frame the ordinance gave to comply was within six months of its effective date.

Most of the solutions available for bringing lighting fixtures into compliance are fairly simple and inexpensive to implement as I recently found out first hand. I have a few external lights (installed in 1996) that are under a roof overhang. They don't shine up into the night sky, so they are compliant from that standpoint, but they are not shielded from shining across the fence line into my neighbor's back yard. He was trying to use his telescope and my light was impeding his view. I recently ordered some sconces that simply mount over the fixture and shine the light down onto the door and entry space – exactly where it is needed.

Common issues are:

- **Streetlights.** These should be shielded to shine light down only. This is called "full cut-off." There are many street lamps that can have shielding added to them. These are located on private property and along some streets. Some are privately owned and some are utility owned. If utility owned, you can contact the utility and ask them to shield the lamp. There may or may not be a cost associated with this service to private individuals or homeowner associations from the utility company.
- **Security lights / spotlights.** Lights mounted on houses should be aimed down and shielded from your neighbor's view. Spotlights should be aimed down. There are also clip on shields for PAR 38 spotlights. Adding motion sensors will only turn the lights on when needed and will save you money as well. A sconce or shield can be placed over a wall mounted light.
- **Carriage lights.** These are placed at the entry posts to many driveways and could possibly inhibit a driver's view by shining light directly in their eyes. If these lights have an intensity of a 40 watt lamp or greater then shielding would be needed to eliminate glare, light trespass and light shining upward.

By assessing our properties and making modifications and adjustments we're all helping preserve our dark skies.

### Here are some great dark skies resources:

- PAR 38 spotlight shield - <http://www.parshield.com/shop.cfm>
- Texas IDA FAQ - <http://www.texasida.org/FAQ'S.htm>
- Dark Sky Fixtures - [http://www.lampsplus.com/products/outdoor-lighting/type\\_dark-sky/](http://www.lampsplus.com/products/outdoor-lighting/type_dark-sky/)
- Dark Sky Fixtures - <http://www.lightingdirect.com/index.cfm?page=search:browse&term=dark+sky>
- Dark Sky Fixtures - <http://www.nilandco.com/products/18/>
- Dark Sky Fixtures - [http://www.starrynightlights.com/Outdoor\\_Lighting/](http://www.starrynightlights.com/Outdoor_Lighting/)
- Slip On Sconce - <http://www.sliponsconce.com/>

## Texas Astronomical Society of Dallas Meeting

**Date:** Friday, January 25th, 2013; 7:30pm

The meeting is at the University of Texas at Dallas in the Science Learning Center building (SLC on the campus map).

Guest speaker will be William (Bill) Wren, M.Ed., who will present a program on Night Sky Preservation, covering the costs of light pollution, the safety, security, and health issues, readily available technical solutions, the organizations involved in the effort and the regulations that have been successfully implemented around the country.

Bill is Special Assistant to the Superintendent at the University of Texas at Austin's McDonald Observatory. Throughout his career at McDonald he has been deeply involved in protecting our night skies, an endeavor which remains a large part of his duties. His greatest joy and satisfaction comes from conveying the wonders of the universe to the many visitors to the observatory.



## Annual Trash Off

**Date:** Saturday, April 13th, 2013; 8am - 2pm

It's a new year and time to start thinking about spring cleaning, getting the yard in shape, and disposing of all of those old chemicals and paint cans that are cluttering up the garage.

Every year the town holds a trash off event which allows residents to bring any trash that they may have in bulk to be properly disposed.

Last year, the event brought in 6,937 lbs. of electronics, 9.03 tons of solid waste, and roughly 120 cubic yards of trash and debris.

This year, the town's annual clean up event will be held Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> 2013 from 8:00AM – 2:00PM. The event will be located at 500 State Hwy 5 (Fire Station 1). We do require proof of residency when you show up — your last water bill, or driver's license will do.

Bring us your old, chemicals, oils, fuel, paints, computers, electronics, tires, bulk materials, etc.. and we will do the rest.