AQUIFER UPDATE
August 2013

Stage IV Exceptional Drought on Horizon

Since the declaration of Stage III Critical Drought on April 17, 2013, water levels in wells and springflow at Barton Springs have been in steady decline. The 10-day average for Barton Springs is currently below 17 cubic feet per second (cfs), where average springflow is more than 50 cfs. This summer has been less hot and a little wetter than recent summers; however, rainfall totals from January through July are still below normal by more than 3 inches. Occasional rains have not been enough to overcome the dry soil conditions to produce runoff into the creeks, and consequently recharge the aquifer. Onion Creek, where the most significant recharge occurs, has not had significant flow since July 2012—over a year ago.

Currently, the US Drought Monitor rates central Texas as experiencing a “severe drought”. Unfortunately, the seasonal outlook from the National Weather Service indicates little chance of improvement over the next few weeks. Preliminary projections by the District based on the rate water levels dropped during the 2009 drought indicate that if dry conditions persist, the Stage IV Exceptional drought threshold could be reached in December of this year.

In general, permittees (including public water supply, irrigation, and commercial uses) are meeting pumpage reductions and therefore helping to extend the groundwater resources until the aquifer receives recharge. Watering restrictions and conservation efforts have effectively slowed the rate of water level decline. It is essential that all groundwater users conserve water. Groundwater is a shared resource and we are all in this together.

Texas Well Owner Network Seminar

The ‘Well Educated’ Day Session is a free, one-day educational training hosted by the Texas Well Owner Network (through the Texas AgriLife Extension Service) for area residents who depend on household wells for their water needs. Well Educated is for private well owners who want to become familiar with groundwater resources, septic system maintenance, well maintenance, water conservation, water quality and water treatment.

The program runs from about 8:30 to 3:30 with a break for lunch. Well owners may bring water samples to the training at 8:30 to be screened for nitrate, total dissolved solids (TDS) and fecal coliform bacteria for $10. You can pick up water sample containers at: Hays County or Blanco County Extension Offices or the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District office (1124 Regal Row, Austin, 78748).

Where:
Wimberley Community Center
14068 Ranch Road 12
Wimberley, TX

When:
Thursday September 12, 2013
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Lunch on your own

RSVP:
twon.tamu.edu/training/?courseid=13078
Submit Your Nomination for the 2013 Groundwater Stewardship Awards

The Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District presents these stewardship awards every two years to deserving individuals, organizations, companies or agencies that have invested exemplary effort towards the protection and conservation of water resources in the District. The District will accept nominations in these categories:

**Water Conservation Award**
Honors efforts to use water wisely. Home owners, water suppliers, businesses, and builders/developers are all eligible for this award.

**Education Award**
Honors efforts to educate individuals, neighborhoods, school groups, professional contacts, or an entire community about water-related issues.

**Research Award**
Honors efforts that lead to improved understanding of or advanced practices in areas such as groundwater, hydrogeology, water treatment, alternative water supplies, well drilling, or structural and non-structural best management practices to reduce non-point source pollution.

**Water Quality Protection Award**
Honors efforts that focus on water quality issues such as water monitoring, sampling/testing, pollution prevention (e.g., creek cleanups), and land use practices to reduce non-point source pollution.

**Innovation Award**
Honors efforts that incorporate new and creative practices or represent outstanding efforts in communication and partnership toward the betterment of the aquifer and related environmental issues.

**Permittee of the Year**
Honors a District permittee who is an exemplary steward of the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer. The Permittee of the Year will have demonstrated a continued commitment to education, water quality protection, and water conservation. The District will nominate and choose the winner of this award.

An individual, group, company or agency may be nominated in any one category, and anyone can nominate a deserving entity. The District’s Board of Directors will select the recipients; awards may not be given in every category, and categories may be added if needed. District staff, Board members, or projects are not eligible.

Nominations must be received in the District office by Tuesday, September 17th by 5 p.m. Nomination forms are available on the District’s website at: www.bseacd.org or by contacting the BSEACD office at 512-282-8441.

The Bowie High School Culinary Arts program will host this year's awards ceremony in November 2013.

Send nominations to:
BSEACD, Attn: Awards
1124 Regal Row, Austin, 78748
or email to Robin Gary (rhgary@bseacd.org)