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Revamped Regional Website WaterSavingTips.org to Help the Community Save 5 Million Gallons of Water a Year

New Site Includes a Challenge for Residents to Pledge Savings and Win Prizes

SANTA CRUZ, CA— On behalf of the Water Conservation Coalition of Santa Cruz County, Ecology Action launched a redesigned WaterSavingTips.org this week. This shared, central, online resource has been retooled to better serve County residents in understanding what water saving actions will make the most difference and help them share success stories with their neighbors.

The site provides tips, incentives and social sharing to support conservation, and includes links to water agencies for more information about specific restrictions, programs and rebates. The site includes a “Submit Your Story” feature where local residents share their photos and tips to encourage other residents to adopt conservation projects and behaviors.

“The drought is serious. At our house we are making it a bit of a game to see how low we can get our household consumption lower each month. This new website helped me learn new things we can do,” said Lora Lee Martin, a City of Santa Cruz water customer. “ Like when we put on solar...there is an intangible return of feeling good about doing our part for the environment. “

A central feature of the website is the “Take The Pledge!” challenge that will help residents save at least 20 gallons per person per day, which is enough for most to achieve their water providers' mandated or voluntary targets for Summer 2014. Site visitors can click through a pledge form that tracks current water conservation efforts and recommends additional practices to further reduce water use. The website tallies all the pledges to show how each city is contributing to reaching the Countywide goal. The Coalition is challenging the community to pledge to save over 5 Million gallons this year, which would equate to 800 people pledging 20 gallons per day savings. Donated prizes are raffled monthly among pledgers, including \$50 gift certificates to local garden centers and a laundry to landscape greywater installation kit.

“I’m thrilled to see the level of collaboration among local water agencies,” said Piret Harmon, General Manager of the Scotts Valley Water District. “This pledge is a great way for all of us to become more aware and commit to being water wise.”

For those who want to learn more the site offers indoor and outdoor water saving tips and a new calendar that lists FREE water-wise gardening presentations, greywater laundry-to-landscape workshops, and lose-your-lawn sheet mulching workshops.

The Coalition invites residents to visit www.WaterSavingTips.org to take the pledge and browse the website to learn more each visit about how we can each do our part in our community's efforts to conserve our precious water resources.

About The Santa Cruz County Water Conservation Coalition

The Santa Cruz County Water Conservation Coalition is a longstanding example of our water agencies working collaboratively to steward our water resources through increased conservation practices. The Coalition includes (in order of size): City of Santa Cruz Water Conservation Department, County of Santa

Cruz Environmental Health Department, City of Watsonville Public Works Department, Soquel Creek Water District, San Lorenzo Valley Water District, Scotts Valley Water District, Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency, and Central Water District, as well as the County of Santa Cruz Water Resources Department, Ecology Action and the Monterey Bay Master Gardeners.

About Ecology Action

Ecology Action is passionately driven to empower individuals, businesses and communities to take actions today that achieve environmental and economic sustainability. Founded on Earth Day in 1970, Ecology Action delivers innovative marketing and engagement programs that make it easy for customers to conserve water, use alternative transportation, protect water quality and save energy. Since launching its first energy-saving program in 2002, Ecology Action has served over 14,000 customers in California and installed efficiency measures that achieve annual resource savings of 413,530,621 kWh, 1,531,228 therms of natural gas, 107,628 metric tons of CO₂ and 208,221,940 gallons of water. Ecology Action was the lead facilitator for the 2013 100 Systems Central Coast Greywater Challenge which helped install laundry to landscape greywater systems that are saving over 400,000 gallons of water a year. For its work, Ecology Action has been awarded twice with the Governor's Environmental & Economic Leadership Award. To learn more, visit www.ecoact.org.

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