

WaterDrops

Volume I • Issue 1

a water resource newsletter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

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Hello, Readers!

You are reading the very first issue of *WaterDrops* for elementary school readers. It's a fun-to-read paper about the **water** we use every day. Did you know that most of your body is made of **water**? (Actually 70 percent of your body's weight is water weight. If you weigh 100 pounds, how many of those pounds are **water**?) We drink **water**. We take a bath in it. We swim in it and we even squirt our friends with **water** soakers. We wash our clothes and our pets with it. We also sprinkle it on our lawns to keep them green when the weather is dry.

In upcoming issues of the *WaterDrops*, you'll discover much more about becoming a **water-wise water** user.

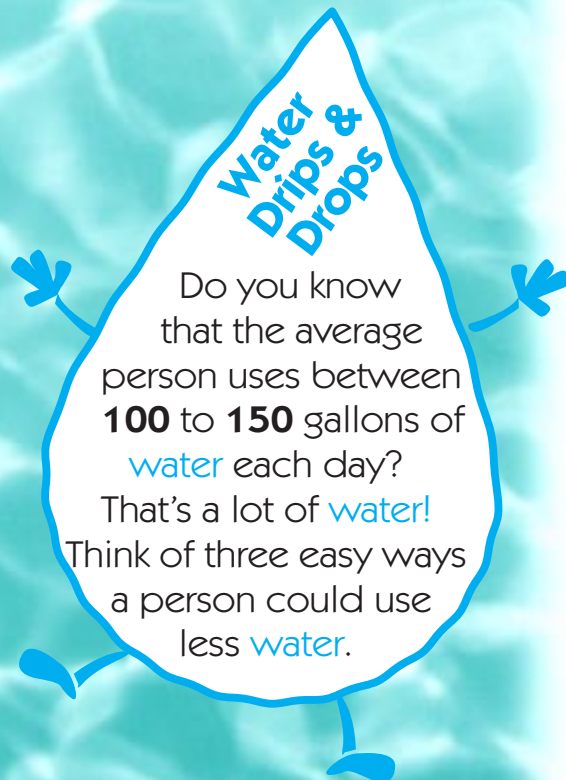
Happy Splashing!



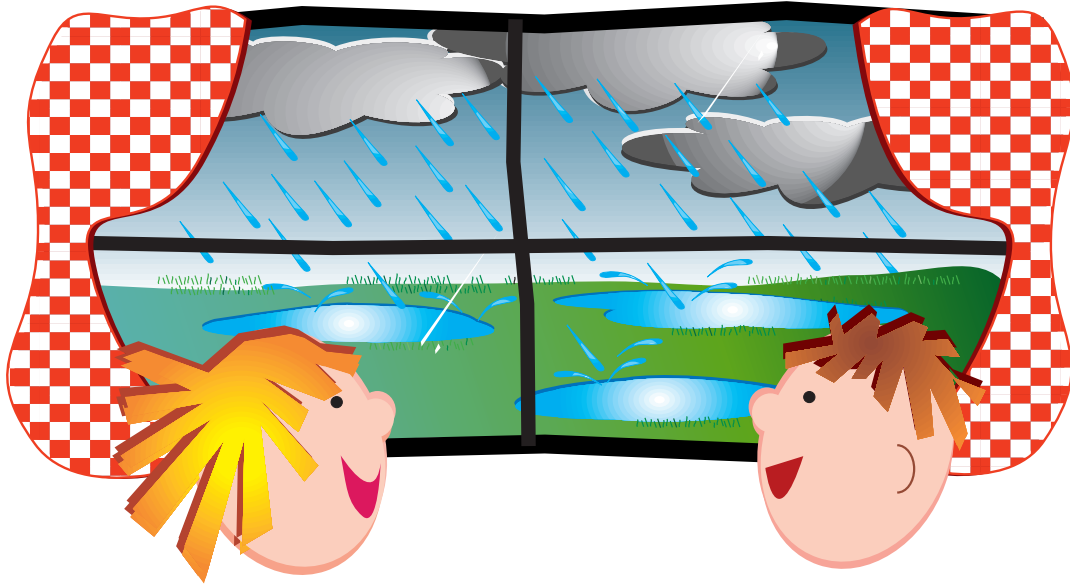
Splash! is a fun program available from the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

Splash! helps us learn about our water resources.

Let's help protect our water supply now and in the future.



Feature Story



AN AFTERNOON RAINFALL

Josh and Debby looked out their grandmother's living room window. "Cool!" they shouted. The rain had stopped and large puddles were filling the front yard. Josh asked their grandmother if they could go outside to splash in the deep puddles.

"Let's wait until we've eaten lunch," Grandma suggested. After Josh and Debby finished their lunch, they ran outside. To Debby's surprise, the puddles were gone!

"Where did they go?" she wondered. Josh looked down the street in each direction, but no **water** remained on top of the ground. Josh and Debby's street was not on a hill, and there was no stream or lake nearby.

"Grandma!" Josh called as he ran back into the house. "The **water's** gone! It disappeared! Some huge earthworms must have sucked it all down into their stomachs and now they're under the earth getting ready to explode and..."

"Stop!" cried Grandma. "Earthworms couldn't take in all that **water**! Most of it may have evaporated, and some of it must have **percolated** through the soil to the **water** table."

Josh and Debby imagined a large table underground with thousands of bowls of **water** resting on its top. Who would drink all that **water** under there? Debby wondered.

"What does **percolated** mean?" Josh asked.



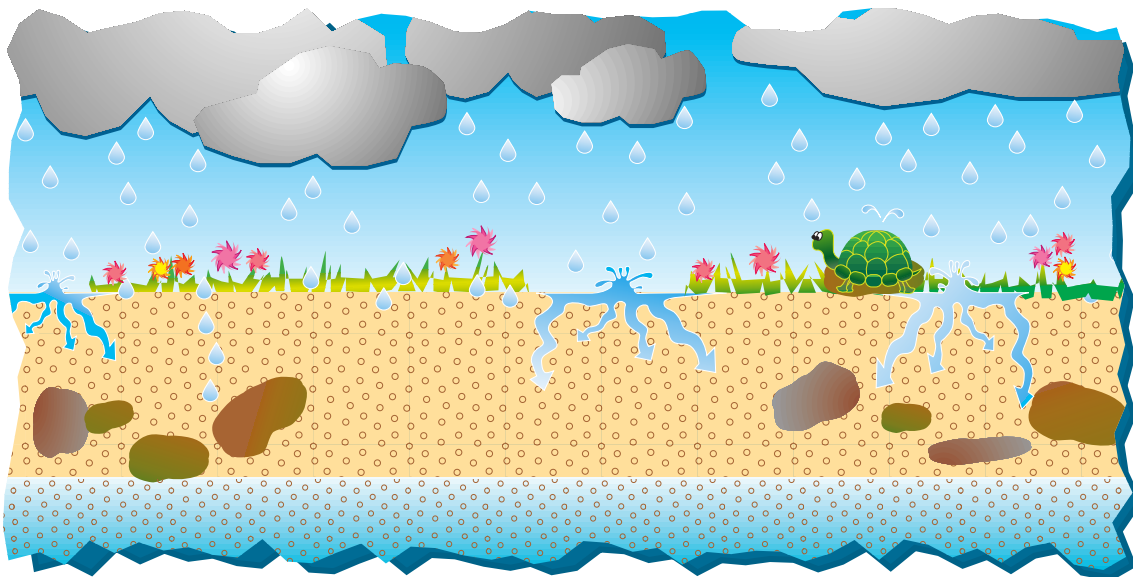
Grandma showed them her coffee pot on the kitchen counter that was used each morning. Water dripped from the top, down through a paper filter with ground coffee, and into a pot underneath.

“Percolate means to drip slowly down,” Grandma explained.

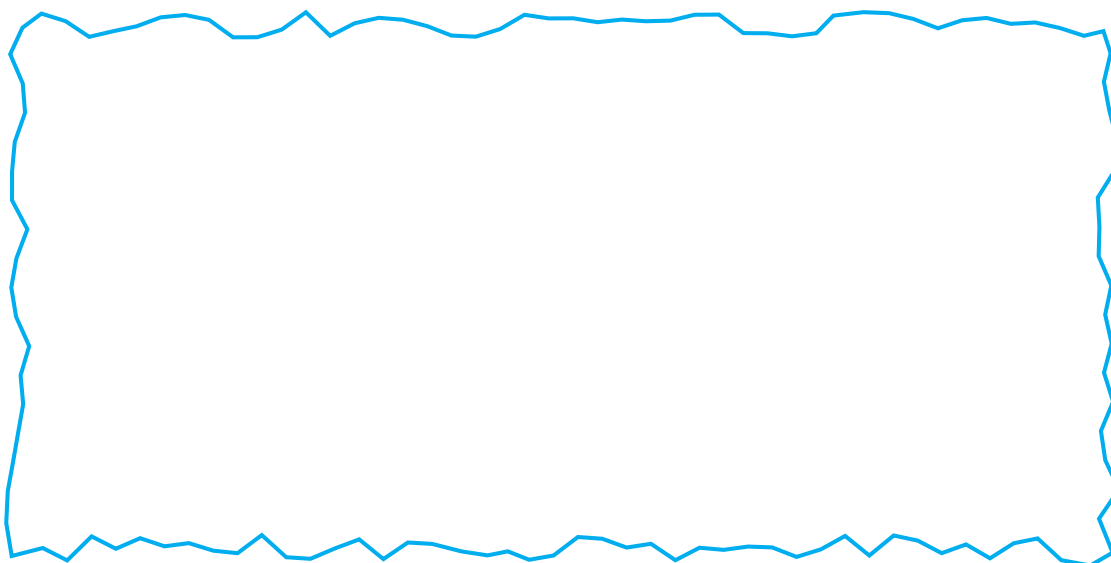
“But there’s not a pot under the surface of the ground, is there?” Debby asked.

“No,” said Grandma. “But there is water under the ground. Remember when your Uncle Pete tried to plant a tree in his backyard near the lake? He dug a hole and found water only seven inches under the ground. That was the top of the water table in his backyard.”

“When water on top of the ground drips slowly down through the soil, it goes down as far as the top of that underground water. Let’s draw a picture of it together!” said Grandma. The picture looked like this:

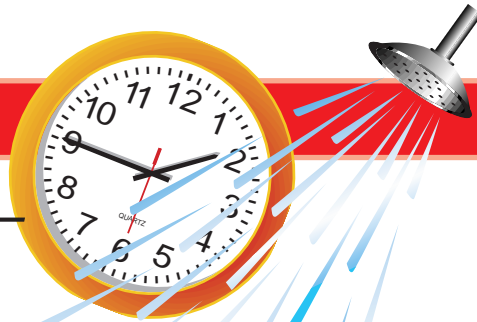


Use this space for your drawing.



Now tell a friend what “percolate” means.

Take it Home



Water conservation at home — something to try!

Much of the **water** we use in our homes is used in our bathrooms. Did you know that taking a shower without a **water-saver** showerhead uses about five gallons of **water** per minute?

Next time you begin a shower, set a stopwatch to time yourself. Multiply the number of minutes by five. If your family has a water-saver showerhead, multiply your shower minutes times three. If you have a **water-saver** shower head and you turned only the smallest amount of **water** on to wash, multiply each minute times two. Here is an example:

Average shower: 10 minutes x 5 gallons = 50 gallons of **water**
Saver shower: 10 minutes x 3 gallons = 30 gallons of **water**
Saver plus low flow: 10 minutes x 2 gallons = 20 gallons of **water**

How much more **water** could you save if you shut the **water OFF** while you are shampooing your hair? Measure the time and subtract!



Ask Water Cycle Wanda

Roberto asks:

Why does hail sometimes fall from the sky instead of rain?

Water Cycle Wanda:

Hail and raindrops both begin in the clouds. But sometimes strong winds blow the falling rain drops up higher into the atmosphere where temperatures are below freezing. Each time a **water** droplet starts to fall again, winds cause it to travel higher into the atmosphere, freezing it until it is a large drop of frozen rain. By the time it is too heavy to blow back up again, it falls as hail— a piece of ice!

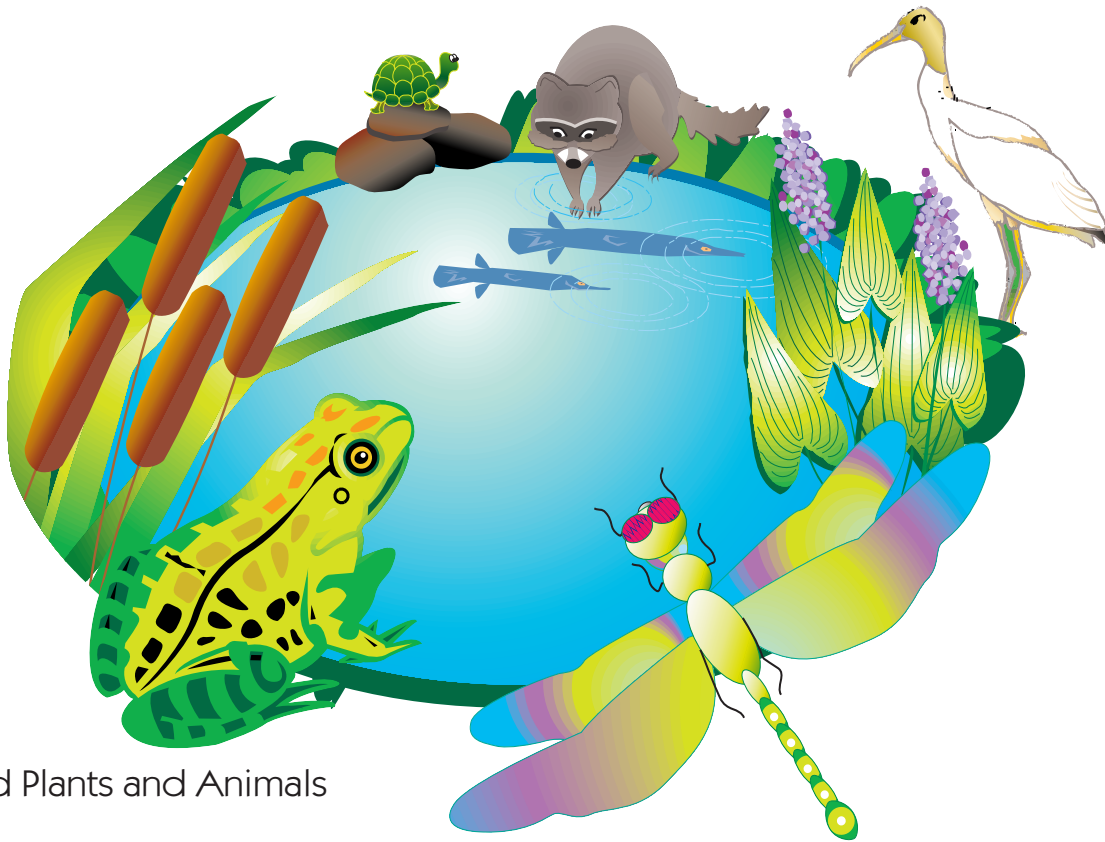


Please send questions to **Water** Cycle Wanda (c/o CHEC, P.O. Box 2494, Port Charlotte, Florida 33949), or on the Internet at chec@sunline.net. All questions will be answered. Yours may be included in **WaterDrops!**

Water in Our World

WHO LIVES IN THIS POND?

A Florida freshwater pond may be home for a variety of plants and animals. Use the word list to label the plants and animals that live in this pond. When you finish, write a story about playing at this pond.



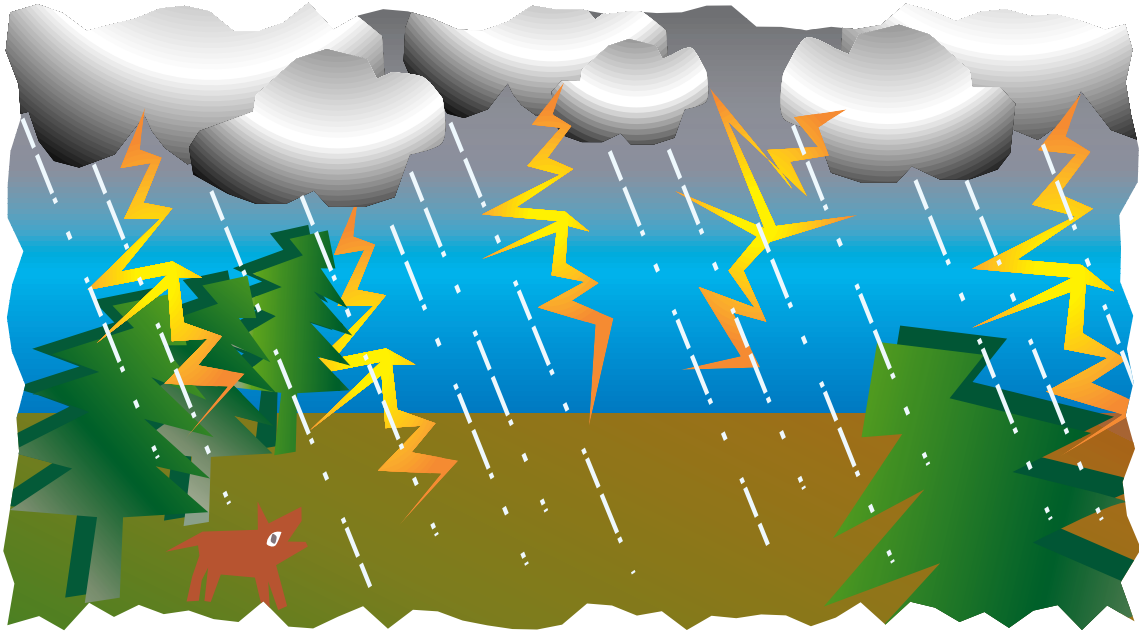
Pond Plants and Animals

cattails
pickerelweed
woodstork

raccoon
turtle
bullfrog

gar fish
dragonfly

Water in Our World



THUNDERSTORMS

Florida is often called the lightning capital of the world, with as many as 7,000 lightning strikes per hour during a strong summer thunderstorm! Because lightning can be dangerous, always try to find dry shelter during any rainstorm. In the last 40 years, almost 400 people in Florida have been killed by lightning strikes, and thousands more have been injured.

Thunderstorms and other rainstorms are very important for Florida's environment. The average rainfall in southwest Florida is about 53 inches per year. When there isn't enough rain, a drought can cause changes to take place in the environment. Can you guess what time of the year is the typical rainy season?

Fill-in-the-blank

Complete each sentence by writing in the correct word.

A drought can cause changes to take place in the _____.

There can be up to _____ lightning strikes per hour during a strong summer thunderstorm!

When a thunderstorm approaches your area, you should find _____.



Games & Puzzles

Water Drops Word Search – Can you find these words?

✓ POND	W	A	T	E	R	C	Y	C	L	E
DEW	E	C	B	S	A	E	C	B	I	S
WATER	D	P	F	G	I	D	S	T	G	A
CYCLE	M	G	S	C	N	X	B	H	H	R
RAINDROP	N	P	O	N	D	P	G	G	T	E
PERCOLATE	O	A	S	W	R	U	X	U	N	W
DROUGHT	P	H	R	A	O	S	S	O	I	O
LIGHTNING	E	G	A	R	P	W	S	R	N	H
HAIL	H	K	D	L	P	R	M	D	G	S
SHOWER	T	E	T	A	L	O	C	R	E	P

Water Words

Unscramble the following groups of letters to form **water** words.
Then use these words to tell a **water** story.

mstorrain _____ pords _____

teolaperc _____ ninglight _____

shalps _____ washer _____



What's Wet on the Web!



Are you ready to go surfing? Check out a few of these “water” sites on the Internet. *It's a splash!*

The National Wildlife Federation
www.nwf.org/kids/cool/water2.html

Water Wiser
<http://www.waterwiser.org>

Surf Your Watershed
<http://www.epa.gov/surf>

The Environmental Protection Agency
<http://www.epa.gov/kids>

The Southwest Florida Water Management District
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/swfwmd/kids.html>

Be a Water Saver, **NOT** a Water Waster!

List 5 ways your family can help to conserve water at home.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Mail your list to us! We will send you a temporary tattoo with a water-saving message, “Just Say No To Wasting Water” pencil, and a water cycle wristband!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ County _____

School _____ Teacher _____

Send to: **In-School Education**
Public Communications Department
Southwest Florida Water Management District
2379 Broad Street
Brooksville, FL 34609-6899



The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) does not discriminate upon the basis of any individual's disability status. This nondiscrimination policy involves every aspect of the District's functions including one's access to, participation, employment, or treatment in its programs or activities. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation as provided for in the Americans With Disabilities Act, should contact the Public Communications Department at (352) 796-7211, extension 4757; TDD only 1-800-231-6103 (FL); fax (352) 754-6883; Suncom 628-4150 or view our Web Site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/swfwmd>.

