

GARDEN IRRIGATION WORKSHOP

June 21, 2014

FINAL REPORT



Prepared by:



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The SSI Water Council acknowledges the financial contributions and support from the Capital Regional District, the BC Water and Waste Association, Windsor Plywood, Slegg Lumber and the SSI Garden Club. This report is posted on the Water Council website at www.ssiwatercouncil.com

GARDEN IRRIGATION WORKSHOP

1. Description

Our Drinking Water Week activity ended up taking place in June due to logistical issues.

Salt Spring Island Water Council partnered with the Salt Spring Island Garden Club to present a workshop on Garden Irrigation addressing the benefits of drip and other irrigation systems, and showcasing local opportunities for purchasing, installing and maintaining irrigation systems and other gardening related water conservation measures. The workshop was held on a Saturday afternoon; local hardware stores were invited to attend the event and bring a selection of garden irrigation supplies, demonstrating what is available locally and helping residents choose the best products for their needs. Three local speakers gave formal presentations on the importance of thoughtful landscaping, proper watering, and irrigations options.

Presenters were:

Allison Marr, owner of Visions West Landscape Design, a certified horticulturalist, landscape designer, project manager and irrigation contractor. Ms. Marr discussed the challenges facing Salt Spring gardeners including tough soils, limited water supply and quality, and an overabundance of deer and rabbits. She explained that these challenges can be overcome with proper planning, sound cultural practices and good plant selection. She spoke about the importance of water conscious methods and perspectives in relation to plant selection, landscape design and irrigation applications in our local environment.

Mike Langley, a certified member of the Irrigation Association of British Columbia (IIABC) and the owner of MiCo Properties, discussed irrigation and automated watering systems designed to place the right amount of water in the right place, at the right time, saving you water and time.

Ron Bain, member of both the SSI Water Council and Garden Club, discussed and demonstrated a simple homemade micro-drip system developed by Garry Brust, which he has used for the last 22 years. This do-it-yourself solution gets the water to the plant roots and is also incredibly flexible.



2. Number of Participants

45 people, plus volunteers attended the workshop.

3. Media Coverage

The workshop was promoted on the Salt Spring Exchange, a local information Internet bulletin board with over 11,000 followers. It included a link to the SSI Water Council website where a webpage describing the workshop was created. A display ad ran for two weeks in the local newspaper, the Driftwood, as well as an article about the upcoming workshop. A poster was created and posted in various locations around Salt Spring including coffee shops, the library and information centre. Both the display ad and poster included a QR Code to send users with smart phones to the website for more information. Email invitations were sent to all Water Council members, Garden Club members and a variety of other community groups. All promotional materials acknowledged BCWWA and the CRD as the major sponsors.

Samples:

SSI WATER COUNCIL & SSI GARDEN CLUB

Garden Irrigation Workshop

OPEN HOUSE at Meaden Hall
Saturday June 21 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Hear from experts, ask questions and see products displayed by our local suppliers.

- Allison Marr of Visions West Landscape Design will speak about the importance of water conscious methods and perspectives in relation to plant selection, landscape design and irrigation applications in our local environment.
- Mike Langley of MiCo Properties will speak about efficient and effective irrigation, and automated watering systems.
- Ron Bain of the SSI Garden Club will demonstrate a simple home made micro-drip system developed and used for the last 22 years by Garry Brust in Saanich.

Supported by:

CRD | BCWWA | DRINKING WATER WEEK | SLEGG LUMBER | WINDSOR

Refreshments will be provided and donations to offset costs requested.

www.ssiwatercouncil.com | ssi-watercouncil@shaw.ca

Garden Irrigation Workshop FREE

Item Details:
Organizer: SSI Water Council
Date: June 21, 2014
Start Time: 1:00 pm
Event Length: 3 hours
Location: Meaden Hall
Expires: 15 days, 6 hours
Email to a friend

Item listed by: [Suzan Chamney](#) on June 6, 2014

Item Description:
You are invited to attend a Garden Irrigation Workshop where you will hear from local experts, have the opportunity to ask questions and see products displayed by Windsor Plywood and Slegg Lumber. Speakers will commence at 1:30 pm.

Saturday, June 21, from 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm at Meaden Hall
Presented by the Salt Spring Island WATER COUNCIL and GARDEN CLUB with the generous support of the CRD and BC Water & Waste Association.

Refreshments will be provided and donations to offset costs requested.

Visit our website for more information: <http://ssiwatercouncil.com/2014/06/garden-irrigation-workshop/>

Like Share Be the first of your friends to like this.

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4. Impact of activities

There was a lot of participant engagement with the workshop attendees asking questions, discussing options and handling products available locally. Many people said that they were inspired go home and start planning out their irrigation systems and working on their planting strategies. Workshop attendees can now make more informed decisions regarding what plants to grow next to each other, as well as choosing the best method and timing for watering their gardens, which will lead to great water conservation on people's property.

5. Community Water Challenge participation

SSI Water Council did not participate as we simply do not currently have the resources to carry out Community Water Challenge.

6. Recommendations and lessons learned for future events

For future events we should start the process of lining up speakers earlier. Unfortunately we waited until we had secured the funding before approaching potential speakers only to discover that most were already booked or on holidays during Drinking Water Week. In the end we had to postpone the event by six weeks in order to obtain speakers. Another lesson is to insist that speakers use the microphone—even if they don't want to! And bring a backup battery for the wireless mouse.

7. Survey of Participants

The feedback from those attending the workshop who completed the evaluation and survey form was very positive. One hundred percent said that they found the event informative or very/exceptionally informative; seventy percent said that they would change their behaviour as a result of this event and some now plan to install a drip irrigation system in the near future.

The presentations were very well received and everyone found the display tables with local product a great asset.



Attachment A

SURVEY RESULTS

Over 45 people attended the event and 15 surveys were completed.

1) How informative did you find the event you attended?

1 = not informative 2 = OK 3 = informative 4 = very informative 5 = exceptional

Informative= 3

Very informative= 10

Exceptional= 2

2) Will you change your behaviour as a result of attending this event?

Yes= 10

- I plan to learn more about what each plant needs
- Will set up a drip system
- Learned what to do!
- Am installing a new veggie garden
- More specific information
- Obvious need for better planning
- Will pay more attention to over/under watering. Water collection. Improving soil
- Water conservation, possible in small amounts to make a difference

No= 4

- I already plan on a drip system x 2
- Already using most of these techniques x 2

3) What did you like about the event?

- Three different speakers / angles / approaches to planting and irrigation
- Friendly banter
- Covered a lot of territory in a short period of time
- Three excellent and varying presentations
- Everything
- Good info
- All three were good!
- Informal, to the point
- What is available and how to plan ahead
- Different approaches to consider
- Relevant, informal
- Very informative x 2

Attachment A
(continued)

4) Name one area of improvement for future events:

- Limit speaker time
- Less paper use
- Need a stretch break halfway thru
- Access to some of the slides on the web. E.g. tables of plants (NB: this is on the web and it was announced that it was there)
- Excellent as is
- Breaks between speakers x 2
- Improved technical aspect (computer control / microphone)
- Microphone

5) Have you heard of BC Water & Waste Association?

Yes= 8

No= 7

6) Do you currently have an irrigation system?

Yes= 8

No= 7

- Time – we just moved onto the property
- This workshop
- This Presentation
- Am doing so
- Very small garden and drought tolerant planting
- Money

7) Where did you hear about this event?

- Newspaper x 6
- Garden Club x 3
- Email x 4
- Word of mouth x 2
- SSI Exchange

REFERENCE WEBSITES

Websites

Salt Spring Island Water Council Society
<http://www.ssiwatercouncil.com>

Salt Spring Island Garden Club
<http://www.ssigc.moonfruit.com/>

BC Water and Waste Association
<http://www.bcwwa.org>

Capital Regional District Water Services
<http://www.crd.bc.ca/water>

Allison Marr, Visions West Landscape Design
<http://gulfishlandslandscaping.com/>

Mike Langley, MiCo Properties
<http://micoproperties.com/>

Windsor Plywood
<http://www.windsorssi.com>

