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News Release

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SARA POSTS 2018 WATERSHED WISE REBATE APPLICATION

SARA to award funds for construction of on-site stormwater management

SAN ANTONIO, TX— The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) has published the 2018 Watershed Wise Rebate Program application and will begin accepting applications on September 11, 2017. SARA's rebate program seeks to reduce the impact of pollution from stormwater runoff by expanding the use of on-site stormwater best management practices (BMPs).

As more natural surfaces are paved and developed, less water during storms percolates into the ground and instead flows over impervious surfaces, picking up pollutants, and carrying them to creeks and rivers. This untreated rainwater is known as stormwater runoff. The pollutants picked up by stormwater include, but are not limited to, oil, fertilizers, bacteria, heavy metals, gasoline and sediment. Scientific data from SARA's water quality monitoring indicates that stormwater runoff is the greatest threat to stream health, with elevated levels of E. coli bacteria presenting the greatest water quality concern in the San Antonio River Watershed.

Increasing the use of sustainable development practices will improve the health of the San Antonio River and other waterways within the watershed. The engineers and scientists at SARA, working with other public sector partners, have advanced the use of sustainable development practices by developing a [Low Impact Development \(LID\) Technical Guidance Manual](#); implementing a Watershed Wise Grant program where K-12 public schools can apply for funding for LID and green infrastructure construction on campus; and by continuing to fund the Watershed Wise Rebate Program.

SARA's General Manager Suzanne Scott says LID is the future of development in the basin: "SARA initiated the Watershed Wise Rebate Program two years ago and demand has shown that there is a very strong market for sustainable development practices in the watershed.

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Projects from previous years, like the City of San Antonio Development Services Department parking lot, which treats more than 90% of stormwater from the lot through a low-maintenance bioswale, have filled a gap in both the sustainability and visual appeal of stormwater management in development practices.”

In order to apply for SARA's Watershed Wise Rebate, sustainable development BMPs must be designed using SARA's Low Impact Development Technical Guidance Manual, and need to have a minimum reimbursement request of \$15,000 and a maximum reimbursement request of \$100,000. SARA's Watershed Wise Rebate Program is open to public, private or environmental non-profit projects in Bexar, Wilson, Karnes or Goliad counties. Private residences and required permitted BMPs are ineligible. Types of construction include: commercial, multi-use, right of ways and neighborhood common space. There are multiple BMPs that qualify for a rebate.

Jake Aalfs, SARA Landscape Architect, encourages interested parties to prepare applications early: “Funds are reserved for qualified applicants in the order applications are received, and this year we expect to begin receiving applications on the opening day, September 11. The rebate website features a ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ section where we have posted common questions in order to facilitate the process for new applicants.”

An application, rebate worksheet, project map and cross-section details checklist are required to be completed in order for a project to be considered. The application deadline is January 31, 2018 at 5 p.m. Applications will be reviewed as they are received and may be provisionally awarded before the January 31 deadline. For more information on SARA's Watershed Wise Rebate Program, please visit www.sara-tx.org.

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The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) was created by the 45th Texas Legislature on May 5, 1937 and reorganized in 1961 to plan, manage and implement water-related programs and projects within the San Antonio River Watershed. The State of Texas empowered SARA to preserve, protect and manage the resources and the ecology of the San Antonio River and its tributaries. To learn more about the SARA, visit our website at www.sara-tx.org.