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**WATERSMART ANNOUNCES 2009 “RAIN BARREL OF FUN” CONTEST WINNERS**

*- Cobb County 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders create and decorate rain barrels  
to add beauty and conservation friendly water source to schools’ landscapes-*

**MARIETTA, GA (May 12, 2009)** – waterSmart<sup>SM</sup> is proud to announce Ms. Melissa Milam’s 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class from Addison Elementary as the winners of the second annual waterSmart Rain Barrel of Fun Contest. Five Cobb County elementary schools participated in the program, which provides students with an opportunity to express their creativity while learning about outdoor water conservation.

Each school submitted a creative and beautifully designed rain barrel, but Addison’s Elementary’s rain barrel was selected as the first place winner for their design which incorporated plants and animals native to the area lakes. Ms. Jamie Kennedy’s 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class from Compton Elementary placed a close second for their artistic design which incorporated their school mascot, the cub, and a water conservation message. Mt. Bethel Elementary, Fair Oaks Elementary and Eastvalley Elementary were runners up in the contest.

“We think all of the Rain Barrel of Fun participants are winners because each class gets a new rain barrel to help keep their school’s landscape healthy without using water from sprinklers or a hose,” says Kathy Nguyen, Water Efficiency Manager for Cobb County Water System (CCWS). “It is important to incorporate environmental education into the classroom, and we are very proud of our teachers and students for their work in creating these rain barrels and being waterSmart.”

waterSmart kicked off the contest with a make-your-own rain barrel workshop, on April 2, teachers constructed their own rain barrels and then took them back to their second- and third-grade students to decorate — providing an attractive, functional and waterSmart addition to their school grounds.

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“Creating and decorating a rain barrel is a wonderful way to collect water, which can be used to water the school’s landscape, as well as teach students about the importance of water conservation,” says waterSmart Program Director Becky Mixon.

Teachers and students were given six weeks to design and paint their rain barrels and learn about the importance a little change can make in the effort to conserve water. The rain barrels and design materials for the educational contest were provided by Cobb County Marietta Water Authority (CCMWA) and CCWS.

The rain barrel design entries were reviewed by a panel of judges on the categories of creativity, artistic ability, theme and team work, with extra bonus points awarded for display of water conservation knowledge. Local celebrity judges included Walter Reeves, Georgia Gardener; Chris Holcomb, 11Alive meteorologist; Jay Dillon, producer for Cobb Ed TV and Maia Davis, principal planner for the Atlanta Regional Commission.

All participants will keep their rain barrel on the school campus to help provide a conservation friendly alternative to supplemental watering for landscaping, and the winning class will receive award certificates from waterSmart. For more information on waterSmart and Rain Barrel of Fun please visit [www.waterSmart.net](http://www.waterSmart.net).

### **About waterSmart**

The waterSmart<sup>SM</sup> program was initiated by the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority (CCMWA) in 2000 to educate their service area residents of all ages about the importance of indoor and outdoor water conservation and to help encourage sustainable, year-round conservation, regardless of climate conditions. The CCMWA is in its eighth year of providing the waterSmart program to the community. For more information on water conservation and waterSmart, visit [www.waterSmart.net](http://www.waterSmart.net) .

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