

Introduction

In Extension, a variety of methods are used to evaluate program success. The methods available, however, are best for evaluating the standard outreach model of educator-led instruction. Without direct teaching from an Extension agent, how one evaluates program success becomes challenging. Free standing displays created to raise awareness of residents in Ocean and Atlantic Counties on water conservation are used to highlight one approach to measure program impacts and success for outreach activities without direct involvement from an Extension educator.

Background

According to the U.S. EPA, each resident in New Jersey uses about 70 gallons of water per day (www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-02/documents/ws-ourwater-new-jersey-state-fact-sheet.pdf). With close to 9 million people living in the Garden State, this means that 630 million gallons are consumed daily. Despite ample rainfall, potable water sources in the state are stressed by the demands of multiple users and uses. A program was developed to focus on the use of educational displays to increase the awareness of residents in Ocean and Atlantic Counties on water consumption and educate them on practices they can use at home to conserve water.

Methods

Display Components

Three displays were designed and built for use in Ocean and Atlantic Counties. The displays consisted of the following:

- ◆ A presentation playing on a digital picture frame mounted in a secure structure onto a 55-gallon rain barrel.
- ◆ A series of images, playing on the digital frame, provides information outlining the need to conserve water and what people can do to save water at home.
- ◆ A one-page flyer providing examples of water-saving activities for homeowners.

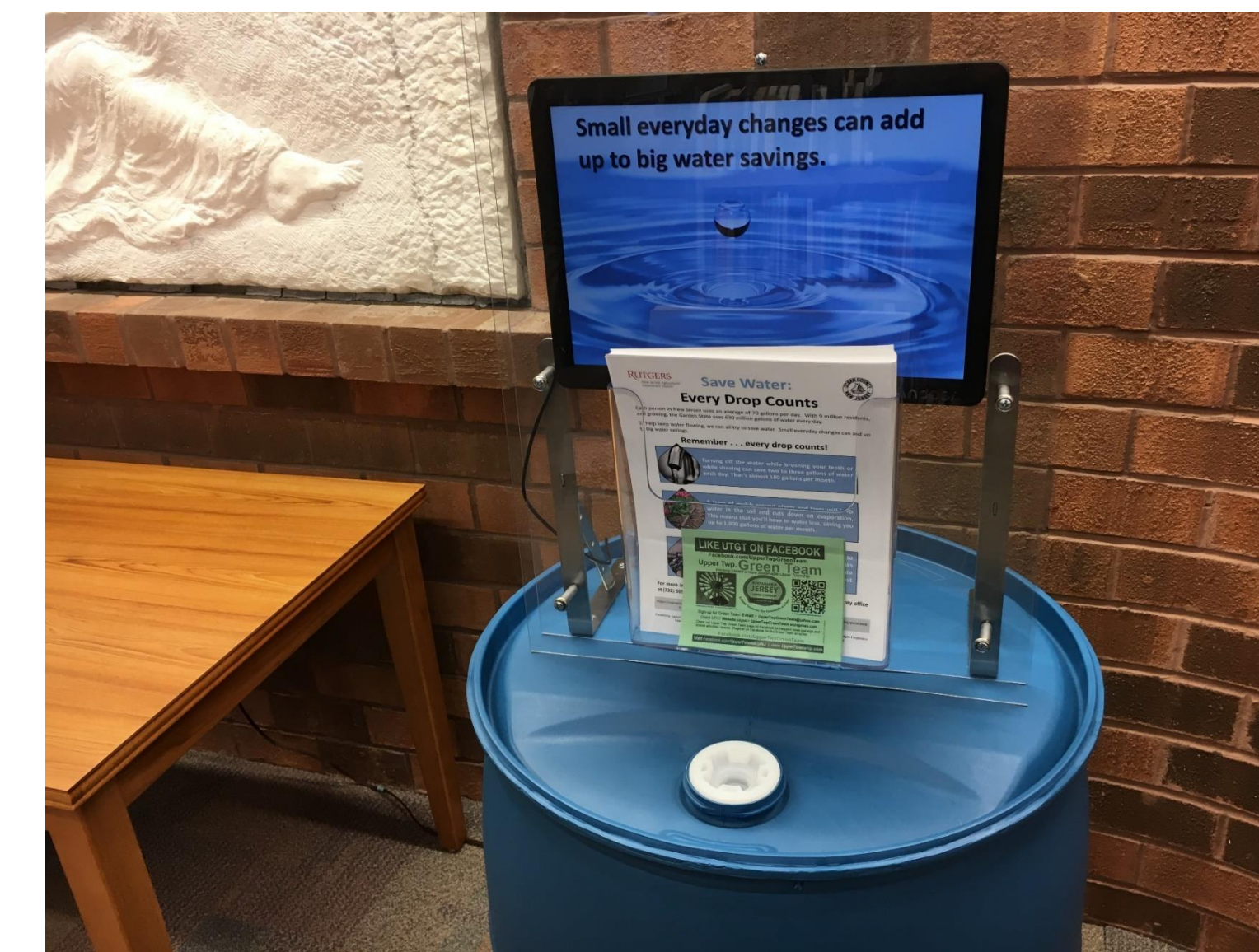
A website (<http://ocean.njaes.rutgers.edu/ag/save-water.html>) was also developed to provide additional resources on saving water for homeowners.

Learning Objectives

- ◆ Increase awareness of public on water consumption
- ◆ Educate public on practices used to conserve water

Evaluation

To determine the success of this program without direct feedback, indirect measures of impact were used and incorporated into the display design: the number of flyers distributed and the number of website views. These indicators are directly from the displays and give a good measure of whether the learning objectives are met.



Results

From May 2018 through March 2020, there have been:

- ◆ 274 website views
- ◆ 18 locations/events throughout New Jersey where the displays have been exhibited (see table)
- ◆ 1,157 flyers distributed through the display (see table)
- ◆ An estimated 80,770 people have seen the displays (see table)

LOCATION	START DATE	END DATE	FLYERS TAKEN	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VISITORS
RCE Ocean County Reception Area (Toms River)	6/27/2018	Present	158	5,120 visitors
Brigantine	7/9/2018	10/16/2018	374	
Ocean County Fair (Bayville)	7/11/2018	7/15/2018	13	40,000 visitors
Seaside Park	7/27/2018	Present	237	
State RMG Conference (New Brunswick)	10/6/2018	10/6/2018	20	270 registered
Upper Township	10/19/2018	10/20/2018	46	
Jersey-Friendly Yards Conference (Toms River)	10/20/2018	10/20/2018	7	135 attendees
Ventnor	11/16/2018	1/14/2019	68	
Upper Township (Round 2)	1/15/2019	2/27/2019	53	
Galloway	3/1/2019	4/30/2019	30	
Barnegat Bay Environmental Educators Roundtable	4/17/2019	4/17/2019	8	45 attendees
Hammonton	5/1/2019	6/15/2019	27	
Metuchen	6/19/2019	6/22/2019	22	
Longport	6/28/2019	10/23/2019	18	
Ocean County Fair (Bayville)	7/10/2019	7/14/2019	11	35,000 visitors
Cape May County 4-H Fair (Cape May Court House)	7/18/2019	7/20/2019	36	
Jersey-Friendly Yards Conference (Toms River)	10/19/2019	10/19/2019	18	200 attendees
Upper Township (Round 3)	11/7/2019	11/16/2019	11	
		TOTAL	1,157	80,770

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