



NEWS RELEASE

December 27, 2013

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Photo Included

Project WET A Success in Santa Maria

Two years of diligent planning culminated in a very special program for teachers within Santa Barbara County earlier this month. The City of Santa Maria Utilities Department and the CREEC Network Region 8 Coordinator Teresa “Tree” Lees sponsored a free two-day Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) Workshop in Santa Maria on Dec. 5-6. Twenty-four teachers from Santa Barbara County participated in this hands-on workshop promoting awareness, appreciation, knowledge, and stewardship of water resources.

“This workshop was not only informative, but fun and well worth attending!” said Amanda Gonzalez, a Mary Buren School teacher.

Elementary and high school teachers from Santa Maria, Lompoc, Sisquoc, and Guadalupe took part in fun activities and hands-on games that correlated to the California State Standards for Science, History/Social Studies, and English/Language Arts.

“Finally! A workshop for teachers that is curriculum-based that helps with common core standards, and the Next Generation Science Standards, too,” said Laura Branch, a Righetti High School teacher. “It was informative, interesting, and gave us great ideas!”

During the workshop, teachers learned about local water education programs, the connection of water to the Earth’s system, and how water resources are managed. They received a free 592-page Project WET Activity and Curriculum Guidebook (funded by the Water Education Foundation) filled with age appropriate teaching aids and activities for students in grades K-12. As a special bonus, they also received a free Education and Environmental Initiative Curriculum Unit (funded by Cal-Recycle) to take back to their classroom.

Each participant left with a bag full of great handouts, useful classroom materials, and informative brochures.

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“Tis the season to be jolly, so who wants more free education materials?” announced Teresa Lees, CREEC Network Region 8 Coordinator, as she distributed printed materials and activity handouts, including maps, posters, activity books, and CDs.

Shelly Spring, a teacher at Santa Maria High School said, “I appreciated all the hands-on activities we can take back and use in the classroom with our students!”

The Utilities Department also distributed promotional items including: recyclable pens, pencils, bags, water sponges, rulers, magnets, and F.O.G scrapers.

Myra Ritchie, Water Conservation Specialist for the Utilities Department said, “I am so pleased to have seen so many local teachers attend and participate in the two-day workshop. All the materials handed out were great incentives for the teachers to take back and share with their students.”

Lodene Blair, a Lompoc Unified School District teacher said, “Water is our most important resource; Project WET gave me awesome teaching tools for water, ecosystems, and California’s unique environmental characteristics.”

If you are an educator and you missed it, don’t worry. CREEC will be begin work for another Project WET Workshop in San Luis County in 2014, and the Utilities Department looks forward to sponsoring another Project WET Workshop in 2015. For more information about this program, please visit www.projectwet.org, www.creec.org, www.cityofsantamaria.org, or call the Utilities Department at 925-0951 extension 7235.

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