

Groundwater Guardian

The Groundwater Guardian Program is a community educational program developed by The Groundwater Foundation, a private, non-profit educational organization recognized internationally, in Lincoln, Nebraska.



"Designation as a Groundwater Guardian

Community is presented by The Groundwater Foundation to communities that demonstrate an ongoing participatory approach to protecting groundwater resources...For continuing designation as a Groundwater Guardian, a community must submit an Annual Entry Form and proposed ROA (Result Oriented Activities) Plan(s) by February each year; continue ongoing activities; and submit an Annual Report in August each year."

For more information about The Groundwater Foundation and/or the Groundwater Guardian Program see www.groundwater.org.

The Desert Hot Springs community has three Groundwater Guardian Teams and a Groundwater Guardian Affiliate:

- Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team (Community - 1st Designated in 1995)
- Mission Springs Water District (Affiliate - 1st Designated in 1997)
- Desert Hot Springs High School (nation's 1st Groundwater Guardian Campus Team - 1st Designated in 2000)
- Desert Springs Middle School (Groundwater Guardian Campus Team - 1st Designated in 2004)

Palm Springs Unified School District's Shiny Apple Award

In 2001, Shiny Apple Awards were presented to Nancy Wright, member of the Mission Springs Water District Board of Directors and The Groundwater Foundation Board of Directors, and founder of all three Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Teams; and Marge Cook, Executive Director, Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Teams, founder of two Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Teams, and member of the Technical Advisory Committee to The Groundwater Foundation Board of Directors, in recognition of their efforts in the formation of "the nation's first Groundwater Guardian Campus Team" at Desert Hot Springs High School.

In 2004, a Shiny Apple Award was presented to the Mission Springs Water District Board of Directors in recognition of the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Program.

In 2008, the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Program was presented with its 4th Shiny Apple Award from the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD). This particular Award was in recognition of the Team's sponsorship of the 2007-2008 Desert Valley Debate League's "The Great Water Debate" which had over 200 middle school students, including Desert Springs Middle School (DSMS), participating in the debate season.

The Groundwater Foundation's Groundwater Guardian Green Sites Program

In 2007, the Groundwater Foundation announced the inception of the Groundwater Guardian Green Sites Program, and in 2008 the Program was formally introduced. The program was developed to recognize good stewards of groundwater by encouraging managers of highly managed green spaces to implement, measure, and document their groundwater-friendly practices. The Program will document current practices related to pesticide and fertilizer use, water use, pollution prevention, water quality, and environmental stewardship.

Five Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Green Sites were designated in the early part of 2008:

- Mission Springs Water District
- Mission Springs Park
- Miracle Springs Resort & Spa
- Desert Hot Springs Spa Hotel
- Hot Springs Water

Student's Drinking Water Festival

The Student's Drinking Water Festival has been held annually since 1997 at Desert Springs Middle School, with over 600 6th-grade students participating each year. The Festival features interactive hands-on learning activities presented by guest speakers from the California Department of Water Resources; Riverside County Flood Control & Water District; Mission Springs Water District; The Wildlands Conservancy; California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin; and the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.

To date, close to 7,000 students have participated in this one-day event where they learn about water issues, water conservation and protection, the desert ecosystem including wildlife and fauna, and environmental issues and professions.

Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team Scholarship Program

Since 2004 the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team has presented four \$500 scholarships to Desert Hot Springs High School graduating seniors, recognizing their participation in water-related Groundwater Guardian activities. Past recipients have included Vanessa Yee (who is attending USC School of Architecture) and Chris Acalinas (who is attending Humboldt State University).



Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Desert Watersheds: From Source to Sand Field Trips Over 1,260 students from Desert Hot Springs schools

participated in the Desert Watersheds: From Source to Sand field trips that involved a 4-hour visit to the Mission Creek Preserve. Partners in this program, which focuses on the water cycle, desert wetland systems, and the importance of Unified School

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Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Sponsorship of the Desert Valley Debate League 2007- 2008 Season The Great Water Debate

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This program is in collaboration with the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team, Claremont McKenna Colleges, the Desert Valley Debate League including Desert Springs Middle School, and involves over 11 middle schools in five districts, including 3 middle schools in Palm Springs Unified School District and over 200 middle school students.

The focus for the 2007-2008 debate season was The Great Water Debate with such topics as bottled water, desert landscaping, and public access to water.

Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Newspapers in Education GROUNDWATER & YOU Supplement.

This 8-page, 4-color, tabloid-size supplement was formally introduced to Desert Springs Middle School in early 2008. This program is in collaboration with The Desert Sun's Newspapers in Education Program and complements the California Department of Education Science Curriculum. In 2004, the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team introduced a GROUNDWATER & YOU Supplement to Desert Hot Springs High School students and teachers, and the program continues today. The next GROUNDWATER & YOU Supplement developed will be for Desert Hot Springs elementary schools.

Desert Hot Springs High School Receives a California Department of Education Specialized Secondary Program Grant (CDE SSP)

Desert Hot Springs High School received a CDE SSP Grant for the Science, Energy & Utilities (including water) Academy Initiative.

Ceramic Tile Project at Desert Hot Springs High School

The event took place on September 25, 2008. The Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team collaborated with Desert Hot Springs High School to create a ceramic tile bench for Cabot's Pueblo Museum with funding from the Mission Springs Foundation.