



2017-2018 Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program

Application Instructions

<http://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/water/>

Growing the next generation of Texas water industry leaders.

GENERAL INFORMATION (updates/corrections in red)

The Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program provides high school age 4-H members and youth an opportunity to gain advanced knowledge and practice leadership skills related to the science, technology, engineering, and management of water in Texas. By connecting with water professionals, Water Ambassadors will gain exposure and recognition as youth leaders, learn about internship opportunities, and explore the diverse career paths in the water industry. The Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program is led by Texas 4-H and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, and supported in part by the Texas 4-H Youth Development Foundation. The 4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy is made possible by private industry and foundation sponsors.

A maximum of (32) individuals will be selected to participate in the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program. Those selected will participate in the summer 4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy and over the next (12) months provide a minimum of (40) hours of service.

4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy

The Leadership Academy is a 10-day tour experience (*actual duration of the Academy may vary*) exposing youth to a wide diversity of water resources, water uses, ecosystems, and water quality concerns. Ambassadors will learn about applied research and technology, water law, policy, planning, and management strategies employed to conserve this valued resource. As they meet and interact with leaders in the Texas water industry, Water Ambassadors will gain an appreciation for the complexity of managing surface and groundwater, and develop a broad perspective of the value of water to local, regional and state economies.

Leadership, Mentorship, & Community Service

Water Ambassadors will commit a minimum of (40) hours of service over a 12-month period following the Leadership Academy. Service hours may be earned by delivering water education at local 4-H clubs, schools, fairs, and other community events. Credit may also be earned by assisting local water utilities, groundwater conservation districts, and County Extension Agents to conduct water outreach activities. Additional service credit will be awarded to Water Ambassadors who participate in continuing education opportunities and assignments administered by the 4-H2O Program Coordinator.

Water Ambassador Benefits

- Serve in a statewide 4-H Youth Development leadership role and are accorded the respect appropriate to this role.
- Play an important role in educating others in your community and state on the importance of water to the State of Texas.
- Serve in an environment to explore career opportunities in the water industry and beyond.
- Gain deeper insight into the governance and management of water resources.
- Meet and interact with water industry professionals and gain access to a myriad of water education tools and resources.

Criteria for Selection

- Demonstrates interest in pursuing advanced knowledge of Texas water issues.
- Willingness to devote the time and effort to deliver water education in the community
- Ability to teach youth and adults about water issues
- Ability to work individually and as part of a team
- Mature, responsible, and able to use good judgement and appropriate behavior while serving as a Water Ambassador and representing the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program
- Access to a computer and the internet
- Commitment to participate in the summer 4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy

Deadlines

- Applications will be accepted through May 15 ~~22~~, 2017.
- Applicants will be notified of their acceptance by June 12, 2017. Instructions and detailed itinerary for the summer 4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy will be provided at that time. ~~Tentative~~ Academy dates are July 8-17 ~~8-15~~, 2017; pickup and drop-off in Austin, Texas.
- Applicants must be a member of Texas 4-H and submit the \$250 participation fee by June 20, 2017.

OBJECTIVES

- Experience the wide diversity of water resources, water uses, sensitive ecosystems, and water quality concerns throughout the state.
- Gain insight into law, policies, and planning strategies to protect and preserve surface and groundwater resources.
- Learn strategies for improving municipal, agricultural, and industrial water conservation and efficiency.
- Understand the importance of water to local, regional, and state economies.
- Develop valuable leadership and communication skills while educating others.
- Learn about career opportunities in the water industry.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicant must be 14 years of age or older as of August 31, 2017 and be entering the 9th, 10th, or 11th grades **high school** in the upcoming 2017-2018 school year. Applicants do not have to be a current member of Texas 4-H, but must agree to become a 4-H member if selected to participate in the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program (\$25 annual membership fee).

TERM

Ambassadorship is a 12-month commitment, beginning July 2017. Ambassadors who fulfill the minimum (40) hours of service will be invited to continue their terms for the next year.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Texas 4-H2O Program Coordinator manages the selection process to ensure that a fair and equitable process is followed.

- The selection committee is composed of representatives of the Texas water industry and Texas 4-H and Youth Development staff.
- Applications must be submitted on-line at <https://fs4.formsite.com/state4h/water/index.html> by **May 15 22, 2017**.
- Applicants will be notified of their acceptance by **June 12, 2017**.

During the online application process, applicants will be asked the following questions. To expedite the online process answers may be typed in a separate program and copied and pasted into the form.

- 1) Provide a description (max 250 words) highlighting your LEADERSHIP and TEAMWORK experiences for community, club, county, district, state, and national areas. Include activities from 4-H, school, and other groups. This will allow the selection committee to understand your teamwork, leadership, and communication skills.
- 2) What are the most important water issues facing your community/region in the coming years?
- 3) Describe the water-related topic or issue that you find most interesting and why.
- 4) What is the most important thing you expect to accomplish as a Texas 4-H Water Ambassador? What do you think you can contribute to the Texas 4-H Water Ambassador Program?

As part of the application process, applicants must submit (2) Letters of Reference and develop a 2-3 minute YouTube video.

- Letters of Reference may come from county extension agents, teachers, or 4-H club leaders, or others who can attest to your scholarship and/or character. Letters should not be from family members. Letters may be uploaded during the on-line application process or mailed to the 4-H2O Program Coordinator (See CONTACT INFORMATION below). Letters should highlight the applicant's leadership qualities, communication skills, and other personal attributes that would justify the individual becoming an effective 4-H Water Ambassador. Only (2) letters of reference will be accepted. Letters of reference that are mailed should be postmarked by May 15 22, 2017.
- The video should reflect who you are, not only what you do. Feel free to be creative. This video is an opportunity for the selection team to learn more about you, seeing the side of you that cannot be presented in paper and ink. The applicant will provide a link to the video during the on-line application process.

PARTICIPATION FEE

If selected, the individual must pay the **\$250 participation fee** by June 20, 2017. *Applicants do not have to be a current member of Texas 4-H, but must agree to become a 4-H member if selected to participate in the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program (\$25 annual membership fee).*

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

A candidate whose disability prevents him or her from completing the application or essays in the usual method should contact the 4-H2O Program Coordinator for assistance.

TIME COMMITMENT

Membership in the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program requires a substantial amount of time. Ambassadors are expected to:

- Participate in the summer 2017 4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy (~~tentative~~ dates: July 8 – July 17 15)
- Participate in monthly on-line continuing education webinars (dates/times to be determined)

- Provide a minimum of (40) hours of service between July 2017 and June 2018

CONTACT INFORMATION

Inquiries about the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program or the selection process should be directed to:

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