



# 2021-2022 Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program

*Application Instructions*

Applications open April 1 – May 15, 2021 @ <https://fs4.formsite.com/state4h/water/index.html>

Visit [www.texas4hwaterambassadors.com](http://www.texas4hwaterambassadors.com) to Learn more about the program.

*Growing the next generation of Texas water industry leaders.*

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program provides high school youth an opportunity to gain advanced knowledge and develop leadership skills related to the science, technology, engineering, and management of water in Texas. By connecting with water professionals, Water ambassadors 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 by water industry sponsors through the Texas 4-H Youth Development Foundation.

Each year, up to (30) individuals are selected to join the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program. Those selected will participate in a summer 4-H2O Leadership Academy. Over the next (12) months, ambassadors provide a minimum of (40) hours of service.

### **Tier I 4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy (June 27 – July 1, 2021)**

The Leadership Academy is an educational tour across Texas exposing youth to a wide range of water resources, water uses, ecosystems, and water quality concerns. Ambassadors 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 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. The 4-H2O Leadership Academy is made possible by private industry and foundation sponsors.

### **Leadership, Mentorship, & Community Service**

Water ambassadors commit to 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 complete continuing education opportunities and assignments administered by the 4-H2O Program Coordinator.

## OBJECTIVES

- Experience the wide diversity of water resources, water uses, sensitive ecosystems, and water quality concerns throughout the state.
- Gain insight into water law, policy, 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.

## **BENEFITS OF BEING A WATER AMBASSADOR**

- Serve a statewide 4-H Youth Development leadership role and are accorded the respect appropriate to this role.
- Play an important part 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.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

- Demonstrate an interest in pursuing advanced knowledge of Texas water issues
- Willing 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 the internet and email
- Commitment to participate in the summer 4-H2O Leadership Academy

## **IMPORTANT DEADLINES**

- Applications will be accepted through May 15, 2021.
- Applicants will be notified of their acceptance by June 1, 2021. Further instructions and tentative itinerary for the summer 4-H2O Leadership Academy will be provided at that time.
- Applicants must be a member of Texas 4-H and submit the \$250 participation fee by June 15, 2021.
- Academy dates are June 27 – July 1. Pickup and drop-off in Waco, Texas.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Applicant must be 14 years of age or older as of August 31, 2021 and be entering the 9th, 10th, or 11th grades in the 2021-2022 school year. Applicants do not have to be a current member of Texas 4-H but must agree to become a 4-H member (\$30 annual membership fee) if selected to participate in the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program.

## **TERM OF SERVICE**

Ambassadorship is a 12-month commitment, beginning July 2021. Ambassadors who meet the minimum (40) hours of service will be invited to continue their terms for the next year. *Twenty hours service must be completed by March 1, 2022 to be invited to serve a second term (Tier II 4-H Water Ambassador).*

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

The Texas 4-H2O Program Coordinator manages the selection process to ensure fairness and equity.

- The selection committee is composed of representatives of the Texas water industry and Texas 4-H Youth Development staff.

- Applications must be submitted on-line at <https://fs4.formsite.com/state4h/water/index.html> by May 15, 2021.
- Applicants will be notified of their acceptance by June 1, 2021.

The online application requires (3) short essays and (2) letters of reference.

**Short Essays** (To expedite the online process answers may be typed in a separate program and copied and pasted into the form.) Essay questions are:

- 1) In 500 words or less, discuss your LEADERSHIP and TEAMWORK experiences for community, club, county, district, state, and national areas. Include activities from 4-H, school, and other groups.
- 2) In 500 words or less, what are the most important water issues facing your community/region?
- 3) In 500 words or less, describe the water-related topic or issue that you find most interesting, and why.

**Letters of Reference** (Two required)

Reference letters may originate from county extension agents, teachers, 4-H club leaders, and others who can attest to your scholarship and character. Letters should not be from family members. Applicants will be prompted to upload letters in the online application. Letters should highlight the applicant’s leadership qualities, communication skills, and other personal attributes that would support the individual becoming an effective 4-H Water Ambassador. Only (2) letters of reference will be accepted.

## **PARTICIPATION FEE**

If selected, the individual must pay the \$250 participation fee by June 15, 2021. 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 (\$30 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.

## **COMMITMENT AND EXPECTATIONS**

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

- Participate in the summer 2021 Tier I 4-H2O Leadership Academy June 27 – July 1, 2021
- Participate in scheduled continuing education webinars (dates/times TBD)
- Provide a minimum of (40) hours of service between July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. *Twenty hours service must be completed by March 1, 2022 to be invited to serve a second term (Tier II 4-H Water Ambassador).*
- Report education/service activities and maintain regular contact with the Texas 4-H Water Ambassador Program Coordinator.
- Communicate with your County Extension Agent and club leader(s) regarding your water ambassador activities.
- **Regularly attend and participate in local 4-H club meetings.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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

David W. Smith  
4-H2O Program Coordinator  
Extension Program Specialist II  
Texas 4-H and Youth Development  
Department of Biological & Agricultural Engineering  
301D Scoates Hall  
College Station, Texas 77843-2117  
Voice: (979) 862-1989  
Email: [davidsmith@tamu.edu](mailto:davidsmith@tamu.edu)