



WATER CONSERVATION & TECHNOLOGY CENTER

— Securing Our Water Future —



Dr. Calvin Finch, new director of the Water Conservation and Technology Center.

Water Conservation and Technology Center, director to focus on statewide water issues

The newly established Water Conservation and Technology Center (WCTC) in San Antonio will accelerate development, testing and adopting of new and innovative technologies to help solve water problems and meet water supply needs for Texas.

Dr. Calvin Finch, formerly with the San Antonio Water System (SAWS), is the center's director.

Texas AgriLife Research, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, the Texas Engineering Experiment Station and Texas A&M University–San Antonio are collaborating on developing the center. The center is administered by the Texas Water Resources Institute, in partnership with the Texas Center for Applied Technology (TCAT).

“As the 2011 drought has shown, the urgency and importance of water conservation and technology advancement cannot be underestimated or ignored,” said Finch, who has been involved in Texas water conservation for 22 years. “Applied research and education are an essential part of Texas making the state water plan a reality.

“With the creation of the Water Conservation and Technology Center, the Texas A&M System is stepping forward to play a leadership role in addressing the challenges of having adequate future water supplies for Texas.”

Cindy Wall, TCAT's executive director, said the center will target its work on four high priority efforts: water conservation, water reuse, groundwater desalination, and energy development and water use.

“The center will establish a team of scientists, engineers and water professionals dedicated to applied research and development, testing and validation, technology transfer, and training and extension education in these four areas,” Wall said.

The center will work with industry, state and federal agencies, municipalities, trade associations and other research institutions to undertake projects and develop solutions within these four areas.

Initially co-located with TCAT at the South Presa Campus, the center will move to the new Texas A&M–San Antonio campus in the future.

Finch comes to the center from SAWS, where he held several positions, including director of regional initiatives and special programs, director of water resources and director of conservation. He was responsible for obtaining the water resources necessary for meeting the needs of San Antonio, a community of 1.2 million people that is growing at the rate of 3 percent per year.

He also directed the system's water conservation education and rebate programs, including the Community Challenge Program that enlisted nonprofits to annually convert 25,000 high water use toilets to high efficiency toilets. He served as SAWS's representative on the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program that recently completed a habitat conservation plan to manage water use from the Edwards Aquifer and protect the endangered species at the Comal and San Marcos Springs. 