



## **March Is Texas SmartScape™ Month Event Ideas and Partnership Suggestions**

The following is a suggested list of ideas for promoting March is Texas SmartScape™ Month. There is also a list of partnership suggestions at the end. Note that some promotional materials are available at [www.nctcog.org/txsmartscape](http://www.nctcog.org/txsmartscape).

- Put a link to [www.txsmartscape.com](http://www.txsmartscape.com) on your city's homepage.
- Team with a local Keep Texas Beautiful coordinator, newspaper, or garden club to sponsor a contest for the most attractive, most creative and most water-efficient residential gardens and/or commercial landscapes in your community based on Texas SmartScape principles. (Since time is a factor, March could be the kickoff for the contest. Awards could be given in the heat of the summer.)
- Include a flyer in water bills or write an article for your municipality's newsletter about Texas SmartScape. (Newsletter templates are available at [www.nctcog.org/txsmartscape](http://www.nctcog.org/txsmartscape).)
- Ask residents to take pictures of their garden at its peak for posting on your website. (Conduct a competition with prizes and giveaways if possible.)
- Encourage the planting of Texas SmartScape demonstration gardens, if possible. Partner with adopt-a-park groups to establish or convert plots to Texas SmartScape design.
- Ask large businesses in your community for contributions for the plants to install as Texas SmartScape demonstration garden.
- Redesign a municipal facility's grounds using Texas SmartScape principles. Make it a community effort by enlisting the help of volunteers (maybe Boy Scouts, local Future Farmers of America (FFA) organization, garden clubs, local college/university students pursuing degrees in environmental studies, landscape design, botany, etc.
- Approach landscaping professionals, local TV meteorologists, a city council person interested in gardening, or other local celebrities to help promote SmartScape events. Ask them to emcee an event kickoff or participate in another way.

- Team up with a local nursery to promote the Texas SmartScape program and distribute materials or conduct a seminar at their business.
- Give away Texas SmartScape bookmarks or other materials at upcoming festival/trade show booths. (Bookmarks are available as part of the annual stormwater program's cooperative purchase.)
- Team with local Keep Texas Beautiful coordinator, local newspaper, or garden club to organize a competition for the Mayor's Award for the Most Environmentally Friendly Yard.
- Team up with your solid waste department and conduct a joint outreach event on composting, recycling, litter prevention, and stormwater pollution (floatables) prevention.
- Partner with your local County Extension office and Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, or partner with local Master Gardeners and composters.
- Partner with your parks department to see if there is an event you could team up on.
- Merge Keep Beautiful events and Texas SmartScape.
- Participate in the regional Texas SmartScape plant sales held in the spring, partnering with a garden center to promote the program. (*If you're interested in participating, email [info@txsmartscape.com](mailto:info@txsmartscape.com) and ask to be put on the annual Texas SmartScape event planning list. Planning for the sales starts several months prior to the first sale event—usually in early fall.*) During this event, you could give away bookmarks, brochures, soil moisture meters, etc., and offer information about plant selection, etc. Ask stores or nurseries to provide handouts at the checkout counter and/or hang a Texas SmartScape poster that you provide.
- Ask local hardware, home improvement, and/or book stores to set up a display with information on the Texas SmartScape program. Go to the store to see which items it sells that relate to the Texas SmartScape program. Then write a letter to the store manager and include the list of items the store already carries that could be part of a Texas SmartScape display. Also include information on what the program is, why it's important, how the store would be doing a service to their customers by participating in Texas SmartScape Month, and what you will provide—but keep it short. Follow up with a phone call or visit. If they agree, provide posters and brochures related to the Texas SmartScape program and information on the website.
- Ask businesses such as Whole Foods and Central Market if you could set up and staff an information booth.
- Offer to present a Texas SmartScape workshop to employee groups at large local businesses.
- Launch a campaign to offer Texas SmartScape presentations to garden clubs and homeowner associations. Send postcards with contact information for key city staff/departments to neighborhood associations. Let people know that city staff are available to talk about composting, stormwater management, water conservation, etc., at meetings and special events.
- Place ads in neighborhood association newsletters. The advertising costs are usually very low for these types of publications.



- Homebuilders Associations and banks often host “home buyer” classes. Offer to give a very short Texas SmartScape presentation to these classes in March and handout materials such as the plant list handout to promote the website.
- Ask local homebuilders, realtors, and mortgage lenders to provide Texas SmartScape materials to new homeowners.
- Offer to give presentations to high school biology or environmental science classes on Texas SmartScape principles.
- Develop a coloring book for children that explains Texas SmartScape concepts and host an art contest.

## **Possible Texas SmartScape Month Partners**

### **Community Partners**

Other Cities  
 Boy/Girl Scouts  
 County Extension Services Agents  
 Garden Clubs, Local Gardens (Public or Private)  
 EPA  
 Homeowners Associations  
 League of Women Voters  
 Master Composters  
 Master Gardeners  
 Neighborhood Associations  
 Nurseries or Garden Centers  
 Schools  
 Service Organizations (Rotary, Optimists, etc.)  
 Texas Department of Transportation

### **Intracity Partners**

City Council Members  
 Environmental Services Department  
 Library  
 Mayor  
 Parks & Recreation Department  
 Planning Department  
 Public Works Department  
 Solid Waste & Recycling Department  
 Stormwater Department  
 Transportation Department  
 Water Department  
 Public Information Office  
 Water Suppliers

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