

Waterline Express

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The Newsletter for Travis County Water Control and Improvement District No. 17

November 2014

SAVE MONEY ON WASTEWATER YEAR-ROUND BY CONSERVING WATER NOW

Each year WCID 17 averages household water usage during the billing cycles of meter readings in November, December and January (months when outdoor irrigation is used very little) to determine the residential wastewater bill amount for the following year. Minimizing your water usage during these months will result in a lower wastewater bill every month beginning next October, 2015. The wastewater rate is evaluated and changed annually each October.

HOLIDAY TRASH PICK-UP SCHEDULE

Trash and recycling pick-up during the Holiday Season is as follows:

If you're normal pick-up day is Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, then your service will remain unchanged.

If you're normal pick-up day is Thursday or Friday; Thursday's pick up day will be on Friday, and Friday's pick up day will be Saturday.



HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

WCID17 Administration will be closed:
November, 27, 28; December 25, 26; and January 1 & 2

PREPARING YOUR IRRIGATION SYSTEM FOR THE WINTER

Most residents in Central Texas irrigate their landscapes at least every few weeks through the winter months, and with the anticipated dry weather this winter no exception is expected. Normal Texas weather conditions should not cause the need for irrigation systems to be drained or turned off at the backflow device, however, **YOU SHOULD TURN OFF YOUR SYSTEM AT THE CONTROLLER WHEN FREEZING TEMPERATURES ARE FORECAST** to make sure the system will not try to run during a freeze. If the system runs, it could cause layers of ice to form on your plants and damage them.

Residents who have systems equipped with above ground backflow prevention (Reduced Pressure Zone devices [RPZ]) must make sure equipment is protected from freezing. Most people know that the side pipes need to be wrapped with insulation, however, the valve itself is located in the center, and is susceptible to freezing also. Because these devices drain water from the bottom of the valve and therefore cannot be fully wrapped, the best way to protect them is with an open bottom RPZ insulated pouch which simply slips over the top of the entire device and attaches to the ground with some small stakes. Adding a layer of mulch around the base of the pouch will help seal off wind.

For additional protection, an insulated box can be placed over the pouched device with another layer of mulch at the base. These pouches and artificial backflow enclosures can be made or purchased locally. Insulating boxes may also be purchased in the form of various decorative faux rocks which can be left in place year round. With this system in place, your RPZ valve is protected from freezing weather and can operate normally whenever you run your irrigation system.

If you don't have an insulated pouch or box and freezing weather is predicted, turn off your irrigation system and lightly wrap your RPZ in an old towel or blanket. (Tightly wrapping the blanket eliminates the air gap between the blanket/towel and the device and leaves the device vulnerable to cold wind.) Use tape or string to tie the towels or blanket in place. When the weather warms up and you are ready to irrigate again, remove the blanket. It is important to remember not to block the drain port at the bottom of the device when you are irrigating.



High Quality Backflow Insulation Protection Bags Offer Unbeatable Value! Perfect For Backflow Valves, Water Well Heads, Irrigation Valves Etc

WCID 17 ADOPTS FY 2015 OPERATING BUDGET, INCLUDES CHANGES TO WATER RATES AND TAX RATES

The Fiscal Year 2015 Operating Budget presented at the August Board meeting was adopted September 18, 2014. This included a slight increase to residential volume water rates based on the 2013/2014 Rate Study as follows:

	<u>2014 Rate/1000 gals</u>	<u>2015 Rate/1000 gals</u>
0-10,000	\$ 1.78	\$ 1.78
10,001 -15,000	\$ 2.56	\$ 2.66
15,001 – 30,000	\$ 3.80	\$ 4.00
30,001 – 50,000	\$ 5.52	\$ 5.96
50,001 – 100,000	\$ 7.52	\$ 8.48
Above 100,000	\$10.50	\$12.42

Drought Rate

The Board also adopted a separate Drought Rate of \$0.08/1,000 gallons to be charged to all customers to offset the LCRA drought rate imposed on the District. This drought rate will only be charged to WCID17 customers when the rate is applied to the District's bill for raw water purchased from LCRA and will appear on the customer's statement as a separate line item.

Tax Rates

The Board of Directors also held Public Hearings and voted September 18, 2014 to set the tax rates for the District-Wide Operation and Maintenance Tax (O&M), as well as the Defined Area taxes for Steiner Ranch, Flintrock Ranch Estates and Serene Hills. Defined Area taxes are based on the amounts required to pay the annual debt service payments for the bonds that have been issued. Only those properties located within the specific defined area pay the defined area tax.

District Wide Tax Rate remained the same at \$0.0575 per \$100 of assessed valuation. This tax is paid by all property owners within the WCID17 jurisdictional boundary.

Steiner Ranch Defined Area – This tax rate decreased by 4.73% to \$0.4285 per \$100 of assessed valuation, with the average residential value increasing by 4.37%. This defined area was the original defined area created within the District. The last authorized bond issue in the amount of \$2,230,000 is scheduled to be issued in December 2014. This bond will be the last reimbursement to the developer for water/wastewater infrastructure constructed within the defined area. The total bonds that were approved by voters in 1989 were \$118,500,000.

Flintrock Ranch Estates Defined Area – Property owners in this area will also benefit from a 2.79% decrease in the tax rate, resulting in a tax rate of \$0.4526 adopted by the Board of Directors. However, the average residential value in this defined area increased by 4.60%. All developer reimbursement bonds have been issued, totaling \$20,055,000.

Serene Hills Defined Area - The tax rate for this defined area will remain at \$0.65 per \$100 of assessed valuation, but will shift from being an O&M tax for the defined area to an Interest & Sinking, or debt service, rate. Because this is a new development, this is the first tax year that included home values in the total valuation. The first bond issue in the amount of \$4,450,000 is scheduled for approval and issuance in early 2015.



TRAVIS COUNTY WATER CONTROL AND IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 17

The mission of District No. 17, a public utility, is to provide the District with an adequate supply of safe, potable water, and to ensure the fiscally sound, environmentally responsible development and management of water resources and wastewater facilities.

WCID 17 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Conserving Water for Today and Tomorrow

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