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WCID No. 17 Announces Updates to the Apache Shores and River Ridge Service Fees

On September 15, 2022, Travis County Water Control and Improvement District No. 17 approved its Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget. As part of this process, the Out of District, Capacity Buy-In, and Debt Service fees were reviewed.

The Capacity Buy-In and Debt Service fees are collected to repay the debt the District incurred on the behalf of the Apache Shores and River Ridge service areas at the time the District took over their respective water systems.

The Capacity Buy-In fee was created to repay the debt that was incurred due to paying the District Water system capacity impact fees for all existing homes at the time the fee was created. This fee is only applicable to homes that were built prior to 3/20/1997 (Apache Shores) or 1/1/2004 (River Ridge), respectively.

The Debt Service fee was created to repay the debt that was incurred due to paying for completed improvements made to that service area to allow it to meet the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality minimum standards as well as the improvements necessary for WCID No. 17 to be able to service the area. This fee applies to every property receiving water service in the service area.

The Out of District fee is a separate fee set by the WCID No. 17 Board of Directors, which is designed to pay each Service Area's fair share of District operations as well as to set aside capital improvement funds to pay for needed improvements within the service areas. Each service area contains a significant number of water line improvements that are necessary to ensure that services can be reliably provided in all conditions while ensuring fire flow needs can be met throughout the service area. These line improvements, in many cases, date back to the original community water system lines that are now in need of being replaced and upgraded.

Unfortunately, over the years, the costs for line replacement have increased significantly, and while the Board of Directors has been working to increase this fee accordingly over the last 5 years, there are a significant number of affected lines.

Due to our historically low fees and the ever-increasing costs of construction, the funds that have been set aside each year only allow the District to complete a line replacement every 4 years or so. At our current rate, it would take well over 100 years to complete the necessary improvements across the Service Area. With water line life cycles being in the neighborhood of 50 years, this is not a tenable situation. As a result, more funds will be required to complete the necessary repairs. WCID No. 17 will be working with both communities on options to expedite these repairs but in the meantime, the Board of Directors has decided to increase the Out of District fee this year to \$40 / month.