

FALL 2005

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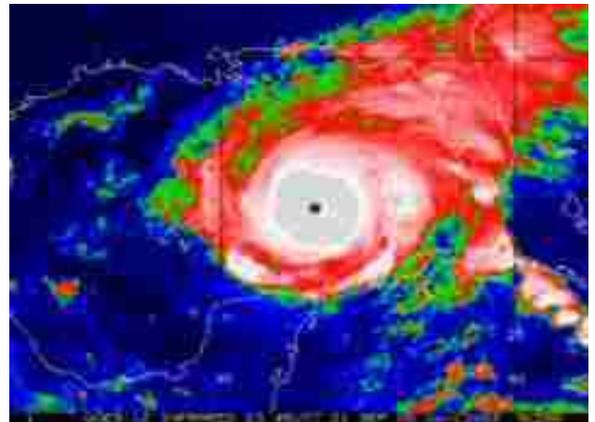
Prepared by Design...

*Advance Emergency Preparedness Plan ensures your
Water District's readiness for natural disasters*

Many, many years ago, Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 25 (the District) was like most other MUD's. For example, the District was comprised of only one subdivision, one water plant, the tax rate was high (\$1.82 per \$100.00 of evaluation), and every action taken was a reaction to a crisis, which was almost always expensive and caused multiple disruptions in service to the residents. Fortunately, changes occurred over 15 years ago to make sure that the District would be ready with emergency plans and equipment in place -- before a natural disaster occurred.

A new board of directors decided that a change in operational behavior was necessary to improve fiscal results and to ensure excellence in customer service. After reaching these important decisions, an action plan was put in place to facilitate the accomplishment of the objectives including:

1. The development and implementation of a mission statement;
2. The development and implementation of a short and long term strategic plan, to include capital improvements;
3. The construction of additional facilities to create redundancy in the facilities and minimize the opportunity for system down time;
4. Emergency natural gas generators at every facility to eliminate the need for location and delivery of equipment and fuel supplies in an emergency, ensuring that pumps and motors are functional for power if electrical sources go down, eliminating the need to wait for fuel deliveries or trying to secure generators from outside supply sources.
5. A proactive maintenance program that allows for a progressive, planned repair approach to reduce emergency break-downs and repairs.
6. Maintain planned growth through annexation to allow the District



Monster storm -- Hurricane Rita

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Prepared by Design...

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to consistently reduce taxes (from a high of \$1.82 per \$100.00 of valuation in the past, to the new rate this year of \$.86 per \$100.00 of valuation.

7. Depreciation has been added as a line item in the operations budget to stabilize and rebuild reserves.

Planning Ahead...

While no organization -- and that includes municipalities -- can guarantee continual service during a regional disaster, such as a category 4 or 5 hurricane, the District's Emergency Response/Preparedness plan was designed to minimize the opportunity for a loss of service to our residents.

Other items included as part of emergency readiness include:

- Restocking chemicals and other critical supplies well in advance of known emergencies to ensure enough supplies on hand to facilitate operations for two weeks.
- Trucks are topped off with fuel in advance of impending events and the fleet is decentralized to minimize potential loss.
- Only essential staff remains on duty during the imminent arrival of a known catastrophic event but those identified as essential staff, to include an Incident Commander, move on site and remain until the danger or threat has passed.

Taking Care of Business...

The District's billing software and accounting databases are exported to out of town locations to maximize safekeeping and the ability to recreate information

should it become necessary to do so. Additionally, all computer files are printed and copied to external hard drives, important documents such as contracts and insurance files, and additional computer equipment, are sent to cold site storage facilities identified as outside the potential disaster area.

Staff, during catastrophic events, go to facilities or respond

to resident concerns in groups of two.

Battery operated communication equipment as well as emergency radio equipment is already on site.

Extra motors are on site for water plants so that in the event of water infiltration, motors can be replaced immediately.

Should the public water

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Ground Storage Tank



Emergency Generator

Safeguarding Water Resources for the Future Begins with Consumer Education and Conservation Practices

Conventional fresh-water supplies in Texas are 75 to 80 percent developed...which makes it an absolute necessity to use our precious water resources more efficiently. Two ways we can do this are through water conservation and reuse. Steps we take to preserve resources today will ensure that precious water resources are available for future generations.

The biggest potential saver is the water customer.

For example, even a 10 to 15 percent reduction in personal water use can save Texas water and sewer rate payers billions of dollars over the next 50 years. The effort to conserve water must begin now and must have broad-based participation and support. The District is taking a multi-step approach to educate our consumers and to encourage conservation:

dents at Garcia Middle School helps to educate our youngest consumers about the need to conserve and protect water resources. The children are challenged to develop themes to depict practices which save water around the house and in the yard. Selected drawings, chosen by a panel of independent judges, will be included in a 2006 calendar, and shared with the community in January 2006. The creative activity will benefit both the students -- who will become conscious of the need to conserve water in a very hands-on way and offer residents ideas for saving water at home, in the yard, and even at work.

◆ **Consumer Rebate Program for Water Conservation** – The District is pleased to announce the implementation of a voluntary program that offers a **rebate** (in the form of a credit to your water bill) to encourage water conserva-

tion. Residents should call the office (281.277.0129, ext. 105, 116, 109, or 112) and agree to join the program for one year (period to be calculated from the date the resident joins the program through the next 365 days).

■ For the one year period, the billing and collection staff will compare your current water usage (gallons used) to water usage for the same time period in the previous year.

■ Every 6 months in the defined 12 month period that the resident *uses less water* (total gallons used) compared to total gallons used for the same period in the previous year, the resident will receive a 10% (based on current year's usage) rebate in the form of a credit to their water bill (maximum credit \$75.00 per account.)

■ For those months in the current billing cycle when total gallons used equals or exceeds amounts used compared to the same period in the previous year, no credit will be issued.

■ The conservation rebate program ends 365 days from the date the resident joins the program. To sign up for further rebates, the resident must voluntarily sign up for a new one year commitment.

◆ **Tiered Rate Structure** – The District uses a tiered rate structure that charges a higher rate per 1000 gallons used as total gallons consumed increases. The more water you use, the more it will cost you.

◆ **Conservation Brochures and Educational Material** – The District offers a host of conservation material and brochures, for both children and adults, free to our residents. Please stop by and pick up free conservation and

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Ft. Bend Co. Municipal Utility District No. 15
2005 Water Conservation Calendar

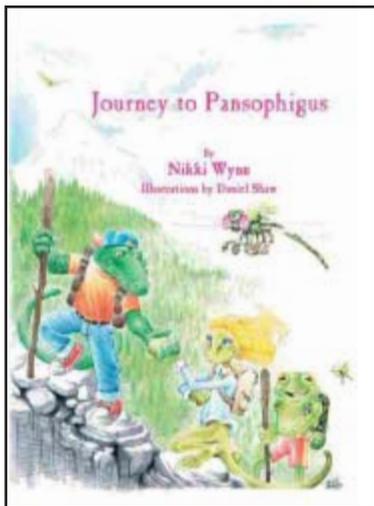
◆ **Conservation Calendar Coloring Contest** - Partnering once again with the 6th grade art stu-

tion. The program is very simple:
■ Residents who wish to join the program must contact the billing

Conservation Education

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storm sewer protection book covers, coloring books, and a copy of **“Journey to Pansophigus,”** the delightful new children’s adventure book, and the accompanying study guide that allows parents and teachers to work with youngsters to highlight important facts regarding water conservation.



For homeowners, please ask for *Learning to Use Water Wisely*, a comprehensive water conservation brochure, along with our new **Water Conservation Kit** (available in January 2006) which includes several items that have practical application in the home. The 2006 Water Conservation Calendar will be mailed to all residents in January.

A Leadership Role...

The District’s Board of Directors and staff are committed to help educate our customers and encourage conservation. It’s up to each of us to learn to use precious water resources wisely to ensure a safe and plentiful water supply tomorrow for our children, grandchildren, and for generations to come. ♠

Important Information About STORMWATER POLLUTION

Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation from rain flows over the ground. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater runoff from naturally soaking into the ground. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or coastal water.

Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the bodies of water we use for swimming, fishing and providing drinking water supply.



Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals and people.

- Sediment can cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. Sediment also can destroy aquatic habitats.
- Excess nutrients can cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can’t exist in water with low dissolved oxygen levels.
- Bacteria and other pathogens can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, often making beach closures necessary.
- Debris - plastic bags, six-pack rings, bottles, and cigarette butts - washed into waterbodies can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles, and birds.



- Household hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil, and other auto fluids can poison aquatic life. Land animals and people can become sick from eating diseased fish and shellfish or ingesting polluted water.

- Polluted stormwater often affects drinking water sources. This, in turn, can affect human health and increase drinking water treatment costs.

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Here's Some Great News... District Tax Rate **REDUCED** for the Ninth Consecutive Year!

Fort Bend Co. Municipal Utility District No. 25 has set its 2005 tax rate at \$0.86 per \$100 of assessed value. The reduction represents the ninth consecutive year of tax rate reductions per \$100.00 of assessed value. The new reduced tax rate ensures that District residents continue to reap the economic benefit of planned growth through annexation. (For a comparison of District tax rates from 1984-2005, see the chart below.)

What does this mean to the homeowner?

First, most home-owners will not see a decrease in overall tax bills, because the Fort Bend Central Appraisal District assesses the value of each home for property tax purposes. The assessed value, or AV, is used by the County, school district, and the District as the basis for setting taxes on individual property. The increase or decrease in AV for each individual property plus the reduction in tax rate affects the total tax bill.

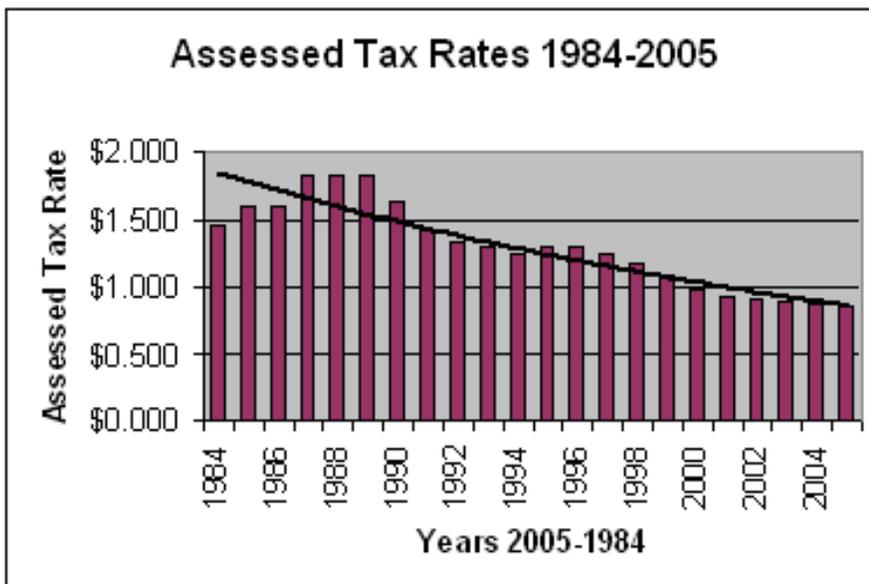
The recent increase in home sales in the District results in an overall increase in home values. Home ownership is the most significant investment most people make during their lifetime, and increases in this value can be a significant benefit upon selling a home. A large portion of the current new home demand in the Houston area results from homeowners using their increase in home value to "step up" to a better home.

What does the future hold for Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 25?

Home construction and associated growth in the District continues. Developers have started construction in Sections II of Chelsea Harbor and Orchard Lakes Estates and we anticipate completion of both within the next two years. Oak Lake Court, as a part of our District and located at FM1464 and West Airport, is well underway. Other nearby tracts are being considered for development

and we anticipate this growth will continue over the next three or more years.

The sustained economic development and annexation, as one small part of the District's long-term strategic plan to ensure long term fiscal stability and viability, will result in future increases in the AV in the District, which should allow for continuing decreases in the tax rate. While growth can bring challenges, planned growth has enabled the District and its residents to enjoy the major benefits associated with economic development to include nine consecutive years of a reduced tax rate for assessed value. ♦



Year	Total Tax Rate Per \$100.00 of Assessed Value
1984	\$1.450
1985	\$1.600
1986	\$1.600
1987	\$1.820
1988	\$1.820
1989	\$1.820
1990	\$1.640
1991	\$1.420
1992	\$1.330
1993	\$1.290
1994	\$1.245
1995	\$1.300
1996	\$1.300
1997	\$1.245
1998	\$1.180
1999	\$1.080
2000	\$0.975
2001	\$0.925
2002	\$0.905
2003	\$0.890
2004	\$0.870
2005	\$0.860

Storm Water Pollution Solutions...

What you can do to help solve this serious ecological problem

Residential...

Recycle or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals, such as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, and used motor oil and other auto fluids. Don't pour them onto the ground or into storm drains.

Lawn Care

Excess fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off and pollute streams. In addition, yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients and organic matter to streams.

- Don't overwater your lawn. Consider using a soaker hose instead of a sprinkler.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Use organic mulch or safer pest control methods whenever possible.
- Compost or mulch yard waste. Don't leave it in the street or sweep it into storm drains or streams.
- Cover piles of dirt or mulch being used in landscaping projects.

Auto Care...



Washing your car and degreasing auto parts at home can send detergents and other contaminants through the storm sewer system. Dumping automotive fluids into storm drains has the same result as dumping the materials directly into a waterbody.

- Use a commercial car wash that treats or recycles its wastewater, or wash your car on your yard so the water infiltrates into the ground.
- Repair leaks and dispose of used auto fluids and batteries at designated drop-off or recycling locations.



Pet Waste...

Pet waste can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters.

- When walking your pet, remember to pick up the waste and dispose of it properly. Flushing pet waste is the best disposal method.
- Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterbodies.

Education is essential to changing people's behavior. Signs and markers near storm drains warn residents that pollutants en-

tering the drains will be carried untreated into a local waterbody.

Residential Landscaping...

- **Permeable Pavement**—Traditional concrete and asphalt don't allow water to soak into the ground. Instead the surfaces rely on storm drains to divert unwanted water. Permeable pavement systems allow rain and snowmelt to soak through, decreasing stormwater runoff.
- **Rain Barrels**—Collect rainwater from rooftops in mosquito-proof containers. The water can be used later on lawn or garden areas.



- **Rain Gardens and Grassy Swales**—Specially designed areas planted with native plants can provide natural places for rainwater to collect and soak into the ground. Rain from rooftop areas or paved areas can be diverted into these areas rather than into storm drains.
- **Vegetated Filter Strips**—Filter strips, areas of native grass or plants created along roadways or streams, trap the pollutants stormwater picks up as it flows across paved surfaces. 💧



GIVE IT A TRY... Pay Your Bill Online!

Did you know that you can now pay your water and sewer bills online! All it takes to pay your bill from the comfort of your home or office is a computer with Internet access, a checking account, or credit card and your District account number.

Go to www.waterdistrict25.com, click on “**WEBPAY**,” and follow the instructions. Eliminate the expense of postage and envelopes as well as the inconvenience of writing checks. Reduce the worry associated with lost mail. Rely on WEBPAY, the fast and easy way to pay your bill!

Remember, if you utilize an online bill payment service through your bank, **allow seven-ten days for postal mail delivery**, since **online payments are not an electronic transfer of funds**. The check is actually mailed to the District office.

ACH Bill Payments Residents can sign up for ACH bill Payment Service by contacting the District. The payment is an electronic transfer of funds, and your water bill account is credited the same day funds are debited from your account.

Emergency preparations...

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supply become contaminated, notices will be posted on the bulletin board in front of the District’s administrative building and signs will be posted at the entrances of each subdivision within the District.

Residents can contact the District at its main number 281-277-0129, and follow voice prompts for emergency requests. However, if the phone system fails, you may try to contact the Incident Commander directly at 281-281-615-6664, or the Chief Operator, at 832-435-3751. Keep in mind, though, that if cell towers are adversely impacted, direct contact may not be possible until tower service is restored.

The District’s philosophy is this: Municipalities have only one thing to offer to their residents and that is service. As such, the services provided must be at the highest levels reasonably attainable.

So when a catastrophic event is identified that may affect our District, residents may rest assured that your District has an emergency plan in place that was developed and implemented some time ago to minimize the opportunity for a loss of service and/or downtime. 💧



DISTRICT NEWS!



Attention Seniors!

The Board of Directors of Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 25 voted to give our resident senior citizens a break! Senior citizens can receive a discount on annual MUD taxes. For more complete information or to find out if you qualify, please contact Tommy Lee at Assessments of the Southwest, at 281-482-0216.

**It's up to US...
Let's use our
water resources
wisely!**

May we help you?

Our District Operations staff is here to serve you, the residents and customers of the District. Do you have a problem with your water bill? Do you have a bill that seems too high and need help to track the problem? Missing a payment? Do you have a leak, or think you have a leak, and need assistance? Do you have a problem with a backflow device? Do you need an inspection of a backflow device? Do you have a concern about a repair that may have affected your landscaping?

We are here to help! Call us at:

Billing Problems:

Talk to Chris, Tracey, Cathryn, or Sam at 281-277-0129 ext. 105, 109, or 112.

Leaks, Inspections, Problems associated with Excavations:

Talk with Brian, Chad, Don or Terry at 281-277-0129, ext. 101, 113, 111, or 106.

We also have a number of methods in place to allow you quick and easy access anytime...

Communicate!

1. E-MAIL -- Our staff can be reached through the Internet! Residents may contact us at our E-Mail addresses listed on our website -- www.waterdistrict25.com -- in the "Contact Us" area.

2. REGULAR MAIL -- You can mail your comments to our Post Office Box:

Fort Bend County Municipal
Utility District No. 25

P.O. Box 2847

Sugar Land, Texas 77487-2847

3. BY PHONE --

Phone: 281-277-0129

Fax: 281-277-0028

4. MONTHLY MEETINGS -- Come to our District meeting! Your Board of Directors holds a public meeting the second Friday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at our office, located at:

18230 Old Richmond Road
Sugar Land, Texas 77478



Fort Bend County Municipal
Utility District No. 25
P.O. Box 2847
Sugar Land, Texas 77487-2847

Dear Resident:

Please take a moment to complete the following so that we may update account contact information.

Contact Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____
E-mail Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
Work Number: _____
Cell Phone Number: _____

You may return your completed form by:

- (1) placing it in one of the drop boxes, located in front of the administrative building at 18230 Old Richmond Road; inside the convenience store at the Shell Station at Pheasant Creek Drive and Old Richmond Road;
- (2) Faxing it to the District Office (281-277-0028); **OR**
- (3) By regular mail to 18230 Old Richmond Road, Sugar Land, TX 77478.

We appreciate your cooperation and assistance in helping us to update our resident's records.

Fort Bend County M.U.D. No.25



Do you have an e-mail address? Have you signed up for e-bill notification?
Provide your e-mail address in the form above!
Did you know that you can receive your bill electronically
and check your account balance FREE?

Visit www.waterdistrict25.com for more details.

Residents have multiple options for paying water bills:

1. **By phone** -- Call 281-277-0129 and press option 2, where you will have the option of checking your balance or making a payment to your account (There is a convenience fee assessed by the service provider for paying your bill via the telephone. The money is not collected or paid to the District for this service).
2. **Electronic draft** (ACH Direct Payment draft) -- For only \$1.00 a month, you may enroll in our Direct Payment Plan; funds are drafted electronically from your bank account and applied directly to your water account.
3. **The web site** -- Visit www.waterdistrict25.com for details (there is a convenience fee assessed by the service provider that is not collected or paid to the District for this service).
4. **Two drop box locations** (no postage) -- conveniently located within 5 minutes of all District residents. One drop box is located at the District's administrative offices at 18230 Old Richmond Road, Sugar Land, TX 77478, or inside the convenience store at the Pheasant Creek Shell Station at the corner of Old Richmond Road and Pheasant Creek Drive.

Residents using financial institution online bill paying services should allow 10-14 days for processing and delivery because checks are prepared and mailed/delivered by regular US Postal Service mail delivery (online bill pays of this nature are **not** electronic transfers).

Please call 281-277-0129, extension 105, 109, 112, or 116 for more information.