

WATERWORKS

Provided as a public service for our customers and neighbors

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Testable Backflow Prevention Device Requirements

The provision of safe drinking water to the consumers in Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 25 (the District) is one of the District's highest priorities. Regulated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the District follows strict standards to ensure that the public drinking water supply remains safe.

Our customers are required to help keep the public water supply safe as well by taking steps to prevent cross connection contamination. Methods to prevent backflow contamination include the following:

1. Don't use a garden hose to "open" a plugged drain or toilet.
2. Don't use a garden hose to spray fertilizer unless it is properly protected with a hose bib vacuum breaker, which should be installed on all hose bibs.
3. Don't submerge hoses in buckets, pools, spas, tubs or sinks, which may contain harmful cleansers or dangerous bacteria.
4. Use an approved testable backflow prevention device where required, schedule inspection with the District's inspectors once installed and then schedule follow-up inspections annually.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What is backflow?

Under normal operation water flows from the District's waterlines to our water customers. However, certain pressure variations in the public water supply can cause water to flow in the opposite direction. The reversal of flow direction is known as backflow.

How can backflow be prevented?

Although backflow itself is difficult to prevent, there are ways to protect the water supply from the dangers of contamination that can occur through cross-connections. A cross-connection may be eliminated by providing only an air gap or installing an approved testable backflow prevention device.

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Backflow Prevention

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What is a cross-connection?

Actual or potential physical connection between a potable water system and any other source or system through which it is possible to introduce into any part of the potable system any contaminant and/or pollutant. For example, a cross-connection would be a garden hose submerged in a swimming pool.

What is the danger of a cross connection?

If a cross-connection exists and backflow occurs, the non-potable water will enter the public water supply. Depending on the degree of hazard of the non-potable water, the contaminated water supply may put the public's health in jeopardy.

Can I cover or hide the backflow preventer?

Yes, there are several approved methods to cover and protect the backflow prevention assembly from weather, vandals, and lawn equipment. Please contact the District's Certified Backflow Inspectors for additional information.

What Are You Required to Do To Prevent Potential or Actual Contamination to the Public Water Supply?

Install an approved testable backflow prevention device (not a hose bib vacuum breaker, which is not testable) on actual or potential contamination sources. Wherever a source of water exists on your property, like an irrigation system or a pool, the possibility for contamination exists. Thus, to avoid contamination and to comply with the regulations that govern Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 25, residents are required to:

1. Install an approved testable backflow device whenever there is an actual or potential hazard for a cross-connection to ensure the public water supply remains safe.
2. Notify the District once the devices are installed to have the devices tested by District Inspectors.
3. Schedule testing annually through the District's certified Inspectors.
4. For more information on backflow prevention, call any of these numbers: (281) 960-9312; (832) 435-3751; (281) 0808-3543; (832) 256-0077; (281) 830-0138; OR (832) 397-0232.

DON'T WAIT... REBATE!

The District is committed to protecting ground water sources by providing conservation incentive programs to reward consumers for using less water, which will lower monthly water bills and earn credits to your water bill account! **BUT DON'T WAIT!! THE AMOUNT OF THE REBATE IS REDUCED OVER TIME...SO DON'T WAIT - REBATE!**

I. Earn a One-Time Credit to Your Bill!

All you have to do is (1) Replace a High Use Toilet with a High Efficiency or LOW FLOW Toilet (HET) or a Water Smart Irrigation system at your residence within the District, (2) make an appointment for one of the District's Inspectors to visit your residence to verify replacement of HIGH USE TOILET with HIGH EFFICIENCY or LOW FLOW TOILET installation (***District personnel will photograph old toilet and new toilet as part of the verification process***), and (3) provide a copy of the proof of purchase.

Once all three steps are complete and the paperwork has been submitted to the District's Billing office, you can earn a one-time maximum credit on your water bill as ***described below:***

FOR IRRIGATION SYSTEMS:

\$100.00 (one hundred dollars) on your water bill if completed by January 1, 2011.

\$75.00 (seventy five dollars) on your water bill if completed by June 1, 2011.

\$50.00 (fifty dollars) on your water bill if completed by June 1, 2012.



FOR HIGH EFFICIENCY OR LOW FLOW TOILET SYSTEMS*:

*\$100.00 (one hundred dollars) for first toilet; if completed by 2012.

\$75.00 (seventy five dollars) for second toilet; if completed by 2012; and

\$50.00 (fifty dollars) for all subsequent toilets if completed by January 1, 2012.

For more information on High Efficiency or Low Flow Toilets, visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/toilets.html>

*Rebates applied to your water bill.

**NO REBATES WILL BE OFFERRED FOR
THIS ONE TIME CREDIT PROGRAM
AFTER JUNE 1, 2012!**

II. Install Low-Flow Showerheads at No Cost to You!

The District will provide two (2) high quality low flow showerheads to all residential customers at no cost to the customer. All you have to do to obtain your showerheads is to complete the form in this newsletter and send in with your payment, drop form in a District payment box, or complete the order form on the District's website (www.waterdistrict25.com), and click on the Low-Flow Showerhead Order Form under the header Water Conservation on the left side of the screen (allow 3-6 weeks for availability.)

For more information on Low-Flow Showerheads, visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/products/showerheads.html>

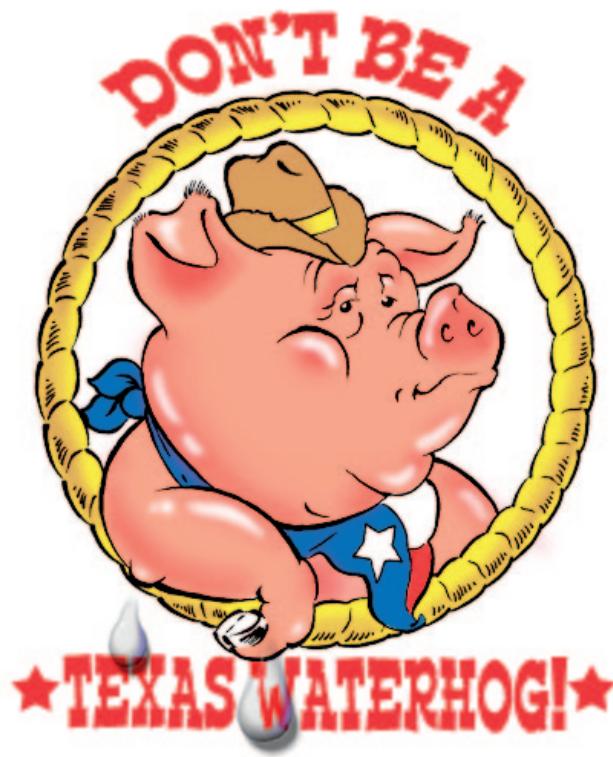
III. Enroll in the District's Rebate Program!

District customers have the opportunity to enroll in a voluntary program that offers a rebate, in the form of a credit to your water bill, designed to reward our customers for water conservation. The program is very simple:

- Contact the billing office (281-277-0129, ext.105, 112, 119, or 121) and agree to participate in the program for one year (365 day period to be calculated from the date the resident joins the program).
- The billing and collection staff will compare the resident's current water usage (gallons used) to water usage for the same time in the previous year for this one-year period.
- Every 6 months in the defined 12 month period that the customer uses less water (measured in total gallons used) compared to the water used for the same period in the previous year, the resident will

receive a 10% rebate in the form of a credit to their water bill (based on current year's usage with a maximum credit of \$75.00 [seventy-five dollars] per account.) For the 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. The resident must voluntarily sign up for a new one-year commitment to earn further rebates.
- Call to sign up today, or go to the District's website, www.waterdistrict25.com, and click on the Water Conservation Registration form, complete the form and click the button to email to our office (or you can print and drop in one of two payment boxes: one located outside the District's office or the other located in the Pheasant Creek Shell Station).



Don't be a Water Hog! Partnering with the District, by taking advantage of one or more of our Water Conservation programs, helps to create sustainable communities through water conservation and just makes sense...and now you can earn "cents" by taking steps to increase efficiency through reductions in over-all water usage, which helps to reduce energy consumption, reduce subsidence, and ensure an adequate supply of water for future generations. ■

District Offers New Service to Assist Residents with Conservation Efforts

Why would a water utility, an entity that sells water, want to encourage people to use less of it? Surprisingly, municipal suppliers and customers enjoy significant benefits through efficient water use. The bottom line is that saving water reduces municipal operating costs and results in lower bills for customers. More importantly, water efficiency offers many other benefits:

- Less water withdrawn from rivers, lakes, and aquifers keeps existing resources viable for the long term, increasing available supplies for future generations.
- Less energy required to pump and treat the water, and therefore less greenhouse gas emissions.
- Less wastewater that requires collection, treatment, and disposal.



Did you know that an American home can waste, on average, more than 10,000 gallons of water every year due to

running toilets, dripping faucets, and other household leaks? In fact, more than 1 trillion gallons of water leak from U.S. homes each year. Failing to repair a controllable leak, such as a broken pipe, is wasteful.

Many homeowners do not have the resources available to repair outside water lines when leaks occur. That's why the District now offers a new fee-based **water line repair service** to help homeowners repair leaks to outside water lines. Once the repair is made, charges for the outside line repair will be added to your monthly water bill and residents will have the option of paying for the repair in 4 (four) equal monthly installments.

Residents are not limited to District options to repair an outside line. In fact, we encourage residents to secure several bids to secure the best price to repair the broken line. For those residents who do not have the resources to pay for the entire repair upon completion of the job, call us for a quote and take advantage of the opportunity to stop wasting water and pay for the repairs within a payment schedule that doesn't break the budget.

We don't offer repair services for repairs inside your home or to irrigation systems. Our specialty is outside water lines: we have the equipment, we have trained staff, and repairing outside water lines is our field of expertise. More important, by offering the convenience of paying for the repair on your monthly water bill, we provide a convenient and affordable way to help our residents stop wasting water ... which helps all of us in the long run.

If you wish to request a quote for repairing an outside broken water line, call 281-277-0129, ext. 105 to schedule an appointment for a quote for repairs (no charge for quotes for repairs). ■

Hey Kids! You don't have to be a DETECTIVE to find waterleaks!



There's something sneaky going on at your house...and it is wasting valuable water...and money. Do you know what it is?

LEAKS...tiny drips of water from faucets in the kitchen or in the bathrooms...or from shower heads...or maybe from an outdoor faucet. There are also leaks that you can't see...silent leaks in toilets... that are robbing your home of hundreds of gallons of precious water. That's just like flushing water down the drain!

A faucet drip or invisible toilet leak that totals only two tablespoons a minute adds up to 15 gallons a day. That's 105 gallons a week and 5,460 wasted gallons of water a year! If you see a leaking faucet or shower, tell your parents so it can be fixed immediately!

Here's a detective project you can do with your parent's permission to find out if the toilets in your home have silent leaks...

1. Remove the tank lid (don't worry about this water...it is clean until it enters the bowl).
2. Add a few drops of food coloring or a dye tablet (available for just this testing purpose) to the tank to turn it a different color. Put the tank lid back on the toilet tank.
3. Wait about 30 minutes or so and look in the bowl. If the water has colored, there's a leak. If the water is clear, the water is not leaking from the tank to the bowl.

If you do discover a leak, there are a number of possible causes; often the culprit is a rubber flapper that needs replacing or a failing filling mechanism. In many cases, the cost to complete the repair will be under \$10 -- certainly much cheaper in the long run than paying for all that wasted water!

Remember, slow drips of water can add up pretty quickly. A toilet that keeps "running" after you flush it or a sink that drips after it is turned off can waste thousands of gallons of water a year. If the drip is hot water, you are wasting energy, too! Find household leaks and fix them immediately. Be good water "stewards"...use this precious natural resource wisely.

The water we conserve today can serve us tomorrow!



STORM DRAIN SYSTEMS AND ILLICIT DISCHARGES

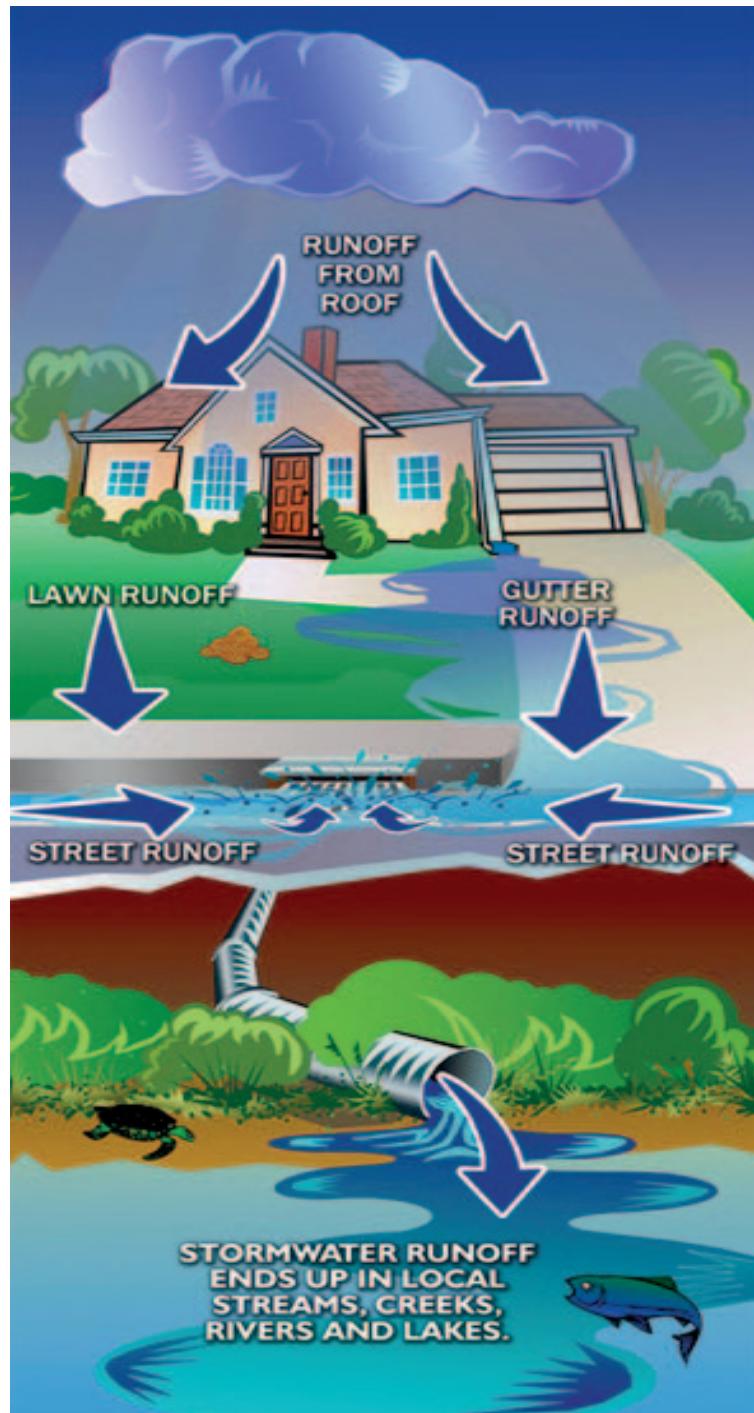
Illicit discharges are described as “any discharge into a storm drain system that is not composed entirely of storm water” (Environmental Protection Agency, 2008). The exceptions to this description include water from fire fighting activities and discharges from facilities under the umbrella of an NPDES permit. Illicit discharges are a problem because, unlike wastewater which flows to a wastewater treatment plant for treatment before discharge, storm water generally flows to waterways without any additional treatment.

Illicit discharges often include pathogens, nutrients, surfactants, and various toxic pollutants. Illicit discharges occur due to failing septic systems, illegal dumping practices, improper disposal of sewage from recreational practices such as boating or camping/camping equipment, illegal connections to the storm drain system from business/commercial establishments, and illegal disposal practices from residential occupants.

Illegal disposal practices include disposal of grass, grass clippings, motor and household oil, pet waste, etc. into systems designated for storm water drainage only. The problem? Illicit discharges allows pollutants and toxins to enter public waterways, lakes and streams untreated, which causes public health concerns, unpleasant odors/color, and harms aquatic and animal life. Pollution can also lead to excess growth of vegetation.

The District implemented a **Storm Water Policy** that, by regulatory requirement, is multifaceted. The policy includes hefty penalties for illicit (illegal) discharge and disposal into the municipal storm sewer system. Fines of up to \$5,000. 00 per day for EACH violation may be applied, plus any other penalties provided by the laws of the State and to any other legal rights and remedies of the District. Additionally, the District created a Dumping Hotline for reporting illicit disposal, discharge and dumping.

Please do your part to keep public waterways safe and don't dispose of prohibited items into the municipal storm water system. And if you see someone else violating the regulatory laws regarding protection of municipal storm water system, call the Dumping Hotline to report the problem:



Courtesy NCDENR

**CALL TOLL FREE
1-866-414-9950
to report illegal
Storm System dumping
SAVE OUR WATERWAYS!**



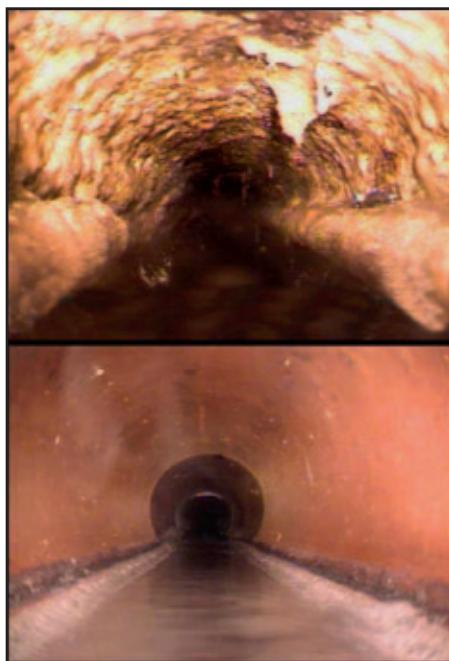
FOG...an acronym for **Fats, Oils and Grease**...is messing up our sewers -- as residents on Tadswood recently discovered. FOG includes animal fats, vegetable fats, and oils used to cook and prepare foods. Grease is a cooking byproduct, and comes from meat, fats, lard, oil, shortening (butter, margarine), food scraps, and gravies and sauces. When washed down the drain, FOG sticks to the insides of sewer pipes and, over time, builds up enough to block entire pipes.

A wastewater sewer system works like the circulatory system in the human body; the wastewater flows through pipes, is pumped at pump stations, and is cleaned at the wastewater plant. Like clots in veins and arteries, greasy blockages in sewer lines can pose serious problems... leading to system failure. Just as with cardiac disease, a FOG blockage is better prevented than treated.

There's a misconception that garbage disposals keep grease out of the plumbing...but not so. And many detergents claim to dissolve grease, but simply pass it into the sewer line causing problems down the way.

Dispose of FOG properly:

- Never pour FOG into sinks or toilets...ever. No exceptions.
- Pour FOG into a can, add until the can is full; put a lid on it
- Dispose of the full can in the trash
- Keep a strainer in the kitchen sink to trap food scraps and other solids. ♦



Don't Use Toilets As Trash Cans

OK, so "potty" talk is not considered polite conversation. However some things just need to be said. Even though some products are labeled as *disposable*, only toilet paper is truly **flushable**... not diapers, not kitty litter, not cigarette butts, not facial tissue.

Our sewer systems are not designed to accommodate anything other than human waste. When inappropriate items are flushed down the toilet, the items clog sewer pipes and create backups that cost time and money to clear.

Repair and cleanup can also be pricey for homeowners. Calling a plumber to clear a backup can cost \$200 or more. Clogged pipes can happen anywhere in the system -- from your property to your neigh-bors' to the system's sewer mains.

In some cases, depending on where the clog is located, the resident or property owner may be responsible for the cost of cleaning or repairing the line, as well as the cost of any damages caused by a backup into a home or building.

In the end...

We will conserve only what we love,
We will love only what we understand,
We will understand only what we are taught.

Baba Dioum, Senegalese Poet and Conservationist



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Here are the results of our Spring Food Drive...

Thanks to everyone who participated to make this Drive a HUGE success!

First Place:

Stratford Park 20% participation
(2nd Place last food drive)

Second Place:

Orchard Lakes Estates 15% participation
(1st Place last food drive)

Third Place:

Summerfield 12% participation
(3rd Place tie last food drive)

Chelsea Harbour	6% participation
Old Orchard	11% participation
Oak Lake Ct.	5% participation
Park Pointe	4% participation
Pheasant Creek	10% participation



Attention Seniors!

The Board of Directors of Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 25 gives our resident senior and disabled citizens a tax break! Senior and/or disable citizens can receive a discount on annual MUD taxes **once certification has been approved by Fort Bend County Central Appraisal District.**

For more complete information or to find out if you qualify, please contact Tommy Lee at Assessments of the Southwest, at 281-482-0216.