

2010 SPRING EDITION

CYPRESS FOREST PUD *News*

PROVIDED AS A PUBLIC SERVICE FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND CUSTOMERS



Raveneaux Update...

At the meeting on April 14, prior to the Board convening in open session to approve the counter offer to the owners of Raveneaux and inform the community of its elements, the 295th District Court of Harris County issued a temporary restraining order against the District and its directors to prevent any amendment to the Raveneaux Agreement that would decrease the amount of land purchased or that would change the land use restrictions in the Agreement.

The District Court has scheduled a hearing on the temporary restraining order; the plaintiff's lawyer requested a one week extension for the TRO hearing and the District court has granted it. The hearing has been rescheduled for Monday May 3 at 11:00 am. The District believes that there is no legal basis for an injunction and expects to prevail.

Please go to our website -- www.cyforestpud.com -- for additional information.

CONVERSION TO SURFACE WATER UNDERWAY

When the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District issued its mandate to reduce reliance on groundwater a decade ago -- to arrest subsidence and give the aquifers a chance to recharge -- the initial conversion to surface water milestone of 2010 seemed an eternity away. After years of planning, the Authority has constructed more than 75 miles of new water line infrastructure and built two new regional pump plants to bring surface water to individual utility districts. This first phase of construction has been accomplished in an environmentally sensitive manner and done on time and under budget.

The good working relationship between CFPUD and the NHCRWA resulted in ongoing coordination of the construction project in our community as it related to completing negotiations with the new owners of Raveneaux for the park purchase effort. We have now crossed the threshold in the required gradual conversion to surface water.

Cypress Forest PUD has also completed all the necessary modifications to our plants and operations to be ready for the conversion. We have notified our residents and customers about the shift to chloramines disinfection and the reason for that method...and we have keep residents up to date about the rising cost of water. In addition, and of critical importance now and into the future, the District has worked with our residents and community organizations to promote the efficient use of our finite water supplies (see page 2).

We now enter the second phase of the mandated reduction in groundwater use when, in 2020, we will be obtaining 70 percent of our demand from surface water. We will continue to keep you up to date on this monumental undertaking.

The Cypress Forest PUD Board of Directors



WHAT'S YOUR WATER "FOOTPRINT"?



If you think of your 'footprint' as how much water you use, are you a tip-toe...or a BIG FOOT? Sounds strange, but water experts have recently begun calculating water usage for individuals, households, communities and even whole countries by considering how much water they directly or indirectly consume in any given time frame. This includes "virtual water*" -- the amount of water needed to produce everyday things we rely on like food, energy, clothing and shelter.

Start with your morning cup of coffee -- that takes roughly 37 gallons of water to grow, produce, grind, package and ship the beans...and add another few cups to brew it. Here's another dramatic statistic: the water footprint of a pound of plastic is 24 gallons. That means that the average bottled water, juice or soda uses three to five times as much water to create as it contains! Get the picture?

Most folks have no idea how much fresh water they consume in a day. Experts suggest that in addition to what we drink and bathe in, food and energy production account for nearly 90 percent of the world's fresh water consumption. While the geo-political-economic implications of water usage by nations might be daunting, the water footprint concept can remind us where our water comes from and its true value as the critical component in virtually everything in our lives and lifestyle.

We are in the process of converting from the groundwater we have depended upon for the past 30 years to surface water, coming to us from Lake

Houston through an entirely new infrastructure constructed by the North Harris County Regional Water Authority. This shift away from our groundwater dependence is being accomplished in compliance with a mandate of the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District with phased reductions over the next 30 years. With the cost of water continuing to increase into the future, putting ourselves

on a 'water budget' -- using no more than necessary in our daily lives -- makes a lot of sense. 💧



* Introduced in 1993 by Professor John Allen, to measure how water is embedded in the production and trade of food and consumer products.

SPRING INTO ACTION EVENT A HUGE SUCCESS

"Spring Into Action", a family gardening event, was held March 28 at Brill Elementary School. The event was co-sponsored by Champions Forest Garden Club, Cypress Forest PUD, CF Fund/HOA and Women's Club, and the CF Civic Club. The North Harris County Regional Water Authority's Mobile Teaching Labs, the Frontier Ladies, the author of the Dime Novels, the Texas WaterHog and "Mother Nature" made special appearances. An impressive group of gardening and wildlife experts were on hand to answer questions. Thanks to all the families who came out and enjoyed this special event! 💧



Spring has Sprung...

And what a delightful spring it is! The weather has been especially kind this year, so folks have been able to get new plants in the ground and there are plenty of colorful flower beds in the neighborhood. The question is...are your lawn and garden ready for the growing season ahead?

Here are some landscape “spring cleaning” chores that will get you out in the fresh air and trigger that endorphin release that experts say happens when working with the soil.

Get Those Weeds...before they get too well established. This is a great time to get down on your hands and knees and take out as many weeds as possible before they flower and seed. Think this isn't important? Consider this...some weeds can produce as many as 10,000 seeds each!

Pamper Your Lawn...give your grass a nice start this Spring...rake up all the thatch -- you know, that underlying tangle of dried up dead grass and weeds -- that has accumulated over the fall and winter months. This stuff can prevent important nutrients and water from reaching the roots so get it out of the way early. Depending on what kind of turf you grow, this might also be a good time for some organic fertilizer and weed killer. The important thing to remember is to control any watering you do after applying the fertilizer to prevent any runoff from carrying the fertilizer into the storm sewer. The US Environmental Protection Agency warns that fertilizers and pesticides from yards and gardens and stormwater runoff pose a serious threat to the quality of our drinking water supplies.

Add Some Compost and/or Manure...experts now tell us that adding a nice thick layer of compost or manure to your landscaped areas can help you cut back on the water needed to keep them thriving by up to 50 percent in some cases. If you've never done so in the past, consider starting your own compost area at home. It isn't difficult and your plants and your pocketbook will thank you! ♦

Isn't it time to STOP WASTING WATER?



Lets face it...we've all taken our finite water resources for granted, right? We turn on the tap and expect the water to be there...no question about it. But what if we only had a certain amount of water we could use each day? How would we choose to 'spend' it?

In a lot of places around the world, people have to do just that. Water is rapidly becoming a global commodity that some say is more precious than oil. If that's true, how come few people even know what a glass of water from their home faucet costs?

We know what a can of soft drink costs...we know what a *bottle* of water costs...but not what we pay for this precious resource when it is delivered to our homes! Sadly, it is just human nature that when we don't know the *value* of something, we don't pay much attention to how we use it.

It is important to understand two things: 1. the days of cheap and plentiful water are history, and 2. the cost of water is going to increase dramatically in the years ahead. These two facts dictate that we use water more efficiently and avoid wasting it whenever we can.

Here are some common sense things we can do at home to put ourselves on a **"WATER BUDGET"** that will also save money in the process!

1. Go low-flow. Did you know that with a few twists of the wrist, you can save 25% to 60% of the water -- and 50% of the energy -- necessary to shower and shampoo for both you and your family? Install a **low-flow shower head**, which restricts the water output to no more than 2.5 gallons per minute -- which is the federally mandated limit for new fixtures. The low-flow shower heads help you start saving money right away, and most can be installed with existing fittings.



If you live in a home built before 1994 and if you haven't renovated your bathroom, you're likely to realize the most out of the low-flow strategy. Older shower heads send as many as 5.5 gallons per minute down the drain. The new fixtures go as low as 1.5 gpm, saving 7,300 gallons and \$30 to \$100 a year over their 2.5 gpm counterparts.

Unlike older versions, which sometimes offer only a sprinkle, the newer low-flow models maintain decent pressure by forcing air into the mix, or even channel water into massage-like streams. Another product shoots bigger droplets at a higher speed, approaching the feel of an old-fashioned soaker at a stingy 1.6 gallons per minute. The fancier fixture may be a little more expensive, but if it delivers the shower experience you prefer, you'll still save money and water.

If it has never occurred to you how fast the water runs through your shower head, put a bucket under the nozzle and time how many seconds the water takes to get to the 1 gallon mark. If it's less than 20 seconds, run -- don't walk -- to the nearest hardware store to find a low-flow replacement for your shower head.

2. Retrofit your faucets. The next time you visit the plumbing aisles at your local home improvement store, check out the faucet aerators — little gadgets that screw into your faucet threading and cut the water flow from 3 to 4 gallons per minute (the rate on older fixtures) to as little as a half-gallon.

As with shower heads, you can figure out how fast your faucet flows by putting a quart container under the stream. If the container fills in less than five seconds, your faucet could use this fix.



As the name suggests, aerators blend water and air, reducing the flow without sacrificing pressure. At 50 cents to \$3 apiece, the devices are some of the cheapest green gadgets available.

Aerators come in a range of flow rates, up to 2.2 gpm. A faucet that flows at 1 gpm gets your toothbrush and washcloth wet enough to do the job. But unless you want to grow old waiting for your pasta pot to fill, you'll need to give your kitchen faucet a bit more oomph. Use an aerator with a flow rate of at least 2 gpm.

3. Use a little WaterSense. It won't be long before you won't have to worry about purchasing products that promise a deluge and deliver a dribble or that simply don't live up to their water-saving claims. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently launched a certification program that checks and tests devices for water efficiency and performance, and awards the **WaterSense** label to those that do the job right.



For more information about this program, visit the website www.epa.gov/watersense.

4. Forget to flush once in a while and save up to 4.5 gallons per memory lapse if you have one of the older model toilets.

5. Test the toilet for leaks. Put a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank. If the color shows up in the bowl, your tank is leaking and



you're wasting up to 200 gallons of water a day. Ask the plumbing experts at the local do-it-yourself store how to fix the leak. Be sure to take along the name and model (if available) of your toilet.

6. Shower. Switch from a bath, which requires 30 to 70 gallons, to a shower, which uses 25 gallons in ten minutes under a 2.5 gpm shower head. Then shorten your shower.

7. Plug the leaks. A leaky faucet wastes as much as 2,700 gallons in a year — if it doesn't drive you crazy first. So stop wasting water...fix it!

8. Raise the mower blades. Adjust your lawn mower blades to the 3-inch setting. Shaggy grass holds moisture longer, requiring less watering.

9. Water early. Water your outdoor plants in the early morning, before the sun can burn off moisture. Make sure that your irrigation timer (if you have one) is set to complete all the watering cycles BEFORE 5 am... when the morning demand for household water begins.

10. Don't over-water. Before starting your sprinkler, step on the grass. If the blades spring back, hold off on watering for a day or two. The average lawn **only** needs up to one inch of water applied in a week -- either from rain or irrigation -- during the spring and summer growing seasons.



11. Get your car washed. Take your car out for a shampoo and rinse. Commercial car washes save up to 100 gallons of water per wash over the do-it-yourself kind, and they often reuse the rinse water. Experts suggest that if every American took the lazy way out and had a professional car wash just once a year, the total savings could amount to 8.7 billion gallons of water! 💧



Just imagine...

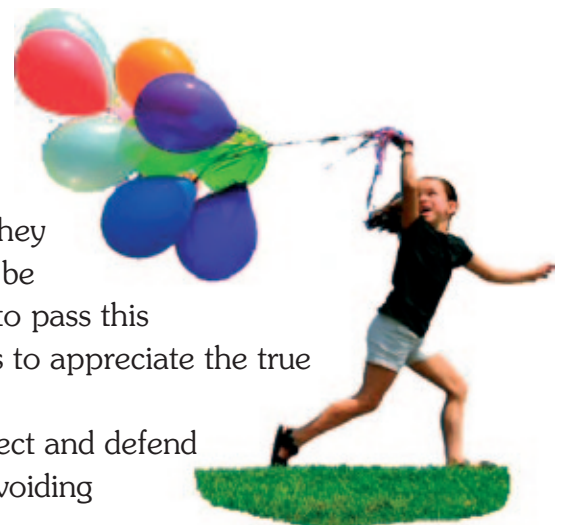


What if we could teach them the true value of water...and how to use it wisely... while they're still at this tender, young age?

Today's youngsters will have families of their own in 2050 when the State's Water Plan warns that we will no longer be able to meet the demand for water...for our cities, our farms, our manufacturing plants, or our homes. For this generation, television...the internet...space travel...adequate supplies of low cost water...and land-line telephones are things they will read about in the history books. Most of the jobs and career paths they will take haven't even been dreamed up yet. Instant communications and technology will be their daily tools...but in ways we cannot even imagine.

So, what can we do to help protect that shining future as they embark on this amazing journey? Quite simply, we must not only be good stewards of our endangered natural resources, but we have to pass this critical legacy on to them. The cornerstone of this responsibility is to appreciate the true value of finite resources...especially water.

Teach by example...make a commitment to preserve, protect and defend our water supplies from dangers foreign and domestic...and, by avoiding waste...to use water more efficiently..

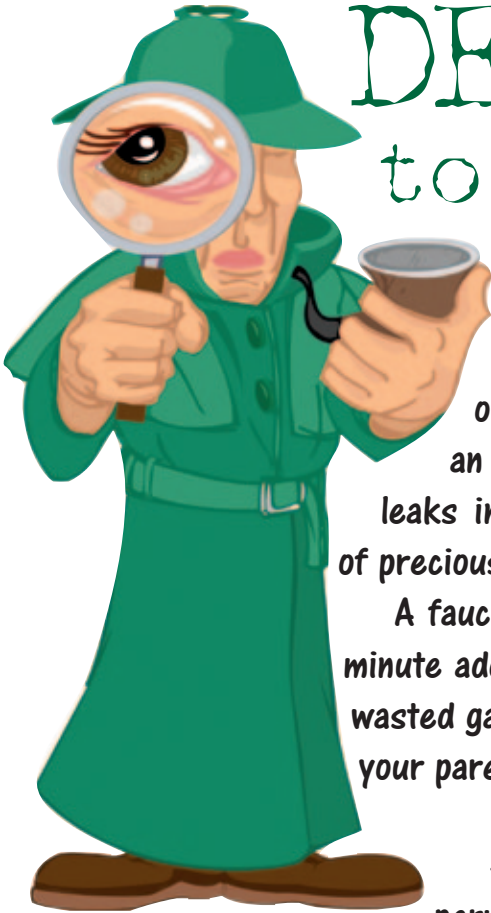


The water we conserve today...can serve them tomorrow!

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.
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 or a failing filling mechanism that needs replacing.

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 a 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!



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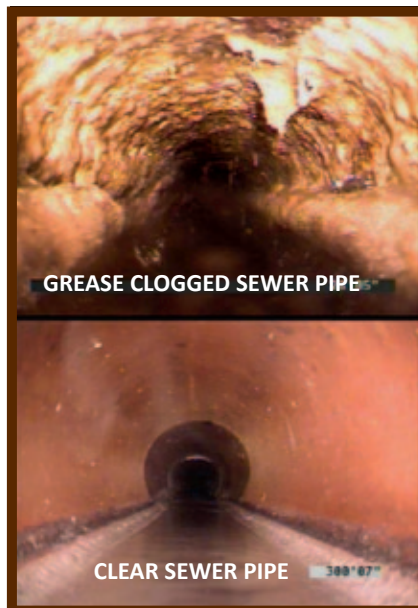
FOG...an acronym for **F**ats, **O**ils and **G**rease...is messing up our sewers -- as residents on Taidswood recently discovered. FOG includes animal fats, vegetable fats, and oils used to cook and prepare foods. Grease is a cooking byproduct, and comes from meat, fats, lard, oil, shortening (butter, 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 something 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 they simply pass it into the sewer line causing problems down the way.

It is critical to 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. But there are some things that 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, they 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 neighbors' 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.