

MUD 18 Newsletter
March 2011
www.mcmud18.com

Become Water Wise - A Special Offer to You: The *Water Wise* Program was initiated in April 2010 to demonstrate water saving practices in the home and to share the learnings with others in our community. Sponsoring organizations were the BCA, the POA and MUD 18. Eight Bentwater "pilot" homes have been tracking their daily water use over the last 10 months, both inside the home and in irrigating their landscape. We have learned a lot. Importantly, we now know how to reduce homeowner water consumption by as much as 25-30%. That's a lot of water! A key conclusion - the pilots were using way too much water to keep the landscape healthy and green, and in some cases twice the amount of water required for effective irrigation. The pilots discovered that the way to reduce irrigation is simple – keep your system in good repair and set the irrigation controller to deliver a target amount of water. You can read all about the results of the eight pilot homes on the MUD website - select the Water Wise Program from the option list.



Our request to you: Become *Water Wise* and conserve our precious water by reducing your lawn irrigation. Irrigation consumes 2/3 of the water used by homeowners in Bentwater and it is clearly "the" opportunity. Although we are blessed with adequate supplies today, the facts are we are using water faster than it is being replenished. MUD 18 will be required to reduce our take from current sources by 30% starting in 2016. Conserving water today can save money and it helps to alleviate the crunch we will face in future years. Most everyone agrees we should not water our lawns more than is needed. But how much is enough? How can a homeowner learn how to optimize irrigation for the specific design of their landscape design? To make it easy for you to learn more about your system, we are making the following offer:

Special Offer

On a first come - first serve basis to 100 homeowners,

we will provide an Irrigation System Evaluation at your home by a professional irrigation technician.

The evaluation will include recommendations for repairs, design enhancements, simple adjustments, and system calibration along with suggested timer settings.

To sign up for your free evaluation, go to our website at www.mcmud18.org and use the **Contact** option to take advantage of this special offer.

What you do today will save you thousands of gallons of water this summer.

Homeowner Awareness - Protection from Sewer Backflow: All homes in Bentwater are tied to the sanitary sewer collection system. The system conveys residential wastewater by gravity to a collection point. Even with regular maintenance, there is a risk of failure with any sanitary sewer collection system. If the system fails, it is possible to have a backflow of sewer into the collection lines on your property and, if not protected, into your home. Attached are pictures of a couple of different backflow prevention devices available: a pop-up cleanout and a gravity pop-up. If properly installed and maintained, these or similar devices could prevent sewer back-up into your home.

When most homes in Bentwater are built, backflow prevention devices are installed. Each homeowner should be aware of the existence and functionality of their backflow preventer. Over time, landscape and lawn debris can interfere with proper function and could cause the device to fail. All residents should educate themselves to ensure they have effective backflow prevention. Use this educational link to learn more:

<http://www.sewersmart.org/smarttips.html> A qualified plumber is also a good resource.



Online Billing Update - Online Payment By Check Now Available: In our February Newsletter, we announced the availability of online billing and access to your customer account. We are pleased with the strong sign-up response from our customers. Some customers have requested online payment by check as part of the online payment options. We are happy to announce this capability is now available, although not on a recurring basis yet. In summary: Customers can go to the MUD 18 website and select to receive their monthly bill by email; the default will be to continue to receive the bill by US mail. Customers can also select among **five** payment options: payment by writing a check each month (no extra fee), automatic recurring direct draft (no extra fee), online payment by check (\$1.00 for each check), online credit card (5% fee) or online debit card (5% fee). The fees are charged by the financial institutions, not by MUD 18. For very large service providers, the cost for electronic payment can be spread across all customers. Due to MUD 18's smaller size, the Board does feel spreading the cost is appropriate. Credit and debit payments on a recurring basis can be set up by calling Hays Utility at 936-588-1166.



Customers are not required to set up an online account unless they want to take advantage of one of the above options or other online features. An online account may be especially useful to customers who are travelling or spending extended periods of time outside of Bentwater. Having an online account, gives you 7 day/ 24 hour access to your account balance, payments, charges and adjustments. You will also be able to see charts of your last 12 months water consumption. If you need instructions for setting up an online account, refer to our February Newsletter. If you need a copy, go to our website and click on *Newsletters*.

Reminders About Enhanced Recycling Service:

1. **Acceptable Items:** juice boxes, glass bottles and jars, tin/steel cans (including large coffee cans), paper board, magazines, aluminum cans, 12" x 12" card board, newspaper, junk mail and plastic with codes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7). The top of the yellow lid has a table of acceptable items to serve as a handy quick reference guide.
2. **Unacceptable Items:** No wire. No wood. No foil. No plastic wrap. No plastic bags (even if marked with codes 2, 4 etc). Other unacceptable items: Styrofoam (plastic code 6, any type of flexible packaging such as film or shrink wrap. Note: flexible bags can be recycled at most grocery stores.



Important Reminder: All homeowners are requested to put their trash containers away as soon as possible after their trash has been picked up. This is important to street safety and the overall appearance of our community. In some cases, neighbors can help their neighbors to move the containers away from the street. Everyone's cooperation is appreciated.

Need to report a Problem? Don't assume the problem has already been identified or reported. If you observe a water leak, sewer odor, discolored water, open manholes, alarms are sounding, or other problems, please help us by calling:

Hays Utility Service @ 936-588-1166.

Hays has someone in Bentwater every day, seven days a week. They can and will respond 24 hours a day. Their general office hours are from 8:00AM to 4:30PM Monday through Friday.

Meetings Open to the Public:

Our regularly scheduled monthly meetings are the **2nd Tuesdays at 2:30PM** in the Country Club Board Room. Meetings are open to the public. The agenda is posted on our web site and the message board in the breezeway entrance to the Country Club Grill near the Golf Pro-shop.

Sincerely,

Your MUD Board:

Lou Tichacek	President	597-7010
Linda Pierce	Vice President	597-5463
Roy Champagne	Treasurer	597-8786
Joe Constantino	Secretary	597-8029
Chris Uzelmeier	Assistant Secretary	449-5198