

MUD 18 Newsletter
October 2011
www.mcmud18.com

2011 Tax Rate:

At our September meeting, your **MUD 18 Board** voted to reduce the tax rate from **\$0.44 to \$0.43 per \$100 of assessed value**. Over the life of the District, the Board has been able to, not only avoid raising taxes but also, for most years been able to declare a tax reduction. In 1995, the MUD 18 tax rate was \$0.8317. The District's tax rate over the last several years is shown in following table:

| Year | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Rate per \$100 assessed value | 0.56 | .51 | .51 | .50 | .49 | .45 | .44 | .44 | .43 |

In 2011, the District sold \$4.58 million in bonds primarily to fund the drilling of a water well in the Catahoula Aquifer and to add a second water plant adjacent to the new well. The plant will include a 25,000 gallon pressure storage tank and a 400,000 gallon ground storage tank. Also included will be two – 2000 gallons per minute cooling towers and a motor control center to operate the plant and well. These new facilities will not only satisfy the requirement for a 30% reduction in our use of the Jasper region of the Gulf Coast Aquifer, but will also increase water storage capacity that will help the District manage supply if the drought conditions persist into next year. The new plant should be operating by early 2012.

The Board is pleased that the District is able to expand the facilities AND provide a tax rate decrease. You should receive your 2011 tax bill within the next several weeks. Our tax bills are calculated partly by the tax rate and also by what the Montgomery County Appraisal District (MCAD) declares as the official taxation value for our homes. The tax payment is due in January 2012.

Update on Moderate Drought Conditions: The volume of water usage by Bentwater customers continues at levels that keep us in Stage 2 of the District's Drought Contingency Plan. Everyone is encouraged to begin to moderate the volume of water you are using to irrigate your lawn and landscaped areas in response to the cooler season. As fall temperatures become the norm, our lawns and landscapes will require less water. But even with the recent cooler temperatures, we continue to experience drought conditions making it difficult for homeowners to determine how much they can reduce landscape irrigation. If you participated in the free evaluation of your irrigation system, you received a recommended schedule for irrigation system operation for different times of the year. This is a reminder to review your schedules for October, November and December and make the appropriate changes to your settings.



What are the allowed times for operating one's irrigation system? There is some confusion about what the "allowed" times are. The posted signs state "midnight to 6AM" which is the timeframe recommended by lawn specialists due to waste from evaporation and stress on plants during the hottest part of the day. Recent Newsletters and your Stage 2 Drought notification letter specified the restrictions as stated in the District's Drought Contingency plan which actually allows lawn irrigation during two intervals of the 24 hour days that are assigned by odd/even addresses: midnight to 6AM and 10AM to 6PM. We apologize for any confusion caused by our communication of these restrictions.

The following are mandatory restrictions specified in the District's Drought Contingency plan:

1. Even-numbered addresses run irrigation systems only on Thursdays and Sundays.
2. Odd-numbered addresses run irrigation systems only on Wednesdays and Saturdays.
3. Refrain from outdoor use between the hours of 6AM and 10AM and between 6PM and midnight.
4. Outdoor use by a hand held hose or bucket may be done at any time on any day of the week.
5. Refrain from driveway washing and filling of swimming pools.

With cooler day time temperatures, some owners may want to adjust the times so that some of the needed lawn irrigation is done in the allowed day time hours. Doing so will help smooth the demand for water over the 24 hour day and help us avoid the high demand at 6AM on some mornings.

We need everyone's continued attention to good water conservation practices to manage through this drought.

Landscape Replacement and Redesign: Since the Bentwater community uses much of its water on lawns and landscape, MUD newsletters include information helpful in migrating to landscapes that require less water. The following is taken from an article by Kathy Huber, gardening writer for The Houston Chronicle:

"Texas gardeners need plants that tolerate extremes. Searing summer heat. Drought. And we've recently been reminded, winters can alter the landscape. Thanks to research led by Texas A&M researchers and extension horticulturists, we have great options. For 21 years, they've tested plants in search of top performers - types that tolerate our extremes with minimal soil preparation and watering and no pesticides. They've deemed more than 50 plants - including trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials and vegetables - Texas Superstars. The list includes plants that scoffed at the miserable summer of 2009 and are now returning from their hardy roots after last winter's big freezes."



Visit their website for more information: <http://texassuperstar.com/>

Recycling Tip: Currently our recycling service from WMS does not accept plastic film bags, examples, shopping bags, newspaper bags, bread bags, etc. Most grocery stores have a recycle container that accepts these plastic film bags. The Marketplace Kroger in Willis has a recycle container inside the entrance under the Marketplace signage - very convenient as you walk in the door.

Sign-up for E-Blasts: If you are not receiving our E-Blasts, you are missing out on timely information. Go to our website www.mcmud18.com and give us your email address. Your address will not be shared with anyone and you can unsubscribe at any time.

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 |