

MUD 18 Newsletter

April/May 2012

www.mcmud18.com

Election Results: This newsletter was prepared prior to May 12, the final day of the MUD Board election. Results will be announced via email to customers who have signed up to receive E-Blasts. Results will also be posted on the message board in the breezeway entrance to the Country Club Grill near the Golf Pro-shop and will also be announced in the June Newsletter. Thank you to all who took time to vote in this election.



Mild Drought Conditions Go Into Effect June 1: *Based on our Drought Contingency Plan, the Board declares a MILD DROUGHT Condition to be in effect as of June 1 and will stay in effect until Sept 30. During this time you are asked to voluntarily conserve water usage. The objectives of this stage of our plan is to:*

1. Avoid exceeding the "safe operating condition" of our wells -- defined to be when the demand of our water supply facilities reaches or exceeds 90% of the safe operating capacity of such facilities for 24 hours. If our water supply facilities reach or exceed these conditions, mandatory water usage restrictions will be necessary. The new Catahoula well and additional storage tanks give us greater capacity than we have had before. With the expanded facilities and everyone's attention to conservation, we hope to avoid mandatory restrictions.
2. Encourage responsible water conservation while encouraging healthier lawns and landscapes. During last year's drought, we had the opportunity to learn more about actively managing our landscape irrigation systems and how to encourage healthier root systems for landscapes that can better tolerate both drought and freezing conditions. We also learned we cannot take our precious water resource for granted. We must use water responsibly.

Your Mud Board is recommending that homeowners voluntarily use the following practices that would become mandatory if we reach Stage 2 of the District's Drought Contingency Plan:

1. Even-numbered addresses run irrigation systems only on Sundays and Thursdays
2. Odd-numbered addresses run irrigation systems only on Wednesdays and Saturdays
3. **Restrict use of your irrigation system to times between midnight and 6:00AM. Note this is a change from last year's plan and is based on 2011 experience.**
4. Outdoor use of water by a hand held hose or bucket may be done at any time on any day of the week.



Important reminders:

1. Be aware of your monthly water usage. Each month you receive a pie chart of the month's water usage in the District. Are you a low, average or BIG water user? What can you do to reduce your water usage? You will save dollars if you do.
2. Check your irrigation system for needed repairs and/or adjustments. Adjust your sprinkler heads so there is no overlap or overspray onto concrete. Last year, MUD offered free irrigation system inspections to the first 150 customers who responded to the offer. 92% of the evaluations identified needed repairs and/or adjustments. Irrigation systems should be checked at least annually for proper operation.
3. If you have a rain sensor, check to see if it is working.
4. Have a strategy for operating your irrigation system that efficiently provides a target amount of water. Overwatering weakens your grass and plants. Most plants need 1" or less of water a week to thrive. Many homeowners have found that running their systems less frequently, but for longer periods of time is a more effective strategy. If you are one of the homeowners who received a free inspection, remember to use the seasonal recommendations (or modifications you may have made) to set your system. If you want to develop your own strategy, visit the Bentwater Civic Association's website at www.bentwatercivic.com and follow the **Water Wise** menu to the **irrigation calculator**.
5. Adjust your sprinkler cycle times to fit the absorption rate of the soil in your yard. If you notice that your system is creating run-off, your lawn has exceeded its absorption capacity and you are wasting water and money. Split the run time on your assigned day over two different intervals to allow absorption.
6. Mulching is essential to the survival of your landscape during a drought. Mulch will reduce the amount of water that evaporates from your soil, greatly reducing your need to water your plants.

7. If you will be out of town for an extended period, leave your contact information with neighbors so they can notify you if water leaks are observed on your property or if your irrigation system needs attention. Or you may choose to contract with a service to deal with these issues while you are away.
8. Report any suspicious excess water run-off to the effected property owner. It may be a leak that needs attention. You will save your neighbor dollars in their bill and help the community save water.

MUD 18 newsletters and pamphlets enclosed with your monthly bills offer additional helpful tips for conserving water usage. Our website www.mcmud18.com offers advice and links to sites that focus on residential water conservation. A copy of the updated Drought Contingency Plan is on our website.

Catahoula Well Update: Phase 1 of the Catahoula Well and Water Plant is expected to be essentially complete on May 12th. The plant components for Phase I include the well which is capable of pumping 2500 gallons per minute, a 400,000 gallon storage tank, a 25,000 gallon pressure tank, two cooling towers for temperature control and a motor control center (MCC) which controls the plant.



Water from the existing wells was used to partially fill the tanks and water lines at the new plant so these components could be chlorinated. After the Catahoula well was activated on May 9th, it was used to complete the filling of the new plant facilities. The chemistry of the Catahoula water is softer than the District's water from the Jasper aquifer (less mineral content). It will be cooled and treated at the plant before being blended into the distribution lines throughout Bentwater.

Phase II will complete the plant to full storage capacity by adding an additional 400,000 gallon storage tank and 25,000 gallon pressure tank. These components will be installed without disruption of water service from the Catahoula well, with completion scheduled for September 30th.

The Bentwater Catahoula Well and Plant will provide water for the District from an aquifer that is not subject to the Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District's 30% pumping reduction requirement in the Gulf Coast Aquifers (which includes the Jasper). This reduction is mandated to begin no later than January 1, 2016. By reducing the District's Jasper well pumping early, credits will be accumulated which will benefit the District's customers in the future. We started accumulating credits on May 9.

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 |