

PECAN GROVE MUD NEWS

PECAN GROVE MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT LEVEE SYSTEM AND FLOODPLAIN UPDATE

The Pecan Grove Development was originally started in 1977 with the construction of an 8.5-mile earthen levee flood protection system as a precaution to prevent floodwaters from the Brazos River from flowing into the development. The Pecan Grove Municipal Utility District (Pecan Grove MUD) currently owns and is responsible for maintaining the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Levee Certification for flood protection. In 1996, the Pecan Grove MUD constructed two (2) storm water pump stations to allow the internal Pecan Grove storm sewer system to be pumped out of the area behind the levee system in the event the Brazos River flooded the surrounding area.

In 2004, FEMA began the Map Modernization Program. The purpose of this program is to create digital data that will help FEMA and local communities administer the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) more efficiently and effectively. As part of the program, communities, such as Fort Bend County, are being re-studied in order to update the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) to reflect current conditions. FEMA and local communities use the FIRMs to determine flood insurance premiums and to regulate development to help prevent future flood losses.

In Fort Bend County, a major effort is underway to re-study and re-map the Brazos River. Based on the revised hydraulic modeling for the Brazos River, numerous Fort Bend County levee districts could lose their FEMA levee certification. This required all levee districts to evaluate and modify their levee systems, as necessary, to regain FEMA Levee Certification once the revised FIRMs are adopted. Without FEMA certification, future developments and residents within existing levees could potentially be placed inside the 1% annual chance floodplain, 100-year floodplain, and would be subject to increased flood insurance premiums and limited on developing in the future.

Based on preliminary data, numerous levee districts decided to move forward to modify their levees due to its proximity to the Brazos River. In 2007, after reviewing the preliminary data released by FEMA's consultant, the Pecan Grove MUD decided not to spend approximately \$4,500,000 of public funds to improve the entire 8.5-mile levee system until more detailed information was given. Based on the preliminary data, it was uncertain how much, if any, of the Pecan Grove system needed to be improved. In 2008, based on a topographic survey of the entire levee system and the preliminary Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) released by FEMA's consultant, it was determined that only approximately two (2) miles of the levee system along FM 359 needed to be raised in order to meet FEMA's levee certification requirements. The construction of these improvements totaled \$700,000 and saved the Pecan Grove MUD and its residents approximately \$3,800,000.

Continued on page 2

News Around the Grove

Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office Contract Renewed

The Fort Bend Sheriff's Office additional law enforcement contract was renewed for one year in October. The contract covers all of the Pecan Grove MUD properties, as well as the following homeowner's association areas: POA, CIA and the HOA.

In addition to their day to day duties, the Sheriff's office law enforcement staff has been enforcing rules prohibiting the driving of golf carts for private use on public roadways, along with incidents involving underage children driving golf carts. Officers are also enforcing laws prohibiting vehicles (including four wheelers) from driving on levies. Warning signs have been posted at all levies. Committing this offense is considered a Class C misdemeanor (subsequent offenses are Class B misdemeanors) and carry with them a fine of up to \$5,000.

The Fort Bend Sheriff's Office is here to help ensure the safety of all Pecan Grove residents. If you have any questions regarding their contract for additional law enforcement duties, you can contact John Minchew at 281-300-3730. ■

Be the First to Receive Emergency Alerts

Pecan Grove MUD is now utilizing the Pecan Grove Fire Department's emergency email system. Please visit the PGFD's

website, www.pecangroved.org to sign up and receive emails notifying you of emergency situations. And, as always, you can keep up-to-date on District information by visiting the PGMUD website, www.pecangrovemud.com. ■

Enjoy the Green Space – District Parks Are Here For You!

Whether you're looking for some family time, exercise, or a place for you or your child's athletic organization to practice or play, take advantage of the beautiful District parks available to you. Parks are open to all

District residents (including Pecan Grove, Pecan Lakes and Plantation Place) and their guests, and boast facilities including, but not limited to, athletic fields, playgrounds, hike and bike trails, a picnic Pavilion and picnic tables.

As expected, keeping our parks beautiful, safe and in working order requires rules that we must all abide by. For a partial list of those rules and regulations, you can click on the "Parks & Recreation" link on the PGMUD website, or for a full listing, including information on reserving park space and insurance requirements for athletic organizations, call Parks Manager, Ben Anders (YMCA) at 281-341-0791. ■

Levee & Floodplain Update Continued from page 1

These improvements will allow the existing Pecan Grove Levee System to regain FEMA certification, keeping numerous Pecan Grove residents from being mapped within the 1% annual chance floodplain.

Based on the proposed map revisions, areas within the Pecan Grove MUD boundary and outside the existing levee system will be mapped within the 1% annual chance floodplain. These areas include the Pecan Lakes Subdivision as well as the commercial properties along FM 359. Pecan Grove MUD is dedicated to evaluating the different options for providing the same amount of flood protection to the Pecan Lakes residents as the Pecan Grove

residents within the existing levee system. The District Engineer, Jones & Carter, has been authorized to evaluate preliminary designs and costs for constructing a levee system around the Pecan Lakes Subdivision.

Jones & Carter is working with the Pecan Lakes HOA, Fort Bend County, the Texas Department of Transportation, and FEMA to determine the best solution for providing the most flood protection. Preliminarily, the Pecan Lakes System will consist of earthen levee and structural floodwall components as well as a new detention basin and pump station for the Pecan Lakes Subdivision. The system was included in the November 2008 Bond Election and has an estimated construction cost of \$11,000,000. ◆

Stay Safe While Preparing that Holiday Feast

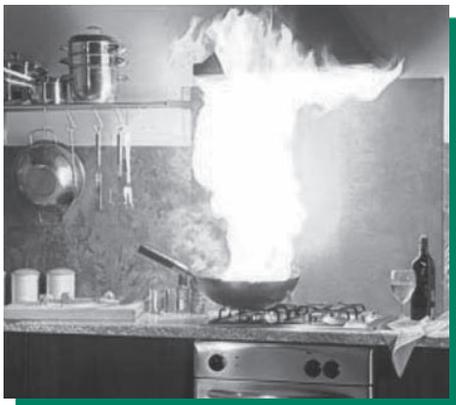
The 2009 Holiday season is here! As you enjoy family, friends, holiday parties and mmm, mmm, mmm, good cookin', try to remember some important safety tips to avoid any unexpected mishaps.

Tis the Season for Fried Turkey, But Watch Out for that Grease!

Fried turkey has become a popular item on holiday tables, but if safe cooking methods are not followed, fire and/or injuries can result. In fact, each holiday season our emergency responders are sent out to multiple calls resulting from this form of cooking. Heating several pints of oil to extremely high temperatures will always be a risk, but if you take the proper precautions, you can avoid severe oil burns or difficult-to-extinguish fires.

So, please remember to:

- “Test-drive” your cooker. Fill it with water, dip the unseasoned turkey into the container and mark the correct level for the cooking oil, then remove, dry and season the bird. Replace the water with oil, heat and cook according to the instructions.



- Always keep the LPG as far away from the open flame as possible, and check for leaks prior to using the cooker.

- Test the temperature with a small piece of bread or potato. If it crisps quickly, the oil is hot enough.

- If the oil starts to smoke, DON'T PUT THE FOOD IN. Turn off the heat and allow it to cool, and don't ever leave the cooker unattended – not for a minute!

- Never throw water into the hot oil. The water will react violently.

Additional Cooking Safety Tips (as outlined by the U.S. Fire Administration)

Safe cooking behavior is important year-round, but with the additional distractions and extra mouths to feed during the Holiday season, we must be even more aware of how best to keep the kitchen a safe and joyful place.

Please take time to acquaint yourself with the below tips before cooking up that impressive holiday spread:

- The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking. Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.

- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.

- Stay alert! To prevent cooking fires, you have to be alert. You won't be if you are sleepy, have been drinking alcohol, or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy.

- Keep anything that can catch fire - potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, towels, or curtains - away from your stovetop.

- Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.

- Keep pets off cooking surfaces and nearby countertops to prevent them from knocking things onto the burner.

- Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and catch fire if it comes into contact with a gas flame or electric burner.

For additional tips on cooking safely – including the proper use of barbeque, charcoal, and propane grills – along with a host of other cooking fire safety videos, visit the U.S. Fire Administration website at www.usfa.dhs.gov and enter “cooking fire safety” in the “Search” box.

Interested in more information on holiday safety, like tips on choosing the right Christmas tree and properly maintaining it? Or the best way to avoid the dangers associated with Christmas tree lights? Find that important information and much more on the Pecan Grove MUD website (www.pecangrovemud.com). Pecan Grove MUD, its Directors and District consultants wish you and yours a happy and healthy Holiday season!

Making a Difference...

One Storm Drain at a Time

News. Turn on the television. Browse the Internet. Pick up a newspaper. At times it seems we're barraged with negative reports, hopeless statistics and bleak forecasts on senseless crimes, the state of our economy, and the abilities of our next generation. But we know better, don't we? We see our fellow neighbors fighting to support their families. We witness the American spirit rising above the reported numbers, inventing new ways to thrive...and with high hopes, we push our way through the tough times to prove, once again, we are survivors and we will not only succeed, we will prosper.

We also see something else. We see our children. Understandably, we worry about how the actions of today will affect their world tomorrow, and we wonder if they are properly prepared, intellectually and emotionally, to handle what may come their way. If we

listen only to the negative reports on the state of our youth, we may feel as our parents did when we defended Elvis for shaking his hips, or spouted off the message of freedom at Woodstock, touted the benefits of Space Invaders and the new age of the computer, or unsuccessfully explained why we found Spiccoli from *Fast Times* so hilarious. They may not have always agreed with our choices, and surely they worried, but deep down they believed in us. Just as we believe in our own children. The truth is, we have just as much reason to believe in the next generation as we did in the many generations that came before. Talk to any proud parent or grandparent, any dedicated teacher, coach, youth leader, music director or countless others engaged with our tots, teenagers and young adults. They do see challenges, of course, but they also see bright minds, talent, inventive ideas and a limitless passion to succeed.

Pecan Grove, like many other communities, has a plethora of amazing young folks to boast about. Pecan Grove MUD, in particular, would like to highlight the efforts of one very special young man who took on an important project very close to our hearts.

As stated in the Project Updates section of this newsletter (p. 6), Pecan Grove MUD continues to implement the necessary and beneficial Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP). The required plan – a



Ryan Hadfield, Eagle Scout

joint effort between the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and local water providers – helps to educate the public on the dangers of polluting our waterways and implements programs to curb the effects.

Ryan Hadfield (an Eagle Scout with local troop 1656) recently hit the streets of Pecan Grove with 30 other scouts and adults to educate residents on storm sewer pollution. As part of his Eagle Scout Project, Ryan worked with the volunteers to place round placards at each sewer drain asking residents to refrain from disposing of lawn clippings and refuse in our water drainage system.

“We are trying to bring an awareness to local residents of the impact these drainage systems have not only on helping with flooding issues, but also with the environmental impact it has on our local waterways and ecosystems, such as the Brazos River,” said Hadfield. “I know that it seems much easier to just blow your grass clip-



Scouts and Parents. It Takes Teamwork!

pings into the drainage opening and that your small amount won't hurt, but it all adds up and congests our system. When the next hard rain comes along, it makes it very difficult for the drains to clear our streets, which results in flooding."

In addition to flooding issues, Ryan has also learned that pollutants can have dire effects down the line.

"Many times chemicals are disposed of in our systems, which make their way to our river and its tributaries, and eventually into the Gulf of Mexico," Hadfield explained. "This creates a biohazard for our fish and wildlife."

The "NO DUMPING" inlet markers adhered to the storm drains are one part of the public education and public involvement requirements outlined by the TCEQ in their five-year plan with Pecan Grove MUD. Ryan chose this as his Eagle Scout Project because he is committed to keeping our land and waterways safe and believes in the environmental and conservation objectives of the project.

As part of this important effort, Ryan worked with volunteers to place approximately 350 placards from Plantation Road through the north side of Pecan Grove. The process included cleaning the cement with wire brushes where placards were to be placed, gluing heavy-duty adhesive onto the back of each placard, and adhering each above the drains where it could be seen by residents. Each scout earned approximately four hours of service time toward rank advancement and merit badges.

"I'd like to thank Mr. Andy Phelps – who works with Pecan Grove MUD operator, EDP – for helping me to initiate this project and providing many of the supplies needed for its completion," said Hadfield. "I'd also like to thank all of the scouts, scout leaders and adults who helped out, Randall's for providing snacks, drinks, an ice carrier and the tote bags for carrying work supplies, Ace Hardware for providing work gloves, Dominos Pizza and Subway for their contributions toward lunch, and the many friends and family for monetary donations that helped so much with this project."

Ryan, who started out as a Tiger Cub Scout with Pack 1880 in Richmond in 1999 and joined Scout Troop 1656 in Richmond in 2003, is a senior at William B. Travis High School and will graduate with the class of 2010. We wish him the best of luck during his final year in high school and in the surely exciting and prosperous years to come.

Special thanks as well to all the scouts and adults who assisted in this special project. We hope to see them continue to be responsible and active stewards of this earth today and beyond. Scouts: Kamron Conover, Kyle Conover,



A Cleaning Team in Action

Bradley Cox, Clayton Coyle, Logan Danna, Jonathon Evans, Alan Garcia, William Garnes III, Robert Garza, Taran Garza, Richard Gonzales, Robert Gonzales, Brendan Hadfield, Brett Hadfield, Russell Harrison, Talon Hill, Zachery Lawrence, Andrew Mueller, Parker Peterson, Andrew Walquist and Reid Williams. Adults: Mary and Floyd Coyle, Susan Harrison, Tom Cox, Roland Garza, Renee Gonzales, Troy Lawrence, Mark Walquist and Ryan's parents, Phil and Kim Hadfield.

As residents of Pecan Grove, we are especially proud of all the great things our youth are doing to make a difference. If you have a story that you would like us to share with our neighbors, please give us a call at 281-238-5000 or write us via our website at www.pecangrovemud.com.



A Well-Deserved Meal for the Volunteers

PGMUD Project Updates

Storm Water Management Plan

Pecan Grove MUD has ended the second year of implementation of the Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) as required by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). We have completed the required Year 2 implementation tasks or “Best Management Practices” (BMPs). These included such items as distribution of public educational materials, operator training, inspection of storm sewer facilities, and a public presentation over the SWMP.



One of the bigger BMP undertakings this year is the marking of storm sewer inlets. Pollutants discharged into the storm sewer will eventually flow into and contaminate local streams, ponds and other water sources. The storm sewer inlet markers are intended to help educate the public and provide a physical reminder to help prevent unauthorized disposal or dumping of pollutants into the storm sewer system. Ryan Hadfield of Boy Scout Troop 1656 led this effort as part of his Eagle Scout Project. For more information on the implementation of this project and those that made it possible, see the article “Making a

Difference...One Storm Drain at a Time” on page 4 of this newsletter.



Levee

Paskey Incorporated has been working to raise the existing Pecan Grove MUD levee. This work is being performed to allow recertification of the levee by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after release of revised Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). The contractor is approaching final completion of the project. A final inspection was conducted on August 28, 2009. Currently, final work items are being addressed.

Elevated Storage Tank

Pecan Grove MUD has nearly completed the rehabilitation of its 650,000 gallon elevated storage tank (EST). The EST was originally constructed in 1987 and is a vital part of the District’s water distribution system as it helps maintain system pressure while providing storage. This project



includes the complete rehabilitation of the interior and exterior protective coating systems, minor structural steel work, and the replacement of the 16-inch (16”) primary fill line and valves. The coatings, logo and metal work are complete with a few minor work items remaining. The project was originally estimated to cost approximately \$400,000. However, the District was able to bid the project during a period of reduced local construction activity and received a submitted contract price of \$248,640 - providing a substantial savings to the residents and customers.

Surface Water Treatment Plant

The District is continuing to move forward with conversion to surface water for compliance with the mandated 2013 conversion requirement. This year the District has completed the Preliminary Engineering Report for design of the proposed 2.0 Million Gallon per Day Surface Water Treatment Plant (SWTP) and completed over 50 percent of the detailed plant design. The District has obtained an 8.3 acre site between Frost Elementary and Oyster Creek for construction of the SWTP. Plans and specifications for the SWTP will be submitted to regulatory agencies for review and approval. On September 14th, the TCEQ approved the District application for approval to sell bonds financing the construction of the District’s surface water conversion projects, which include the SWTP, transmission lines, and modifications to the existing ground water plants.

Let Us Recycle Those Christmas Trees!

Once again, the District will pick up – and recycle – all clean Christmas trees placed curbside. The dates for recycling are **Saturday, January 2nd and Saturday, January 9th.**

Trees with flocking, lights, ornaments or other decorations **can not be recycled**, so place only clean trees at the curb by 7:00 a.m. Please do your part this Holiday season to cut down on the unnecessary use of landfill space. We also encourage you,

throughout the year, to fill up those curbside recycling bins. For items not accepted in bins, we ask that you call or visit the Fort Bend County Recycle / Environmental Center at 1200 Blume Road, on the western edge of the Rosenberg city limits. You may now pick up recycling bins at the Pecan Grove Customer Service Office at 2035 FM 359, Suite 13 (Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; closed 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.).

Hours of operation at the Fort Bend County Recycle / Environmental Center are:

- Recycling: Monday-Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (except holidays); closed on Wednesdays
- Household Hazardous Waste: Mondays, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., and the first Saturday of the month, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

*Note: The automated Recycling/ Household Hazardous Waste information telephone line is: 281-633-7527.

More information (including items accepted and not accepted for recycling) can be found on the PGMUD website at **www.pecangrovemud.com**.

You will also find a link to the Fort Bend County Recycle / Environmental Center website.

Happy Holidays from Your PGMUD Board of Directors

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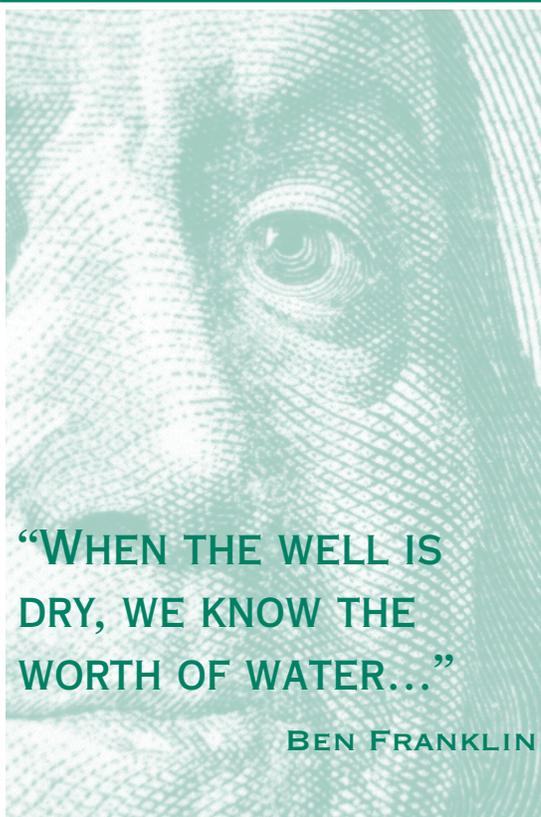
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conserve today...
can serve us
tomorrow!

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**“WHEN THE WELL IS
DRY, WE KNOW THE
WORTH OF WATER...”**

BEN FRANKLIN

WHO TO CALL:

Water, sewer and drainage questions:
PGMUD Customer Service Office
2035 FM 359, Suite 13 (located in the
rear of the Sweet Mesquite Center)
(281) 238-5000

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and
2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

After Hours: (281) 238-5000;
24 hrs/7 days a week

NOTE: If you have water or sewer related problems,
PLEASE CALL US BEFORE YOU CALL THE PLUMBER!
We will investigate the problem at no cost to you. If it is
found to be a water district-related problem, we will ar-
range to correct it. If it is not a water district issue, we will
provide our advice. Remember, we are here to help!

www.pecangrovemud.com – Your 24-Hour Resource

PGMUD’s primary role is to provide the highest quality water and sewage services to our residents. The Board and our very capable consultants work hard every day to keep our water and infrastructure running smoothly.

We also feel that it is crucial to communicate with you, our fellow neighbors, about important projects (in process or on the horizon), tax updates, drought contingency plans, conservation suggestions, and much more.

Via this newsletter and our monthly meetings (which are always open to the public), we strive to keep you informed. But another PGMUD communication outlet you may not be aware of is our comprehensive District website. By simply visiting www.pecangrovemud.com you can find loads of information - ranging from meeting notices and minutes, tax rate and rate order documents, the latest budget, director and contact information, loads of conservation tips (seasonal and year-round), and a host of other topics. You can even write in to ask questions, offer up comments or provide suggestions on other topics that might be of interest to you and your fellow neighbors.

PGMUD is here to serve you, and we consider transparency and open communication one of our primary goals. We appreciate your taking the time to read through this newsletter and we hope you will take advantage of all the great resources on our website very soon!