

West Harris County Regional Water Authority (WHCRWA)

Pumpage Fee to Now Be Included in Monthly Water Bills

In 1975, the Texas Legislature created the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District (HGSD) to provide for the regulation of groundwater withdrawal. This measure was taken to prevent land subsidence (the “dropping” of land) caused by excessive groundwater withdrawal. The large amount of freshwater pumped out of our underground resources was creating flooding problems, and also depleting our aquifers at an alarming rate.

In 1999, a bold plan was developed to reduce groundwater withdrawal through a conversion to surface water in north and west Harris County. Under the 1999 Plan, MUD 132 was required to join an approved group constructing a surface water infrastructure. If we did not do so, disincentive fees would have been charged for groundwater withdrawal. In compliance, MUD 132 entered into a contract with the West Harris County Regional Water Authority (WHCRWA) to meet the requirements of the HGSD plan for surface water conversion.

WHCRWA Fees

MUD 132 pays the WHCRWA a pumpage fee based on water pumped from the two MUD 132 wells. For nine years, MUD 132 has chosen to absorb these fees (initially \$0.35 per 1,000 gallons and periodically increased) in an effort to minimize the burden on our customers. This January, however, the pumpage fee was increased to \$1.55 per 1,000 gallons. MUD 132’s Board has determined MUD 132 can no longer absorb the WHCRWA pumpage fees. Based on our aging infrastructure, required maintenance and unforeseen costs that can arise at anytime, the operating budget can no longer handle the implications of this increased cost without a tax adjustment. The Board believes it is more equitable to invoice the pumpage fee directly based on water usage rather than impose a general tax increase that unfairly spreads the costs resulting from high volume users over the entire community. The overwhelming majority of utility districts affected by the surface water conversion have, from day one, passed on these water pumpage fees directly to their customers.

Effective May 1, 2011, MUD 132 will be passing through the WHCRWA pumpage fees to our customers based on their individual actual monthly water usage. It will be clearly stated Surface Water Conversion -WHCRWA on your bill. Each account will be invoiced the WHCRWA pumpage fee based on their actual water usage @ \$1.55 per 1,000 gallons. As the pumpage fee charged by WHCRWA changes in the future (and it will go up), the new rate will be invoiced. Examples of the changes in your monthly billing as various water usage quantities are provided below.

Offsetting the WHCRWA Fee

In an effort to alleviate some of the additional cost that you will now see on your bills, the Board is investigating ways to reduce property taxes, now that the surface water conversion cost is not being paid from MUD 132 operating funds. MUD 132 has worked hard for many years to keep taxes down. It is imperative however that our reserves be maintained at a level that can provide for any repairs or new construction that may be necessary in the future.

Conservation

MUD 132 continues to recommend to customers that they utilize any and all efforts to practice water conservation in their daily lives. It will not only keep your water costs down, but will also help to sustain our freshwater reserve for generations to come. Read the monthly water conservation inserts with your water bill and the articles in our newsletters for simple ways to start conserving. **Conservation is the only way to control WHCRWA costs.**

More information on the Harris Galveston Subsidence District and WHCRWA is available by visiting their websites available as links from the MUD 132 website, www.hcmud132.com.

Any questions on this billing practice change can be directed to the MUD 132 operator, Severn Trent 281-579-4500.

Monthly Water Sewer Costs at Various Water Usage Volumes

Monthly Volume (Gallons)		5,000	8,000	10,000	15,000	20,000	25,000	30,000	45,000	60,000	75,000
Water											
Gallons	Amount										
Minimum	10,000 gallons	\$10.00									
10,001	Gallons to 20,000 gallons	1.25 per 1,000 gallons			6.25	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50	12.50
20,001	Gallons to 30,000 gallons	1.50 per 1,000 gallons				7.50	15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00
30,001	Gallons to 40,000 gallons	1.80 per 1,000 gallons						18.00	18.00	18.00	18.00
40,001	Gallons and above	2.50 per 1,000 gallons						12.50	50.00	87.50	
	Total Water	10.00	10.00	10.00	16.25	22.50	30.00	37.50	68.00	105.50	143.00
Sewer - Residential											
	Includes 30,000 gallons water usage		16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00
	Next 10,000 gallons water usage	1.00 per 1,000 gallons						10.00	10.00	10.00	
	All over 40,000 gallons water usage	1.20 per 1,000 gallons						6.00	24.00	42.00	
	Total Sewer	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	32.00	50.00	68.00
	Total Current Invoice	26.00	26.00	26.00	32.25	38.50	46.00	53.50	100.00	155.50	211.00
Surface Water Conversion											
	- WHCRWA	1.55 per 1,000 gallons	7.75	12.40	15.50	23.25	31.00	38.75	46.50	69.75	93.00
	Total Future Invoice	33.75	38.40	41.50	55.50	69.50	84.75	100.00	169.75	248.50	327.25

March 17, 2011