

PARTNERS INDROGRESS WHCRWA Summer 2025 Newsletter

I

West Harris County Regional Water Authority

www.whcrwa.com



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eric Hansen, President Director, Precinct 3

Larry Weppler, Vice President Director, Precinct 1

Gary Struzick, Assistant Vice President Director, Precinct 7

Douglas ("Cam") Postle, Secretary Director, Precinct 6

Mike Thornhill, Assistant Secretary Director, Precinct 4

Jay Wheeler, Director, Precinct 2

Karla Cannon, Director, Precinct 5

Mark G. Janneck, Director, Precinct 8

Dennis Gorden, Director, Precinct 9

Attorney: Alia Vinson, Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP

Engineer: Wayne Ahrens, Melinda Silva, Gannett Fleming

Operator: Bryan Thomas, Inframark

Communications: Barbara Payne, Payne Communications & Associates

Graphics & Layout: Russell Lambert, The Texas Network, LLC

Securing Surface Water for Generations

WHCRWA's Long-Term Investment in Regional Water Supply



The WHCRWA's water supply and infrastructure efforts are built around four major components: the Surface Water Supply Project (SWSP), WHCRWA's internal distribution lines connecting to local MUDs, the Northeast Water Purification Plant (NEWPP) Expansion Project, and the completed Luce Bayou Interbasin Transfer Project.

2



Surface Water Supply Project

To meet the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District and Fort Bend Subsidence District's groundwater reduction requirements, the West Harris County Regional Water Authority has partnered with the North Fort Bend Water Authority to construct the Surface Water Supply Project.

The Surface Water Supply Project is needed to conserve groundwater and reduce land subsidence. Pumping large amounts of groundwater causes the ground to settle, lowering the elevation of the land. This project will help to reduce land subsidence and will meet the water needs of a rapidly growing population.

Once complete, surface water from Lake Houston will be supplied to retail water providers by way of the City of Houston's Northeast Water Purification Plant through over 55 miles of pipeline and two large pump stations. These transmission pipelines will vary in diameter from 42 inches to 96 inches, depending on the pipeline segment. Visit www.surfacewatersupplyproject.com to learn more.

WHCRWA Distribution Lines

Internal distribution lines are the underground pipelines that WHCRWA has constructed to transport water from the Northeast Water Purification Plant (NEWPP), via the Surface Water Supply Project (SWSP)—to various neighborhoods, Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs), and other users within the WHCRWA boundaries.

While large transmission lines move high volumes of water over long distances, internal distribution lines are part of WHCRWA's infrastructure that:

- Branch off from major transmission lines.
- Directly connect to local water providers or storage facilities.
- Ensure a reliable flow of treated surface water to individual districts or systems.



These lines are essential for:

- Supporting the conversion from groundwater to surface water, as required by state mandates.
- Managing water pressure and flow to meet demand at the local level.
- Expanding access to surface water as more areas come online.

In short, they are WHCRWA's version of "last-mile" delivery—bringing water from the main supply system to the districts or providers that serve homes, schools, and businesses.

Northeast Water Purification Plant Expansion Project

The \$1.973 billion Northeast Water Purification Plant (NEWPP) Expansion Project is managed by the City of Houston (COH) and will serve the COH, WHCRWA, North Harris County Regional Water Authority, North Fort Bend Water Authority, and Central Harris County Regional Water Authority, with each participating entity contributing its proportional share of the cost.





This progressive design-build project increases the plant's treatment capacity by 320 million gallons per day (MGD), adding to the existing 80 MGD facility.

The WHCRWA share of the project is 25.76%, which equates to 82.42 MGD of additional treated surface water capacity.

Luce Bayou Interbasin Transfer Project

The Luce Bayou Interbasin Transfer Project is the largest untreated water supply project constructed in Southeast Texas in the past 50 years. It transfers surface water from the Trinity River in Liberty County to Lake Houston, serving as a critical component of the region's long-term water supply strategy.



The project includes:

- The Capers Ridge Pump Station (500 million gallons per day capacity),
- 3 miles of dual 96-inch diameter pipelines, and
- 23.5 miles of earthen canal.

The project received its U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit (SWG-2009-00188) in

2014, and construction was completed in 2022. It is now fully operational and actively supplying untreated water to Lake Houston.

The WHCRWA's share of the project is approximately \$70 million, increasing its untreated water demand allocation to 82 million gallons per day, with a total allocation of 110 million gallons per day. ♦



What is the WHCRWA Fee on my water bill?

The West Harris County Regional Water Authority fee that appears on many home and business water bills is a fee that pays for the State mandated conversion to surface water from lakes and rivers to address the significant subsidence problems affecting Harris County and other surrounding areas. Subsidence, the sinking of land, has been a problem in Houston since the early 1900s due to heavy groundwater use. By the 1940s, it became evident that groundwater withdrawal was causing the land to subside. To address this, the Texas Legislature created the Harris Galveston Subsidence District in 1975 to regulate groundwater use. The Subsidence District has mandated the region convert to 60 percent surface water by 2025 and 80 percent by 2035 and there are very expensive penalties



for failing to meet these requirements.

It takes an incredible amount of money to keep our water flowing. The fees collected not only pay for surface water, but also fund operations and maintenance, as well as providing the money needed to plan and build the water infrastructure to deliver surface water to MUDs and Cities.

Regional water authorities, including the West Harris County Regional Water Authority which was established in 2001, were formed to manage the transition to surface water. Like most water authorities in Texas which aren't granted taxing authority, the West Authority relies on water usage fees to fund infrastructure and pay for treating surface water from the San Jacinto River, Trinity River, and Lake Houston.

Each MUD or City in the Authority is charged for the amount of groundwater pumped from its wells as well as for the surface water the Authority delivers.

The MUDs and Cities then apply the Authority fee to their customers' water bill. The fee is charged to all Cities, MUDs, and water well Owners.

The regional water authority amount shown on your water bill is charged to you by your water provider and is based on how much water you use. The amount of the fee may change from month to month depending on how much water your household uses. The West Harris County Regional Water Authority fee is the same for all water providers within the Authority. However, SOME MUDs and Cities may modify the Authority fee to cover such things as leaks in their system, flushing of fire hydrants, administrative costs, etc., which will cause an increase in the actual fee shown on your bill.

THE MORE WATER YOU USE, THE HIGHER THE FEE AMOUNT ON YOUR BILL WILL BE.

To learn more scan the QR code below to watch a short video or visit <u>whcrwa.com/what-is-the-whcrwa-fee</u>







The little things really do add up.

Here are some water saving techniques you can implement that won't require a lifestyle change, and are mostly just old fashioned common sense.

WATER LESS SAVE MORE

Rule number one... NEVER pour water down the drain when there may be another use for it... perhaps to water indoor plants.

TAKE SHORTER SHOWERS

Shortening a 10 minute shower to five minutes can save 25 gallons of water!

ONLY WASH FULL LOADS

Running the dishwasher with a full load saves water, energy, and money.

TIX RUNNING TOILETS

If you have a leaky toilet, don't delay, Fix it right away! A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons of water per day.

TURN OFF THE WATER

Don't run the water while brushing teeth, just turn on enough water to rinse the toothbrush.

Maximizing Value Through WHCRWA Alternate Credit Agreements

Incentivizing Innovation and Sustainability in Water Management

In 2011, the West Harris County Regional Water

Authority (WHCRWA) adopted an Untreated Surface Water Use and Wastewater Treatment Plant Effluent Reuse Policy (often referred to as the Alternate Water Credit Agreement Policy). The Alternate Water Credit Agreement Policy is designed to incentivize retail water providers—such as Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs) and cities—to invest in alternative water sources. The program offers valuable financial credits that can offset WHCRWA pumpage and surface water fees.

Since its inception, the program has:

- Supported ten projects (including five reuse, four stormwater, and one direct surface water project).
- Awarded over \$5.1 million in credits, which includes the reimbursement of nearly \$4.8 million in capital costs.
- Generated an estimated \$9.95 million in total savings when accounting for avoided pumpage and surface water costs.
- WHCRWA has earned over 29.3 billion gallons of over-conversion credit from the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District (HGSD).

The over-conversion credits earned by the WHCRWA from the HGSD as a result of the alternative water projects do not expire, which enhances long-term flexibility for the WHCRWA's Groundwater Reduction Plan—in addition to increasing water supply options and redundancy.



What Are Alternate Credits?

Alternate credits are awarded by the WHCRWA when MUDs or other water providers develop and use alternative water supplies beyond what is required for regulatory compliance, after the WHCRWA receives over-conversion credits from the HGSD for the use of such alternative water. Eligible projects fall under three categories:

- **Reuse of Water:** Treated wastewater (effluent) reused for non-potable purposes, typically irrigation for public greenspaces or golf courses, or treated drinking water reused for non-potable purposes such as splash pads.
- **Stormwater Capture:** Water collected and repurposed from rainfall runoff, often from detention basins.
- Other Surface Water Sources: Use of non-potable surface water from sources where the user has legal water rights to use surface water (such as from a bayou or stream).



These approaches reduce the demand for groundwater and support compliance with mandates from the HGSD.

How It Works

The WHCRWA and the participating entity—typically a MUD—enter into a formal agreement. The MUD finances, designs, and builds the system. Once operational, the MUD reports measurable alternate water use, and if the criteria are met, the following applies:

- Credits are based on metered alternate water use.
- The value of the credit is equivalent to **one-half of the applicable WHCRWA fee per 1,000 gallons.**
- Credits are applied to future WHCRWA invoices after the WHCRWA earns over-conversion credits from the HGSD for the usage year—no money changes hands.
- Credits provided by the WHCRWA pursuant to these agreements are limited to 10 years and/or capped at documented capital construction costs for certain types of projects.

Why It Matters

As regulatory requirements grow more stringent and water rates rise, these agreements create a compelling opportunity for MUDs and cities to manage costs while promoting sustainable water practices. Importantly, the credits awarded through this program are earned by developing new, measurable alternate water

supplies—they are not taken from a shared pool or redistributed from other participants. Each agreement is performance-based, ensuring fairness and direct benefit to those making proactive investments.

Conclusion

The Alternate Water Credit Agreement



Policy reflects WHCRWA's commitment to long-term planning, innovation, and responsible stewardship of water resources. By supporting and incentivizing forward-thinking retail water providers, the program not only helps individual MUDs and cities offset costs but also contributes to the region's overall resilience and sustainability.

WHCRWA Wins Water Project of the Year for Segment C2 Waterline

The West Harris County Regional Water Authority (WHCRWA), in collaboration with Gannett Fleming and Harper Brothers Construction, has been honored with the prestigious Water Project of the Year award at the Underground Infrastructure Conference (UIC) 2025 in Houston. This accolade recognizes the exceptional execution of Segment C2 of the Surface Water Supply Project (SWSP), a critical initiative aimed at enhancing the region's water infrastructure.

Segment C2 is a 4.8-mile stretch of 84-inch diameter waterline extending from State Highway 6 to Brittmoore Road. This segment plays a vital role in transporting up to 150 million gallons of water per day toward WHCRWA's Central Pump Station, ensuring a reliable surface water supply for the rapidly growing communities in west Harris County and north Fort Bend County. needed to conserve groundwater and reduce land subsidence. Pumping large amounts of groundwater causes the ground to settle, lowering the elevation of the land. This project will help to reduce land subsidence and will meet the water needs of a rapidly growing population.

Once complete, surface water from Lake Houston will be supplied to retail



The Surface Water Supply Project is



water providers by way of the City of Houston's Northeast Water Purification Plant through over 55 miles of pipeline and two large pump stations. These transmission pipelines will vary in diameter from 42 inches to 96 inches, depending on the pipeline segment.

The successful completion of Segment C2 presented numerous engineering challenges, including navigating urban corridors and executing complex tunneling operations beneath Langham Creek. As the design engineer, Freese and Nichols, Inc. provided innovative solutions—such as modifying approach sections toward deep tunnel crossings and employing advanced tunneling techniques—that were implemented to overcome these obstacles, ensuring the project's success.

This award underscores WHCRWA's commitment to advancing water infrastructure and delivering sustainable water solutions to the communities it serves. The recognition at UIC 2025 highlights the collaborative efforts and engineering excellence demonstrated throughout the execution of Segment C2. ●

VISIT IRRYGATOR.COM FOR AN ALL NEW EPISODE OF IRRY GATOR FEATURING JAY B BLUE, AND WESLEY THE WATER WASTING WEASEL!





ASCE Houston Tours the Central Pump Station



The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) – Houston Branch toured the Central Pump Station (CPS) project on February 26, 2025, to see its progress firsthand. The tour included personnel from City of Houston Public Works, Gannett Fleming, and SJRA.

Attendees explored the facility and learned about the engineering behind this critical infrastructure project.

Check out some photos from the tour below!



Beat the Grease: Summer Grilling & FOG Prevention

Protecting Pipes, Preventing Pollution, and Keeping Summer Carefree

ORE

There's nothing quite like the smell of burgers sizzling on the grill, the laughter of family gatherings, and the long, warm evenings of a Texas summer. But behind all

the flavor and fun, there's a sneaky kitchen villain that could cause big problems for your plumbing and the environment—FOG: fats, oils, and grease.

During peak cookout season, it's easy to pour a little grease down the drain or rinse off a greasy pan without a second thought. But that simple action can set off a chain reaction leading to sewer clogs, overflows, property damage, and costly repairs. And it's not just your pipes that suffer—FOG can impact entire communities.

> The West Harris County Regional Water Authority (WHCRWA) is working to raise awareness about how small changes in how we handle grease can make a big difference for our homes, our infrastructure, and our waterways.

What Is FOG?

FOG stands for Fats, Oils, and Grease, and it comes from everyday cooking activities—especially popular in the summertime:

- Grilling burgers, sausages, or chicken
- Frying fish, bacon, or potatoes
- Cooking with butter, lard, or oilbased marinades
- Pouring out sauces, gravies, or meat drippings

Even if it seems like a small amount, when grease cools, it solidifies. Over time, it sticks to the inside of your pipes and the public sewer system, restricting flow and eventually causing blockages.

And when those blockages back up, it's not just a mess—it's a public health hazard and a major repair expense.

Why Summer Is a Hotspot for FOG Problems

Outdoor cooking ramps up in summer, and so does indoor cleanup from greasy grilling tools and platters. Combine that with more guests, bigger meals, and hotter temperatures—and FOG buildup happens fast.

Sewer systems are especially vulnerable during this time. Heat accelerates the breakdown of food scraps and waste, increasing odors and the chance of blockages. More people in the home means more dishes, more cooking, and more risk.

That's why WHCRWA wants residents to know: you can enjoy all the flavors of summer—without clogging up your pipes.

Top Tips to Keep Your Home—and Community— FOG-Free

Here are a few simple ways to stay on the safe side this season:

Don't Pour It Down the Drain

Never pour grease, cooking oil, or fat down the sink—even with hot water or soap. It may seem like it's going away, but it's only going further down the line... where it will harden.



Scrape It, Contain It, Trash It

Wipe or scrape greasy pans and plates into the trash before washing. Pour cooled grease into a disposable container (like a coffee can or used jar), then toss it when full.

Use Sink Strainers

A fine mesh strainer over your drain can catch food particles and reduce what goes into your pipes.

Plan Ahead for Grilling

Keep a grease collection station near your grill for easy, safe disposal of drippings and leftover oils.

FOG in the Big Picture

FOG isn't just a household issue—it's a costly one for water providers and city infrastructure. Blocked sewer lines lead to overflows that contaminate local waterways, affect wildlife, and require emergency response.

According to the EPA, grease is a leading cause of sewer blockages nationwide. And the cost of cleanup, repair, and environmental mitigation is ultimately passed on to ratepayers. By doing your part at home, you're helping prevent pollution, protect infrastructure, and save your community money.

A Grease-Free Summer Starts With You

At WHCRWA, we're committed to smart water use and sustainable practices—and that includes keeping our sewer systems safe and flowing. So as you fire up the grill this summer, remember: the best cookouts don't just taste good—they protect our pipes, too.

Enjoy the flavor. Ditch the grease. Protect your home and community. ♦

MORF

From Fishing Poles to Splash Pads: WHCRWA Connects with the Community

The West Harris County Regional Water Authority (WHCRWA) proudly showcased its prized Mobile Teaching Labs at three spring events, bringing water education and conservation to life for hundreds of residents.

On April 26, WHCRWA joined HC MUD 127 at their annual "Spring on Tap" event at the Brenwood Park Clubhouse in Katy, thanks to an invitation from MUD Director Maureen Herzog. Residents enjoyed Italian ice while visiting with their MUD board and operator — and couldn't miss HCMUD 127's board member Mike Harvey spinning tunes as the event DJ. Many stopped by the WHCRWA trailers to ask questions about the Authority.

A week later, on May 3, WHCRWA participated in two community events. At Mary Jo Peckham Park, Harris County Precinct 4 hosted its long-running "Take Me Fishing!" event, now in its 20th year. Families visited the WHCRWA trailer and booth before heading to the lake for a fishing tournament. Our sunglasses and Irry hats were crowd favorites once again!

Later that day, the WHCRWA was welcomed to HC MUD 71's community gathering at Stephen Woodring Park. Directors hosted a fun-filled day where residents cooled off with snow cones and the splash pad — and stopped by the trailer to learn more about where their water comes from.



Learn more about the WHCRWA Board of Directors

Eric Hansen President and Precinct 3 Director

Eric, a Houston area native, graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Environmental Design and graduate degrees in Land and Real Estate Development and Construction Management. Eric is a licensed Texas Real Estate Broker. He is President



of HealthLink Development, a construction and real estate consulting company that operates across the United States. His experience includes the development, planning, design, and construction of senior housing projects, including skilled nursing, assisted living and Alzheimer's/memory care facilities, and evaluating, planning, and implementing commercial and residential projects in the local Katy, Texas area. Eric served on the Board of Directors of Harris County MUD #81 for 7 years until he joined the WHCRWA Board of Directors.

Larry A Weppler Vice President and Precinct 1 Director

Larry served as a municipal utility district director for 7 years and was the Vice President of Mission Bend MUD #2 until he joined the WHCRWA Board of Directors. He is a registered professional civil engineer and is the Construction Division Manager for Quiddity. Larry has a B.S. degree in civil engineering.

Gary Struzick Assistant Vice President and Precinct 7 Director

Gary spent twenty four years as a MUD director. He was president of Harris County MUD #208, and served as President of Copperfield Joint Operations Board until he joined the WHCRWA Board of Directors. Gary has a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from



Texas A&M University and is a registered professional civil engineer and a nationally certified flood plain manager. Previously, he served as President of the Houston Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), as President of the Texas Section ASCE, and as Regional Governor for ASCE Region 6 (representing Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico).

Douglas (Cam) Postle Secretary and Precinct 6 Director

Cam served as President of Harris County MUD #257 for 16 years until he joined the WHCRWA Board of Directors. He earned a B. A. in math, and is a real estate consultant



regarding right-of-way acquisition and abstraction.

Michael Thornhill Assistant Secretary and Precinct 4 Director

Mike has been a resident of Katy since 1999. He served as his MUD president for seven years until he joined the WHCRWA Board of Directors. Mike has a Bachelor's Degree in Biomedical Science from



Texas A&M University. He works for a water operations company as the Regulatory Compliance Manager, working closely with the TCEQ and the EPA.

Jay Wheeler Precinct 2 Director

Jay is a project manager and consulting services executive with 25 years supporting SAP IT



transformational projects in multiple industries. Jay is a Houston native married to Gwen Wheeler; they have four children and six grandchildren. Jay served on the Board of Directors of Nottingham Country MUD for nine years until he joined the WHCRWA Board of Directors. In addition to his service on the utility district board, Jay has served on the Parklake Village HOA board as President since 2014. Jay graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics.

Karla Cannon Precinct 5 Director

Karla Cannon has a long history of public service and community involvement. She served on the WHCRWA Board of Directors from the Authority's inception in 2001 through 2018, and returned to the Board in 2023 to continue her



commitment to regional water planning and infrastructure. Prior to her role on the Board, Karla also served on the Clay Road Municipal Utility District.

A longtime Katy resident, Karla spent 25 years as a successful Realtor in the area. She is the proud mother of three daughters and one son, and a devoted grandmother to four granddaughters and five grandsons.

Mark G. Janneck Precinct 8 Director

Mark served as a MUD director for 16 years and was President of Horsepen Bayou MUD until he joined the WHCRWA Board of Directors. Mark has a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, is a registered professional mechanical engineer, and project manager for Shah Smith & Associates.



Dennis Gorden Precinct 9 Director

Dennis, a native of Katy, Texas, attended Katy area schools and Texas Tech University. He pursued a career with Severn Trent Environmental Services and retired in 2011 after 28 years with the company. In 1989, Gorden was elected to the board of Harris County



MUD #61 and served as president during his tenure with the District. He also served on the Board of Harris County MUD 457 until he joined the WHCRWA Board of Directors.

To view larger maps of each precinct and see which MUDs are included in each director's precinct, visit <u>whcrwa.com/about-whcrwa/board-of-directors</u>.



IRRY GATOR'S SUMMER SURVIVAL GUIDE: DON'T LET WATER GO TO WASTE!

Summer heat often means increased outdoor water use—and higher water bills. With peak watering season underway, it's the perfect time to make small changes that can lead to big savings. Here are a few simple, smart ways to save water this summer:

WATER EARLY OR LATE

Avoid watering during the hottest part of the day, when much of the water evaporates before it can soak in. Watering early in the morning or after sunset allows your landscape to absorb more moisture.

ADJUST YOUR SPRINKLERS

Make sure your sprinklers are aimed at your lawn not the driveway or sidewalk. A quick check for leaks, broken heads, or overspray can prevent gallons of wasted water.

USE THE "CYCLE AND SOAK" METHOD

Instead of running your sprinklers for one long session, split it into two shorter cycles. This gives the soil time to absorb water and reduces runoff.







TURN OFF THE TAP

Don't let water run while brushing your teeth or washing dishes. These small habits add up, especially when the whole household gets involved.

USE A CAR WASH THAT RECYCLES WATER

Washing your car at home can waste a lot of water. Commercial car washes often use water-efficient systems and recycle their water.

INSTALL A RAIN SENSOR

If you have an irrigation system, installing a rain or soil moisture sensor can prevent it from running unnecessarily.

CHOOSE DROUGHT-TOLERANT PLANTS

Native and drought-resistant plants thrive in our region and need far less water than traditional landscaping.

Water conservation is important all year—but in summer, it's essential. By using water wisely, we help ensure that our community has enough to meet current needs while protecting resources for the future. • You can rely on WHCRWA to supp water for today, tomorrow, and generations to come



whcrwa.com