# Spring Creek

UTILITY DISTRICT

# September 2024

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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## District Alert System

Sign up for text alerts at ***https://springcreekud.com/alerts*** for notices and updates about your area!

Example Message

FIRST

# A WORD FROM THE BOARD

Welcome to the September 2024 issue of our newsletter.

As the static level in our water wells keeps dropping and as mandatory water restrictions within the District are still in effect, we continue to promote water conservation and, this month, our focus is “leaks”. According to the Texas Water Development Board, leaks can account for 14 percent or more of your water bill. Leaks can happen in many different places on your property and sometimes, in areas that are not visible. In this newsletter, you will find some tips that will help you find leaks. In addition to this, in a separate article, we are offering some suggestions you can use to save money on your water bill.

In the other articles of this newsletter, you will find details and/or updates on some of the many on-going projects in your District.

First, we are providing some information about the Reclaimed Water project that the Spring Creek Utility District has initiated. This project will take a few years to complete and will be developed in multiple phases; and there are still a lot of decisions that the Board will have to make. This is a significant step towards preserving our resources for the future.

Next, we are giving you a sneak preview of what the “coming soon” District building will look like!

Finally, we are providing a brief update on some of the projects pertaining to our water needs that were mentioned in our June newsletter and we are announcing a drainage improvement project in the Fox Run subdivision.

Your comments and suggestions are always welcome as we strive to improve communication with our residents. Until next time,

**Claude Humbert**
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

**Claude Humbert**
PRESIDENT

**Mark Fusca**
VICE PRESIDENT

**Frederick Sunderman**
SECRETARY

**Leslie Gourley**
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

**Paul Sterling**
DIRECTOR

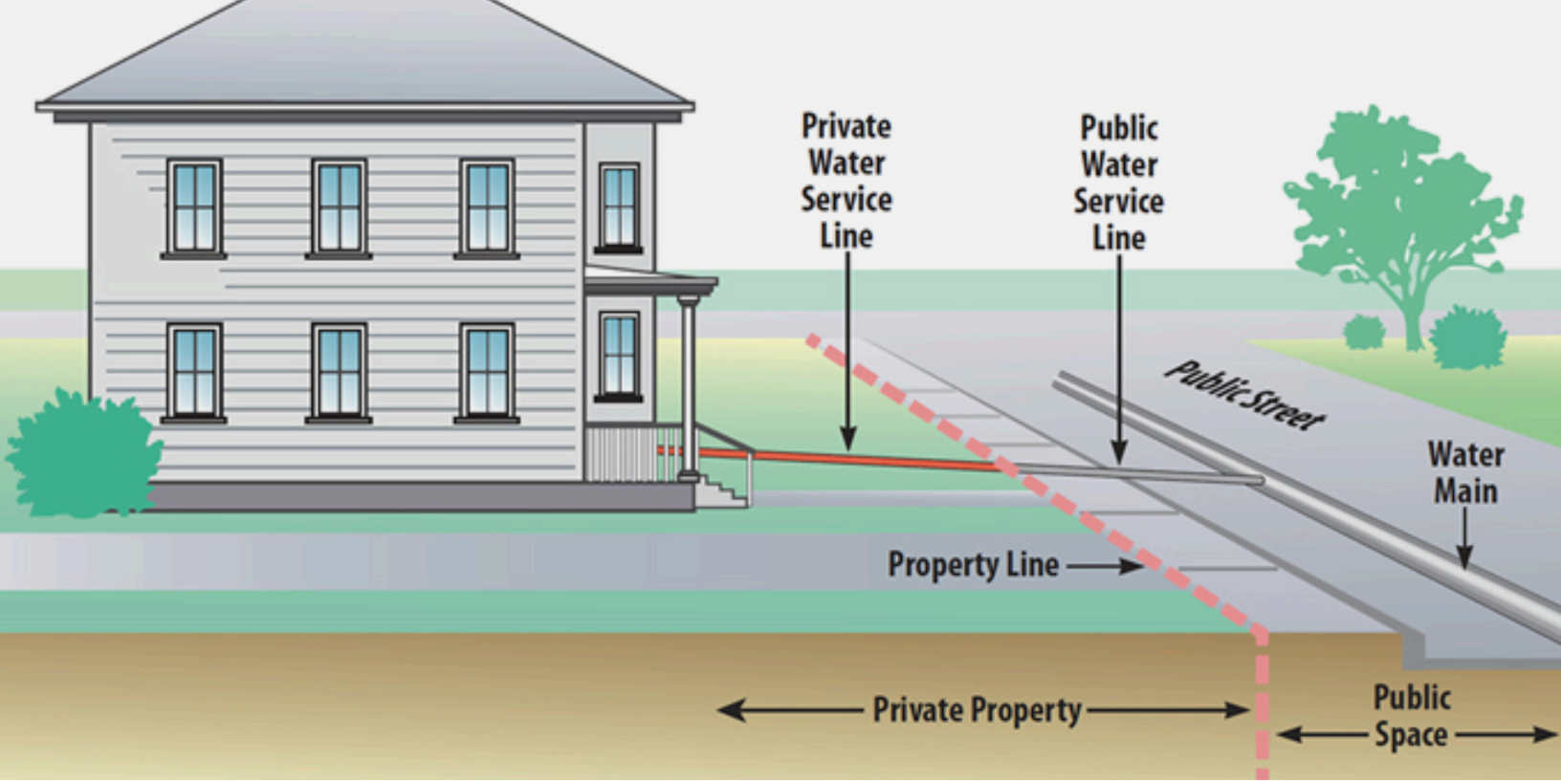
# Welcoming
# PAUL STERLING

The Spring Creek Utility District Board of Directors would like to welcome Paul Sterling to his new position as Director. Paul has lived in the District since 1992 and he has a previous history of being on the Board. Paul served on the Board of Directors from 2000 to 2016. After being off the Board of Directors for 8 years Paul decided to run again, for a Director's position and now holds a position as a new Director. Paul strives to continue to be a good steward of the District so future generations will have drinkable water within the District's boundaries.

# WATER CONSERVATION: LEAK DETECTION

**As we continue in Stage 2 of the Drought Contingency Plan, each resident needs to do their part in detecting leaks and conserving water where possible. Here are some tips to check for leaks in and around your home:**

- Residents can use their Smart Meters to monitor their water usage and set up leak alerts. To learn more about how to use Smart Meters and sign up for EyeOnWater, Click here.
- By utilizing Smart Meters and the EyeOnWater app, residents can lower their monthly water usage.
- Plan a time in the home for no usage, while monitoring the EyeOnWater app, and check to see if the app is detecting usage. If it is, you will likely have a leak.
- Residents can add dye tablets or food coloring into the tank of the toilet and wait 30 minutes to an hour and check the bowl. If there is color in the bowl, there is a leak, and this should be addressed.
- Ask a professional to come to the home and detect leaks if necessary. This can be done non-invasively and with thermal imaging to detect leaks through walls.
- Residents can check irrigation systems for leaks by walking the property while the system is on and checking for any soggy soil or flooded areas in the yard. Irrigation lines can often crack or break with changes in the temperature of the ground and damage from vehicles, so it is important to check lines near the driveway.
- Residents can check to see if certain areas of the yard are more lush, green and growing faster than others. If that is the case, there is likely excess water being used in that area
- If Residents have water softeners installed, they should be checked frequently as leaks can go unnoticed in these devices.
- If Residents own a pool, water bills may fluctuate based on usage. It is ideal to use the EyeOnWater App to monitor average usage during these times.
- Shutting off the house valve and checking to see if the meter is still ticking upward would determine if




there is a leak on the service line leading towards the residents home. This would still be the residents' responsibility as it is after the District's meter.

- Know average usage in the home. Residents should be aware of their average usage, so when leaks do occur, it is more obvious and easily fixed. Overall, this is costing the resident less money and conserving water in the process.
- Residents should be vigilant to report leaks they notice in the District. If there are any leaks in your area, you can report them on the website on the Contact Us page.

| AVERAGE WATER USE | GALLONS |
|---|---|
| Bath | 39-40 |
| Shower | 30-40 |
| Brushing Teeth | 2 |
| Laundry (per load) | 40-50 |
| Toilet Flushing | 10 |
| Dishwashing | 15 |
| Cooking | 8 |
| Lawn Watering (per minute) | 10 |

The District is taking steps to proactively alert residents of their own leaks to help prevent water waste and notify customers accordingly. Leaks are the number one reason for an abnormally high water bill! Residents may be alerted by the District via door tag if there is a suspected leak in their home or if they have higher than average water consumption.

# HOW TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR WATER BILL

**We all know that in the summer months bills can increase due to the amount of water usage increasing and the temperatures outdoors rising. Here are some tips to keep your water bill lower during the summer months:**

## Consider your Smart Meter

Smart Meters are your number one tool when it comes to saving money and conserving water. By utilizing the EyeOnWater App, Residents can monitor and track water usage and set up leak alerts. Residents can also track their irrigation usage and high usage times.

## Adjust watering times

Changing irrigation to avoid watering between the times of 10am-6pm. This is due to the sun causing higher evaporation rates during those hours. Both the plants and the soil will have more time to absorb water if they are watered within the early morning or late evening hours.

## Fixing leaks

If there is a leak found in the home, do not wait to repair it. Leaks are very costly and can get worse over time. Check toilets, sinks, appliances, and irrigation systems checked regularly for leaks and have them maintained by a professional.

## Catching rainwater

Harvesting rainwater is a fantastic way to conserve water. Large box stores offer rain barrels of many shapes and sizes to fit individual home needs. Rain barrels are relatively simple to install outdoors around the home and can be used in place of a garden hose to water plants.

## Water conservation in the home

Residents can practice in-home water conservation, such as shorter shower times, turning off the water when not in use while brushing teeth and washing dishes. Keep in mind that a 10-minute shower uses approximately 25 gallons of water. Residents can also aid in lowering water usage by only using the washer or dishwasher when there is a full load of laundry or dishes. For more information on water conservation, you can view our previous issue of the Spring Creek Quarterly Newsletter Here.

There are many ways to save money and conserve water around the home. In Texas water conservation is not just for the heat of the summer, but can be utilized year-round. Many areas of the state can benefit from smart water usage throughout the year, especially during rainy season when residents need to use less water overall, or in drought season when water is a more precious resource. Let mother nature aid in taking care of our beautiful landscapes.

# RECLAIMED WATER PROJECT

In our last Newsletter, we mentioned that the Spring Creek Utility District had decided to move forward with the design and construction of a Water Reuse Treatment Plant facility. Since then, the Board authorized the Engineer to begin the design of the first phase of the distribution system. This first phase will be combined with the storm water pipe rehabilitation project in the Fox Run subdivision.

You may have seen recently a surveying crew from the District Engineer, Cobb Fendley, performing work in both the Fox Run and Legends Run subdivisions. This means that the design phase of that combined project has started.

The first phase of the distribution system will bring reclaimed water to both the Fox Run and Legends Run HOA's irrigation systems, which are among the largest users in the District. The estimated cost for this portion of the project is slightly below $2.0M.

The design of the treatment plant and the distribution system, including the review by the relevant authorities (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, County, etc..) will take some time, and we are anticipating that requests for bids will be sent by the end of the first quarter of 2025. Currently, it is estimated that both projects (Treatment plant and first phase of the distribution system) would be completed around the middle of 2026.

## But what is "Reclaimed Water"?

Reclaimed water is treated wastewater that is safe and suitable for a purpose that would use other water resources. It is classified according to the source from which it originated. It may come from either domestic or industrial activities. In our case, we are dealing with domestic activities and our reclaimed water is treated water that is primarily derived from permitted sewage treatment plants. These plants primarily treat human waste and wastewater from activities such as washing, bathing, and food preparation. These wastes are then treated to the extent at which they are safe and suitable for reuse as reclaimed water. Reuse of untreated wastewater is prohibited.

## What can I use reclaimed water for?

Municipal reclaimed water may be substituted for many applications that would otherwise deplete current and future drinking water resources. Its use is divided into two "**Types**" that are defined according to whether people are likely to have contact with it during or after application:

## Type I

You can apply Type I reclaimed water where public contact is likely. Examples of Type I uses include watering:

- public parks
- school yards
- residential lawns
- athletic fields

You also can use Type I reclaimed water for:

- fire protection
- food-crop irrigation
- application to pastures grazed by milking animals

We may approve the use of Type I reclaimed water to supply recreational off-channel lakes or ponds and to flush toilets or urinals.

Type I reclaimed water may be used for either a Type I or Type II use.

## Type II

You can apply Type II reclaimed water in remote, restricted, controlled, or limited-access areas where human contact is unlikely.

**The Spring Creek Utility District reclaimed water plant will be designed to meet the criteria mandated by TCEQ for Type I reclaimed water.**

In addition to the quality criteria mandated for reclaimed water, the TCEQ provides design and operational requirements for the beneficial use of reclaimed water (See Chapter 210 of the Texas Administrative Code, Title 30-Environmental Quality).

The District Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has a rated capacity of 1.5MGD (Million Gallons per Day) and the actual average daily flow is 0.6MGD. The reclaimed water plant will be designed to treat the whole quantity of effluent processed by the WWTP.

It is the intention of the District to initially focus on meeting the existing irrigation needs of the "commercial" users. Also, for new developments, the District will request that the usage of reclaimed water be maximized (for example by using reclaimed water for toilet flushing in addition to irrigation).

As it will be impossible to provide enough reclaimed water to satisfy the irrigation needs of all customers, some decisions will need to be made soon regarding the distribution network:

**Do we plan to ultimately build the distribution system with the intent to provide reclaimed water to everyone in the entire District?** This would be very costly, and this would mandate that we include tees, isolating valves, individual taps, etc... on the main distribution lines to allow for future expansion/connections.

**Would residential customers be interested** in tapping in the reclaimed water network for their irrigation needs if the potential saving is limited to the reduction of the San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) and Lonestar Ground Water Conservation District (LSGCD) fees?

**Do we limit the distribution** to the largest "commercial users" and, if the reclaimed water production exceeds these needs, sell that water to neighboring Muds?

***The Board of Directors of the Spring Creek Utility District has made the decision to move forward with this large project to conserve water and preserve our precious resources for the future. This was not a financial decision based on an anticipated profit and quick return on our investment.***

***The Board is committed to finding the best solutions that will maximize the use of reclaimed water at the lowest costs for its residents and customers while benefiting most whether directly or indirectly and is welcoming any suggestions in that respect.***

# DISTRICT BUILDING

Spring Creek Utility District is moving forward with the plans to build a District building. This will allow us to bring our monthly meetings inside the District, making it easier for more residents to attend the monthly meetings and to host events. The drawings are currently about to be submitted to the County for approval and construction is to start by 2025. More information to come in the future.


# PROJECT UPDATES

**In our June newsletter, we listed a few water infrastructure projects that the Spring Creek Utility District had recently started or was considering for the future. Here is an update of the status of these projects:**

01. Booster pump addition at the SCUD Water Plant #2: The contract has been awarded and the contractor should mobilize in December.

02. SCUD water Plant #3: the land where this plant will be built has been transferred to the District and the Engineer is finalizing the plans for submission to TCEQ.

03. Increase pumpage from Legends Ranch well #3 (Jasper Aquifer): This is a joint project with MUDs 88 & 89. A 330,000 gallons storage tank with deaeration system will be added to the facility. The estimated cost of the project is $3.75M and will be split equally among the three participants. The design of the plant expansion has begun.

04. Getting Surface Water from the San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA): Even though the SJRA has agreed to allocate 200,000 gpd of surface water to SCUD, MUDs 88 & 89, the definitive agreement has not been signed yet. In the meantime, the three districts have agreed to split the costs for this project equally among them. The revised cost for the whole project (extension of the SJRA transmission pipeline and interconnection at the water plant) is estimated to be close to $5.6M.

05. Reclaimed Water Project : See separate article.

# NEW PROJECT: FOX RUN SECTION 1 DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Various analyses have been performed in the past few years, to evaluate the existing drainage conditions in some parts of the Fox Run subdivision. Based on these analyses and recent failures in some portions of the storm sewer lines, the District has decided to move forward with a first drainage improvement project. This will include the replacement of the storm sewer lines on Fox Run Blvd (from Rayford rd. to Leichester drive) and on Leichester drive to the Drainage District 6 (DD6) channel. The new storm sewer lines will also be larger in diameter (in most places) than the original lines. The estimated cost for this project is about $5.0M. As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, this project will be combined with the first phase of the reclaimed water system project.