

EAST FORK S.U.D. NEWSLETTER

December 2008

East Fork Special Utility District has undergone many new changes and improvements in the way it provides service to its customers. Since the last newsletter was issued, East Fork has provided larger water lines to many different areas of service, drive-through payment lanes at the front of the East Fork office and credit card payment availability.

This newsletter is designed to inform East Fork Special Utility District customers of changes in policies and to give them new information pertinent to compliance with its requirements. Topics include the following:

- New payment methods for your convenience
- New Rates for 2009
- Upcoming Projects to improve service
- Back Flow Prevention Device Testing for all customers with irrigation systems
- Back Flow Prevention Device Testing with RPZ valve placement for all customers with wells on their properties
- Thermal Expansion with regard to hot water heaters

PAYMENT METHODS

- For your convenience, East Fork has added drive-through lanes with pneumatic tubes, open during office hours. To save you time at the window, you may “Pay and Go” by dropping your check and payment stub in the tube, press “Send” and go!

If you want a receipt, place both sections of your bill in the tube. We will return the larger portion to you, stamped with the date of your payment.

- East Fork now accepts MasterCard, Visa or Discover cards with a 3% convenience fee. For example, if your bill is \$35.00, the convenience fee is \$1.05.
- East Fork continues to offer Automatic Bank Draft or Authorized Credit Card payment. **Automatic Bank Draft** is free to the customer. All is needed is our form and a voided check to process the request. **Authorized Credit Card** payment adds the 3% convenience fee and pays your bill on the 15th each month. All is needed is our authorization form.
- The East Fork office has a drop-slot in the front door if you are making a payment after hours. Please be sure your account number(s) or service address is written on the check or money order.

BOARD MEETINGS

Monthly board meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM in the office at 1355 Troy Road.

If you desire to speak with the Board regarding East Fork policies or any problem you have encountered with the water system, you must be put on the agenda by the Thursday prior to the Tuesday meeting.

NEW WATER RATES

1. Effective with the January 2009 meter reading for the February bill
2. Due to a 10% increase in the cost of wholesale water from North Texas Municipal Water District, East Fork SUD is raising its rates.
3. Water Rates as of January 19, 2009

Size of Meter	Minimum Charge	Former Min. Charges
5/8" x 3/4	\$18.00	\$17.00
1"	\$25.23	\$23.80
1 1/2"	\$32.44	\$30.60
2"	\$52.26	\$49.30
3"	\$198.22	\$187.00
6"	\$378.42	\$357.00
Gallon Ranges	Gallon Rate	Former Gallon Rate
0-2000 gallons	See minimum charge Add:	See minimum charge
2001-4000 gallons	\$4.09 per 1000 gallons	\$3.75
4001-6000 gallons	\$4.36 per 1000 gallons	\$4.00
6001-10,000 gallons	\$4.63 per 1000 gallons	\$4.25
10,001-20,000 gallons	\$4.91 per 1000 gallons	\$4.50
Over 20,000 gallons	\$5.18 per 1000 gallons	\$4.75

4. These new water rates reflect a 6 % increase in the Minimum Rates and a 9% increase in the Water Rates.
5. Reconnection Fees are as follows: If you pay:

During office hours

\$25.00 Trip Fee (trip out to lock meter)**
\$45.00 Reconnect Fee
 \$70.00 total Trip/Reconnect fee

After 4 PM on Disconnect Day only (Drop payment with reconnect in door slot at the East Fork office; Meter will be reconnected after 7 PM)

\$25.00 Trip Fee (trip out to lock meter)
\$60.00 Reconnect Fee (trip out to reconnect meter)
 \$85.00 total Trip/Reconnect fee after 4 PM on cutoff day

**If a check, cash or money order is presented to the East Fork personnel at your property before he/she locks the meter, you will only be charged a \$25.00 Trip Fee.

NEW REQUIREMENTS:

BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY DEVICE TESTING for irrigation systems

All customers with an irrigation system are required to have a Backflow Prevention Assembly Device. Backflow Prevention Assembly Devices are part of a standard installation of any irrigation water system and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality mandates that a certified tester must test it upon installation. The form for this certification is available at East Fork SUD's office.

In addition, an annual test report must be sent to the District for its records. A list of local testers is available in our office.

BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY DEVICE TESTING for wells

All wells placed on properties within East Fork SUD's service area are required to have an RPZ backflow prevention assembly device installed at the meter by a certified Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester (BPAT) and an annual backflow prevention assembly test report to be sent to the District for its records. A list of local tester is available in our office.

FOR YOUR SAFETY: THERMAL EXPANSION & CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL:

Check valves are routinely installed on all new services. The check valves create a closed system for the customer, which helps to ensure the health and safety of all customers from possible cross connection contamination. A thermal expansion tank for your hot water heater is highly recommended for your safety!

WHY DO I NEED A THERMAL EXPANSION TANK FOR MY HOT WATER HEATER?

When water is heated, it expands. In a 40-gallon water heater, it expands to about 40.53 gallons. This thermal expansion has to go somewhere or the tank could rupture and explode! Before cross-connection control came into effect, this expansion flowed back into the Water District's waterlines during a water break. And this was good. The bad thing about allowing this heated water (and the rest of your household water) to flow back into the District's waterlines is that if you left your garden hose immersed in the dog water bowl, Doggie's water and germs all went back into the District's waterlines to be distributed back to you and your neighbors. Or, it could be the pesticides you used through a spray attachment that went back into the waterlines during a water break.

This is why the dual check valves are installed on new services now, which creates this closed system, which could cause a water heater to explode if there is no outlet for the expanded water to go. Thermal expansion tanks provide a safe place for the expanded water to go. These may be purchased at home improvement centers for about \$34.00 for the DET-5 model and \$56.00 for the DET-12 model.

SAFETY TIPS:

- Buy a hand-held sprayer that does not hook up to the water hose.
- Don't leave the end of the water hose in the dog bowl, fertilizer truck, the children's swimming pool, or any other container you are filling up with water.
- When you buy a new water heater, ask questions concerning the temperature and pressure valves (relief valves) that are built in to release the thermal expansion.
- Operate the water heater well below the emergency setting of a relief valve.
- If your relief valve on your water heater is not operating properly, don't plug the hole! Replace the valve as soon as possible.
- If your current water heater does not allow for thermal expansion, purchase the above-mentioned Thermal Expansion Tank.

LEAKS:

East Fork SUD has recently upgraded its meter-reading software. It now has the capability of determining possible leaks OR water left on for a continual period of more than 24 hours. If you receive a courtesy letter OR phone call regarding this possibility, please take action to curb any leaks or water left on. Check your hoses, faucets and toilets to determine if any are running, even at a very slow rate. Once the source of the continual water flow is detected, please correct the problem as soon as possible.

Fixing all leaks promptly can save you money and conserve our water supply!

HOW TO CHECK FOR A WATER LEAK

Do not turn off valve in your meter box!

Turn off all water inside and outside of the house, including washer, icemakers, dishwasher, all faucets and automatic irrigation system.

- First, locate your meter box. It is generally in the front of your home in a direct line with the main outside faucet. Remove top lid with a meter "key" (available at home improvement centers).
- Observe to see if the red sweep hand is moving. If it is, you have a leak and water is going through the meter. If it is NOT moving, note the position of the hands, wait 15 minutes and check again. If it has moved, you have a slow leak.
- To isolate the leak, turn the water off at your cut-off valve near the house. If the red sweep hand is still moving, the leak is between the meter and your cut-off valve (service line). If the red sweep hand stops, the leak is located in the house.
- To check for a leak in the house, you need to isolate different fixtures in the home. Turn off toilets, hot water heater, basins, washer, and dishwasher. Recheck the meter to see if it is still running. If it is, it is possible the leak is under the house.
- **Check toilets** for leaks by placing several drops of red, green or blue food coloring (or colored Kool-Aid) in the back tank. If you have cleaning tablets there, remove it and flush to clear.
- Do not flush the toilet after placing food coloring in for an hour or more. If the color shows up in the toilet bowl, the flapper seals need to be replaced.

- **Check your irrigation system** if you have one. If you have leaks in your system, they may not be noticeable unless your system is running. Turn your controller on manually and walk your property, looking for broken sprinkler heads, missing emitters (which will produce small stream of water) or break in irrigation, piping or tubing.

If you suspect a leak, the recommended thing to do is to contact a plumber. If you feel this is not necessary and can do the work yourself, please make the repair as soon as possible.

UPCOMING EAST FORK PROJECTS:

1. The District’s engineer is preparing plans to replace the 8-inch line beside Wells Road from Pleasant Valley to Whiteley Road and from Whiteley Road to Vinson Road. Plans call for the new 12-inch line to include fire hydrants every 1,000 feet. (Planned for Spring 2009)
2. Replacement of the 8-inch line along Pleasant Valley Road from Sachse Road to Elm Grove Road is planned for early 2009.

All project dates are estimated. Projects to replace or add lines and hydrants may be contingent on the District acquiring notarized easements from property owners who will benefit from the improvements. Priority will be given to projects for which the District has acquired necessary easements.

East Fork is aware that installing and replacing water lines may be inconvenient for affected property owners, but this is only temporary and the benefits will outweigh the inconvenience in the long run. East Fork will work with affected customers to prevent property damage during installation and to repair property after improvements are installed. We encourage customers to call or come by the office to discuss any easement or line installation concerns related to their property and we will make every reasonable effort to resolve those concerns.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG! If you plan to do some digging for sprinklers, gardens, driveways, plantings, trenching or other:

It is the law to call 1-800-DIG TESS (1-800-344-8377) beforehand. This will ensure that no utility line will be cut while you are digging. This includes gas, telephone, cable and electric. Call East Fork S.U.D. directly for water line locates. A two-day notice is required. Mark the area you wish to dig with a stake and/or white flags. You may also request line locates online by going into www.digtess.org.

OFFICE:	972-442-7572
FAX:	972-442-9215
OFFICE HOURS:	MONDAY THRU FRIDAY, 8 am to 4 pm
EMERGENCY AFTER HOURS:	(no normal business requests) 972-442-7572