



# City of Hitchcock

Newsletter January 2023

## THE FACTS ABOUT FATS, OILS, AND GREASE (FOG)

Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) represent one of the largest problems for sewer utilities and their customers. Blockages due to coagulated grease in pipes are thought to be the leading cause of sanitary sewer overflows. Sanitary sewer overflows are backups in either the public sewer or residential plumbing. Although often unintentional, the introduction of FOG into the sewer system poses a costly risk to household plumbing and public sewer systems.

While garbage disposals can be useful, the grinding of meat and dairy products or other cooked foods allows grease to be introduced into the sewer system. However, FOG will accumulate and eventually form blockages, often causing sanitary sewer overflows.

### KEEP FOG OUT OF PIPES

- Never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets or garbage disposals.
- Pour grease and oil into a covered disposable container and put into trash.
- Soak up remaining FOG with paper towels, and dispose of with your trash.
- Before washing pans or dishes, scrape fatty food scraps into the trash—not into the sink or garbage disposal.

### DON'T DUMP fats, oils, and grease down the drain! Instead, just...

After cooking, let fats, oils and grease cool in the pan. Pour the cooled fats, oils, and grease into a can. Cover the can with your grease lid, and store it in the freezer. When the can is full, remove the lid and put the can into the trash on your regular trash collection day. Save the lid for the next time you need to dispose fats, oils, and grease from your household.

### DON'T POUR FOG DOWN THE DRAIN!

When FOG cool inside pipes, they can cause clogs that may lead to backups in either your home's pipes or the public sewer system.

Help limit grease build-up by properly disposing of FOG.

Put baskets or strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, then empty the drain basket or strainer into the trash.

### THE ORIGINS OF FOG

Most household grease is a byproduct of cooking and is usually found in:

- Cooking oil
- Sauces
- Butter and margarine
- Lard
- Food scraps
- Dairy products



### MANAGING FOG

#### Don'ts:

- Do not pour residue directly into the drain.
- Do not dispose of food waste into the garbage disposal.
- Do not pour waste oil down the drain.

#### Do's:

- Wipe pots, pans, and work areas prior to washing.
- Dispose of food waste into trash
- Collect waste oil and store for recycling.

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<b>DATES TO REMEMBER</b>	
1/16/2023 City Offices will be closed for the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	
1/17/2023 Planning and Zoning Commission Workshop at 6:00 p.m.	
1/23/2023 City Council Meeting at 6:00 p.m.	

## **BACKFLOW PREVENTER**

What Is a Backflow Preventer? A backflow preventer is a device that attaches to water supply pipes and keeps the water flowing in one direction only. The preventer can also consist of a combination of valves that connect to sewage pipes and sprinkler systems.

Why do you need a Backflow Prevention device? The goal of any water supply is for the water to flow only in one direction. For example, you want the water supply in your home to only flow into your home. You wouldn't want it to flow backward, as that would be counterintuitive. Not only would you not get the water that you're paying for, but it will contaminate your supply if it flows back in. That's what backflow is, and it can be perilous. Water should only flow one way in pipes. That's the goal, but it doesn't always work that way. There are many reasons why backflow can occur.

Common reasons include:

- A break in the water line
- When a fire hydrant opens up for use
- Changes in pressure in your pipes
- Puddles from sprinkler systems
- Cars being washed
- Dry-cleaning services

With the implementation of our new Backflow Prevention & Cross Connection ordinance, our goal is to have all backflows in the City of Hitchcock documented and compliant. The City has never had a Backflow Prevention and Cross Connection program. However, this is a T.C.E.Q. mandated program for every water utility for the purpose of the overall safety and protection of the city's water system. Every source of contamination or possible contamination from any contaminant which originates from, or is located at, a residential or commercial establishment, and said source of contamination or possible contamination is connected to any public potable water supply or provides potable water to the public shall be equipped with the protection required under the provisions of all articles of this new ordinance. The City has also employed BSI Online for the management of the Backflow Prevention and Cross Connection program. BSI will manage all new test reports, test companies, tester credentials and other miscellaneous task associated with the Backflow prevention program. If you are a homeowner or a business owner that houses a backflow prevention device, please adhere to the new ordinance and inspection requirements. Thank you in advance in partnering with us to ensure a better Hitchcock.

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## **NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS REGARDING EXTREME WEATHER EMERGENCY**

The Public Utility Commission's rule in Title 16, Chapter 24 Texas Admin. Code § 24.173(d) prohibits the City of Hitchcock (the "City") from imposing a late fee or from disconnecting your retail water or sewer service for nonpayment of bills that are due during an extreme weather emergency until after the emergency is over.

An extreme weather emergency is defined as a period beginning when the previous day's highest temperature in your area did not exceed 28 degrees Fahrenheit, and the temperature is predicted to remain at or below that level for the next 24 hours according to the nearest National Weather Service reports for your area. For the purposes of these requirements, an extreme weather emergency is over on the second business day the temperature exceed 28 degrees Fahrenheit.

The City is required to offer a payment schedule to an affected customer that timely requests a payment schedule. If you are affected by an extreme weather emergency, you may request a payment schedule for unpaid bills that are due during the extreme weather emergency.

For affected customers that timely request a payment schedule, the City is prohibited from disconnecting service for nonpayment of bills that are due during an extreme weather emergency. However, once a payment schedule is offered, disconnections may resume if you (1) decline to timely accept the payment schedule, or (2) violate the terms of the payment schedule.

If you have a bill from the City due during an extreme weather emergency, then you qualify to request a payment schedule. Please contact the City's office at: 7423 Highway 6, Hitchcock, TX 77563 or by phone at 409-986-5591.

## **AVISO AL CLIENTE SOBRE EMERGENCIA POR CONDICIONES DEL TIEMPO EXTREMAS**

La regla de la Comisión de Servicios Públicos en el Título 16, Capítulo 24, del Código Administrativo de Texas § 24.173(d) prohíbe a ciudad de Hitchcock (La "ciudad") imponer un cargo por mora o desconectar su servicio minorista de agua o alcantarillado por falta de pago de las facturas adeudadas durante una emergencia por condiciones del tiempo extremas hasta después de que la emergencia haya terminado.

Para los clientes afectados que soliciten oportunamente un programa de pago, La ciudad tiene prohibido desconectar el servicio por falta de pago de las facturas adeudadas durante una emergencia por condiciones del tiempo extremas. Sin embargo, una vez que se ofrece un programa de pago, las desconexiones pueden reanudarse si usted (1) se niega a aceptar oportunamente el programa de pago, o (2) viola los términos del programa de pago.

Si tiene una factura de ciudad adeudada durante una emergencia por condiciones del tiempo extremas, entonces tiene derecho a solicitar un programa de pago. Póngase en contacto con nuestra oficina en 7423 Hwy 6, Hitchcock, TX 77563 or by phone at (409)986-5591.

## 2023 GENERAL ELECTION IMPORTANT DATES:

Upcoming General Election for Mayor, Council Member for District 1 and District 2.

First Day to file applications for place on the ballot is January 18, 2023 through February 17, 2023 by close of business day (5:00 p.m.).

April 6, 2023 is the last day to register to vote in this election cycle.

Early Voting will be April 24-28, 2023 and May 1-2, 2023.

**Election Day is May 6, 2023.**

Qualifications for a position are shown on the city website at:  
[https://www.cityofhitchcock.org/departments/city\\_secretary/elections\\_information.php](https://www.cityofhitchcock.org/departments/city_secretary/elections_information.php)

Candidate packets will be available by January 18th in the City Secretary's office and on the City Website.

## BE PART OF THE TRADITION, BE PART OF THE EXCITEMENT, BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY, BE A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER



Accepting applications for volunteers  
Min 17 years of age with parental consent.  
All training is paid by department.  
Fun, and family friendly environment.  
Call or text for more info or pick up application every  
Wednesday 7pm at the station  
Hitchcock Volunteer Fire Department INC.  
7005 2<sup>nd</sup> street  
409-986-7131

## USE YOUR WATER METER TO FIND LEAKS

You know that your water meter tells you how much water you're using each month. But did you know the meter can also help you detect leaks in your water system?

It's a handy tool that could save you money and conserve water during this time of drought.

Most meters are located underground beneath a round or oval lid. The most common location is between a front outdoor faucet and the street.

Your water meter has a glass face with a sweep hand and a series of numbers similar to a car's odometer. When the sweep hand makes one complete rotation, the last number in the series turns over. Most meters also have a fine flow indicator – usually a small triangle or diamond on the face of the meter – that measures the lower volumes of water that are common with leaks. When water is not being used, nothing on the meter should be moving.

To check for leaks:

- Turn off all inside and outside water faucets.
- Watch the meter for 10 minutes. If the fine flow indicator moves clockwise, then leaks exist on your property and need to be located.

In some cases, the fine flow indicator may move back and forth slightly as water pressure in the street fluctuates. Check the main meter reading numbers, and come back an hour later after you know no water has been used. If there is a higher reading, there is a leak.

## FOLLOW US ON

### FACEBOOK



We are excited to announce that the City of Hitchcock has created a Facebook Page. Follow us for important information regarding your community. Our page is for informational purposes only. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact the City Hall at (409)986-5591 or visit our website at

[www.cityofhitchcock.org](http://www.cityofhitchcock.org).

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Serving on a City board or Commission is an excellent way to serve your community. The City is currently accepting applications for the Parks and Recreation Board, Building Standards Commission, Board of Adjustments and the Disaster Assessment Team.

If you are interested in serving on one of these, please complete the on-line application at and return to the City Hall or email to the City Secretary at

[rsorrell@cityofhitchcock.org](mailto:rsorrell@cityofhitchcock.org).

You may attach your resume and any additional material you would like considered with your application.

[https://cms9files.revize.com/hitchcocktx/document\\_center/City%](https://cms9files.revize.com/hitchcocktx/document_center/City%20)

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## WAYS TO PAY YOUR UTILITY BILL

Online at

[www.cityofhitchcock.org](http://www.cityofhitchcock.org)

By Phone at (833) 282-0826

In Person at the City Hall at

7423 Hwy. 6

Drop Box located in the parking lot of City Hall

Cash, Check, Money Order, Credit Card

## 10 Things You Can do to Prevent Water Contamination

1. **Recycle your used motor oil and other auto fluids.**
2. **Fix oil, radiator and transmission leaks in your car.**
3. **Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in the toilet or in the trash.**
4. **Wash your car in the grass or at a car wash that utilizes a water reclamation system.**
5. **Dispose of hazardous home chemicals, unused medications and oil based paint products at your local hazardous waste site.**
6. **Use pesticides and other lawn chemicals sparingly**
7. **Pick up and properly dispose of leaves and grass clippings.**
8. **Install a rain garden, use a rain barrel and reduce impervious surfaces around your home.**
9. **Plant trees and plants that serve as natural filters.**
10. **Always use a trash can to dispose of waste and recycle reusable materials.**

**Stormwater runoff carries pollutants into your waterways.**



### HOW TO CONTACT US

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HENRY DEBORD	BUILDING INSPECTOR	inspector@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 739-0822
RAQUEL SAUCEDO	UTILITY BILLING SPECIALIST	utilitybill@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 986-5591
LISA CLEMENTS	PERMIT CLERK	lclements@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 986-5591
EDUARDO GONZALEZ	STREET SUPERINTENDENT	egonzalez@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 986-5591
LEROY THOMAS	PUBLIC WORKS OPERATION MANAGER	lthomas@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 761-0737
MIGUEL DELGADO	WWTP OPERATOR	mdelgado@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 986-5591
ANIMAL CONTROL			(409) 948-2485
MOSQUITO CONTROL			(800) 842-5622
GARBAGE COLLECTION	AMERIWASTE	customerservice@ameriwaste.net	(281) 331-8400
AFTER HOUR WATER/ SEWER/WWTP			(409) 795-7595
NON EMERGENCY POLICE	NON EMERGENCY POLICE		(409) 986-5559
STREET LIGHT OUTAGES			(800) 332-7143
TX DOT DITCH MAINTENANCE FM 2004, HWY 6, and FM 519 (Main St.).			(409) 978-2551