



City of Hitchcock

Newsletter May 2020

ILLEGAL DUMPING IS A CRIME

Dumping trash in prohibited areas can cause public health and safety concerns. Broken glass, exposed metal and other dangerous materials can hurt children playing around illegally dumped debris. Rats, snakes, mosquitoes and other pests are attracted to and populate within dumped garbage. This debris washes into storm drains during rain, and eventually ends up in our neighborhood creeks.

Illegal dumpsites and roadside litter create a negative image of our community. Illegal dumping also creates more illegal dumping – people are much more likely to dump on property where trash already exists.

Stopping illegal dumping makes good environmental sense and good economic sense. You can help solve the problem by working with the City of Hitchcock to create a cleaner, healthier, and safer community.

Common Illegal Dumping Methods

- Throwing litter out of a car, truck or boat.
- Dumping household trash, construction debris or yard waste on land that is not a legal landfill.
- Dumping household trash in someone’s dumpster without authorization.
- Hauling trash for profit and dumping it on land that is not a legal landfill.
- Letting someone else dump waste on your property, whether they pay you or not.
- Pouring used motor oil or restaurant grease into storm drains or down manhole covers
- Disposing of old cars by rolling them into a river.

Texas Litter Abatement Act / Fines for Illegal Dumping

Class C Misdemeanor: If the amount dumped weighs 5 lbs or less or has a volume of 5 gallons or less, the maximum penalty is: A fine not to exceed \$500

Class B Misdemeanor: If the amount dumped weighs more than 5 lbs but less than 500 pounds or has a volume of more than 5 gallons but less than 100 cubic feet, the maximum penalty is:

A fine not to exceed \$2,000; or Confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days; or Both fine and confinement

Class A Misdemeanor: (1) If the amount dumped weighs 500 lbs or more, but less than 1,000 pounds, or has a volume of 100 cubic feet or more, but less than 200 cubic feet; or (2) if it was disposed for a commercial purpose and weighs more than five pounds but less than 200 pounds or has a volume of more than 5 gallons but less than 200 cubic feet, the maximum penalty is:

A fine not to exceed \$4,000; or Confinement in jail for a term not to exceed one year; or Both fine and confinement

State Jail Felony: (1) If the amount dumped weighs 1,000 lbs or more or has a volume of 200 cubic feet or more; or (2) if it was disposed for a commercial purpose and weighs 200 pounds or more, or has a volume of 200 cubic feet or more, or is contained in a closed barrel or drum, the maximum penalty is:

Confinement in a state jail for not more than two years, but not less than 180 days

Additionally, an individual may also be fined an amount not to exceed \$10,000.

To report illegal dumping call the Hitchcock Police Department at (409)986-5559.

NO WAKE ZONES, NO SKIING, AND POSTED SPEED LIMITS

City Ordinance Sec. 94.37 states that no person may operate a motorboat as to create a hazardous wake or wash.

Violation of this ordinance is punishable as a Class C misdemeanor.

Do not buzz docks, boat ramps or any shore objects. STAY ALERT, LOOK on all sides, and keep a safe distance from other boats. Wear your cutoff lanyard and life vest at all times.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

5/18/2020 - City Commission Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

5/25/2020 - City Hall will be closed in observance of Memorial Day.



OPEN TEXAS FAST FACTS

STEPS FOR EMPLOYERS

In addition to the Health Guidelines, these are minimum standards.

- Screen employees before coming into the business daily.
- Train all employees on appropriate cleaning etiquette.
- Regularly and frequently clean and disinfect any regularly touched surfaces.
- Disinfect any items that come into contact with customers.
- Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar readily available.
- Place readily visible signage to remind everyone of best hygiene practices.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Send home any employee who has any of the following new or worsening symptoms:

- Cough
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- Shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100 °F
- Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed positive with COVID-19.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

WHEN POSSIBLE, STAY HOME



PHASE 1 BUSINESSES

Businesses listed in Phase 1 are allowed to reopen when GA-18 expires after April 30, 2020.

- Libraries and museums
- Malls
- Movie theaters
- Restaurants
- Retail

Must limit their capacity to 25% of their listed occupancy, interactive displays and food courts remain closed.

Outdoor sports

No more than four participants are playing together at one time, keeping social distancing

Local government

Operations, including county and municipal government relating to permitting, recordation and document-filing services.

REINTRODUCTION TO WORKPLACE OF AN ILL EMPLOYEE

Do not allow employees with the new or worsening signs or symptoms listed, and/or a positive COVID-19 test return to work until:

At least **3 days** since recovery (no fever without the use of fever reducing medicine); respiratory symptoms **improve**; and at least **7 days** from symptom onset



If an employee has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to work before completing self-isolation a medical professional's note with an alternate diagnosis **is required**.

HITCHCOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Hitchcock EDC has a new sign at their office. Thanks to the generosity of ACU of Texas and Creative & CAASCO Signs the installation was completed on April 28. It is important to the traffic passing by on FM 2004 to know that Hitchcock is open for business. The sign has a message board that will be used to promote events in the community. According to HEDC board president Jack Click this is the first of what we hope to be many moves by HEDC to launch new initiatives in Hitchcock to grow and promote the city. If you or your firm have an event to promote contact interim director Fred Welch at HEDC@cityofhitchcock.org or phone 409-502-7331



MAKE EVERY DROP COUNT

Right this moment hundreds of gallons of water could be leaking in or around your home. You may not hear water running or see any puddles, but that doesn't mean it's not happening.

The clear evidence: an unusually high water bill.

In some cases, the answer is simple: You've started watering more. Even hand watering can increase your bill, especially if you lose track of time while you're doing it. But sometimes the reason your bill has skyrocketed is a complete mystery. The two most common culprits of a high water bill are leaky toilets and misbehaving irrigation systems. Any device in your home that automates anything related to water is at risk of leaking — often without leaving any easy to find clues.

Swimming pools, water softeners — anything with pumps and valves that move water could malfunction. These culprits could be silent, invisible problems. A device that tops off the water in your pool automatically is the number one reason for catastrophic water bills.

According to a national study, 13 percent of the water used in homes is lost to preventable leaks — leaks people didn't know they had.

FLOOD SAFETY

1. Do not walk through flowing water.
Drowning is the No. 1 cause of flood related deaths, mostly during times of rapidly rising water. Currents are deceptive; six inches of moving water can sweep you off your feet.
2. Do not drive through a flooded area.
More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Vehicles also push water into homes and cause additional property damage. Do not drive around road barriers. "Turn around, don't drown!"
3. Stay away from power lines and electrical wires.
The No. 2 cause of flood deaths after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the power company. Have your electricity turned off by the power company.
4. Evacuate if needed:
If emergency officials tell you to evacuate or leave your home, go immediately to a safe shelter, hotel or relative's house.
5. Look before you step.
After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be quite slippery. Fence planks with nails can wash into your yard, driveway, or city street.

IMPORTANT USEFUL WEBSITES

www.fema.gov
www.usgs.gov
www.floods.org
www.tfma.org
www.weather.gov
www.floodsmart.gov



YOUR PETS AND WILDLIFE

Wildlife and pet interaction is discouraged to prevent health and safety concerns. State laws and City ordinances in place to ensure the safety of your pets include:

Do NOT let pets roam unrestrained. Small pets can easily become prey to larger wild mammals and all pets may become injured by wildlife during interactions such as when animals are startled and react defensively.

Tagging and micro-chipping pets. Lost animals found without collars but micro-chipped can more easily be returned to owners.

Registering your pet with the Galveston County Health District. For more information on how to register your pet, call the Galveston County Health District Monday through Friday at (409)948-2485.

Do vaccinate. Vaccinations are critical in avoiding unnecessary and expensive medical care for your pet and their early demise. For more specific information on required and optional vaccinations to protect your pet, contact your veterinarian.

United States Census 2020

Do your part to ensure a complete count by responding right away. You should have received a letter in the mail from the Census Bureau inviting you to respond to the census in one of three easy ways: online, by phone or by mail. Make sure you are counted by filling out your Census online at www.census.gov or sending your questionnaire through the mail.

WHEN TO DIAL 911 AND WHEN TO USE THE NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER

At some point in your day to day life, you will most likely find the need to call for Police, Fire or EMS assistance. Any situation where you feel the need to call for assistance is important, but are you utilizing the correct number?

911 is the universal number for reaching emergency assistance for the area that you are in. Because it is quick and easy to remember; often times it is used incorrectly. 911 should only be used when an immediate emergency response is needed. Examples of this include but are not limited to:

- Any medical emergency (injury accident, heart attack, seizure, stroke, etc.)
- To report a fire (residential, commercial, wild/brush fire)
- To report gas leaks
- To report any in progress crimes (DWI drivers, prowlers, burglaries, thefts, assaults, bomb threats, etc.)
- To report serious crimes that are in progress or have just occurred (sexual assaults, robbery, shootings, etc.)

If at any time you are not sure if your situation is an emergency or non-emergency, dial 911.

If the above examples do not apply to your current situation, please use the non-emergency number (409)986-5559. If you live in the City of Hitchcock; this is the number you would call to reach the on-duty dispatcher. Please save this number in your cell phone so it is easily accessible. Below are examples of non-emergency calls:

- Reporting a crime that is not in progress (criminal mischief, theft, fraud, etc.) Most of the time these crimes occurred several hours to days prior to being discovered.
- Reporting nuisance issues (traffic issues, parking violations, barking dog, loud music, City Ordinance Violations, etc.)
- Reporting suspicious circumstances (suspicious or out of place vehicles, people, etc.)

Remember; do not let a non-emergency call compete with real life or death emergencies.

Emergency number: 911

Non-Emergency number:
(409)986-5559

SIGN ORDINANCE

Temporary signs can lead to clutter and become a public nuisance. One garage sale or advertisement sign may not seem like an issue, but can develop into a problem. Our city has ordinances to keep roads and Highway 6 from becoming an eyesore.



City Ordinance Sec. 150.77.

It shall be unlawful for any person to do any of the following acts:

- (A) To post, paint, or otherwise exhibit any billboard, advertisement, poster, bill, or other notice or sign, on any property not owned or controlled by him, without the permission of the person owning or controlling the property.
- (B) To tear down, remove, or otherwise interfere with any billboard, notice, sign, advertisement, bill, or poster erected by another, unless the same was placed or maintained on the property of the person removing the same, without permission previously given.
- (C) To place or cause to be placed anywhere in the city any poster, placard, handbill, or advertising material on any car, or in any location, in such a manner that the same may reasonably be expected to be blown about by the wind.
- (D) To erect, maintain, or paint any sign, billboard, or other outdoor advertising upon a tree, rock, or other natural feature within the city right-of-way.
- (E) To erect within the city limits any sign, billboard, or other advertising covered by an ordinance without having obtained a permit.
- (F) To erect a sign with a flashing, blinking, or traveling lights which shall have light bulbs which exceed 60 watts each.
- (G) To construct a lighted sign in such a manner that intensive or excessive light or glare projects upon a residence.
- (H) To erect a sign over any public right-of-way, except as provided in § 150.79.
- (I) To place or erect any billboard or sign in such a manner as to obstruct or interfere with the view of a driver of a motor vehicle or any other vehicle, of approaching, merging or intersecting traffic.

HOW TO CONTACT US

NAME	TITLE	E-MAIL	PHONE NUMBER
RANDY STRICKLIND	MAYOR	rstricklind@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)927-0058
MARY COMBS DEMBY	CITY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1	district1@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)986-7171
CHRIS ARMACOST	CITY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 2	district2@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)519-9646
Wayne Newton	CITY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 3	district3@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)770-3297
MARK COOK	CITY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 4	district4@cityofhitchcock.org	(281)782-7656
MARIE GELLES	CITY ADMINISTRATOR	mgelles@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)986-5591
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NICHOLLE ANDRUS	CITY SECRETARY	nandrus@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)986-5591
CANDIE SERNA	CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	cserna@hitchcockpd.com	(409)986-5559
D. JOE WOOD	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST	djwood@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)316-7234
FRED WELCH	INTERIM EXEC. DIRECTOR OF HEDC	hedc@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)502-7331
HENRY DEBORD	BUILDING INSPECTOR	inspector@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 739-0822
JANIE AVILA	PERMIT CLERK	javila@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 986-5591
RUTH ANN SORRELL	MUNICIPAL COURT CLERK/ASSISTANT CITY SEC.	rsorrell@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)986-9702
ANDY JENKINS	STREET SUPERVISOR	anthonyjenkins47@icloud.com	(409)986-5591
LEROY THOMAS	WATER/WASTEWATER SUPERINTENDENT	lthomas@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)761-0737
BILL GARVIN	WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR	billgarvin@yahoo.com	(409)986-5591
ANIMAL CONTROL			(409) 948-2485
MOSQUITO CONTROL			(281) 337-4289
GARBAGE COLLECTION	AMERIWASTE		(281) 331-8400
AFTER HOUR WATER/ SEWER			(409)986-5559
AFTER HOUR WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT / LIFT STATION			(409)986-5559
NON EMERGENCY POLICE			(409)986-5559