



# City of Hitchcock

Newsletter November 2020

## WINTER AVERAGING UNDERWAY

Your water meter measures your monthly water use, but there is no meter on your wastewater line. Winter averaging provides a measure that is generally reflective of the amount of water that goes directly into the sanitary sewer system from your property. Outdoor watering (such as irrigation, car washing and recreational use) does not go directly into the sanitary sewer system so it is important to isolate it and not include that wastewater on your invoice. Usually outdoor watering is minimal during the winter months; therefore, it is easier to estimate the actual amount of water that goes directly into the sanitary sewer system versus being used for outdoor watering during the winter months.

The average of your next four (4) water bills will determine your utility bill for the next year.

The City will take an average from your next 4 water utility bills. Your utility bill will be based upon that average until a new average is calculated next year. Residents will not notice a change in their utility bill until March. This is based on the average consumption during November, December, January, and February. The month with the highest volume is dropped and the remaining months are averaged.

## UTILITY RATES

NEW RATES EFFECTIVE: OCTOBER 2020 CONSUMPTION

WATER BASE FEE:	Water	BASE FEE
	Meter size:	Base fee is determined by meter size.
	5/8"	\$19.00
	3/4"	\$20.90
	1"	\$26.60
	1.5"	\$34.20
	2"	\$55.10
	3"	\$209.00
	4"	\$266.00
	6"	\$399.00

WATER VOLUMETRIC CHARGE:	Water	Rate
	<u>Volumetric Rate, Non-Residential</u>	
		\$5.69
	<u>Volumetric Rate, Residential</u>	
	0-2,000	\$4.07
	2,000-5,000	\$4.28
	5,000-10,000	\$4.92
	10,000-20,000	\$7.13
	20,000-50,000	\$10.34
	ABOVE 50,000	\$15.00

WASTEWATER VOLUMETRIC CHARGE:	Wastewater	2020
	Base Fee, per month	
		\$19.00
	Volumetric Fee, per thousand gallons	
		\$4.10

The new utility rates went into effect for the October billing cycle and is reflected in the November utility bill.

## WINTER E-CYCLING EVENT

After the holidays the City of Hitchcock will host an E-cycling Event on, Saturday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 9am-1pm at The City Barn located at 8401 Schiro Road Hitchcock, Texas

Hitchcock residents are invited to drop off selected electronic items free of cost. You will be required to provide a Texas Identification Card and current utility bill to participate.

Some accepted items will be: computers, computer hardware, cell phones, TV's (CRT up to 36" & flat panel up to 55"), VCRs, and DVD players.

For more information contact Natalie Wilson at (409) 795-1517 or by email at [nwilson@hitchcockpd.com](mailto:nwilson@hitchcockpd.com)

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## ELECTION RESULTS

**DISTRICT 1 COUNCIL MEMBER:**  
Mary Combs Demby

**DISTRICT 3 COUNCIL MEMBER:**  
Wayne Newton

**DISTRICT 4 COUNCIL MEMBER:**  
Andre Perkins

**CITY CHARTER PROPOSITIONS A-E**  
All Passed

Results based on unofficial tabulation

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### DATES TO REMEMBER

11/16/2020 City Commission Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

11/26/2020 & 11/27/2020  
City Hall will be closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday

12/24/2020 & 12/25/2020  
City Hall will be closed for the Christmas Holiday



## 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 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.



## HOLIDAY PET SAFETY

Now that the holidays are on the way, people will be spending more time indoors entertaining which could mean trouble for those who want to include their pets in the merrymaking. Here are some simple tips to keep pets and their people safe during this holiday season.

- Holiday treats of any sort should be kept away from your pet. Chocolate and raisins can be toxic to many animals.
- Do not give your pet table scraps as this may lead to intestinal issues such as diarrhea.
- Poultry bones, including turkey, are a choking hazard.
- Create a safe and comfortable place for your pet to relax away from party guests and noise.
- Pay attention to your pet. Pets are often ignored in the rush and excitement of the season.
- If traveling with your pet, make sure to bring all your pet's supplies.



## WHAT IS STORMWATER RUNOFF?

During rain events, impervious surfaces such as rooftops, driveways, parking lots, and roads, prevent water from being absorbed into the ground. When a rainfall event occurs, the portion of water that is not absorbed into the ground becomes what is known as “stormwater runoff”. All properties contribute to stormwater runoff and property owners are responsible for storm drainage flowing through their property.

This flowing water picks up and carries a wide variety of pollutants and debris – such as soil, fertilizers, pesticides, pet waste, trash and motor oil – which then flow into storm drains or channels and eventually empty into the waterways used for recreation and drinking water. Unlike typical household wastewater (from sinks, toilets and showers) stormwater is not filtered and treated at a wastewater treatment plant. This means that the everyday pollutants carried by stormwater runoff have a direct impact on our local water quality.

Property owners are responsible for maintaining drainage easements located on their property in a neat and clean manner. This may include routine grounds keeping such as grass mowing as well as removal of trash, vegetation, and debris. Owners should ensure that drainage systems and structures are kept free of yard waste (grass clippings, tree trimmings, fallen limbs, and leaves) or other obstructions (privacy fencing or retaining walls) that may block the flow of water. Driveways, and their associated culverts, bridges, or other appurtenances, that cross public drainage systems (e.g., that cross over ditches or streams) are also property owner responsibilities.

Vegetative growth (trees, shrubs); firewood; driveways and their associated culverts or bridges; and fences or retaining walls, may be permitted or allowed in easements as long as they do not block the flow of storm drainage. Drainage directed from gutters, french drains, downspouts, swimming pools, retention walls, or other private systems to neighboring properties is a civil matter between the property owners. Moreover, owners that place obstructions, or fail to maintain property within public drainage easements (i.e. structures, sheds, buildings, curbs, retaining walls) may be subject to civil action from adjacent property owners and may be subject to a notice of violation as determined by the City.

**While the city may propose or recommend possible solutions, the city cannot design or otherwise engineer improvements on private property. Additionally, the City cannot recommend a particular contractor or undertake any work outside a dedicated city drainage easement.**

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

Keep easements and storm drains free of litter and debris. Do not rake, blow, or dump grass clippings or leaves into the storm drainage system or street. Keep the area easily accessible in case repairs or maintenance are necessary. Do not place sheds or other permanent structures in the easement or on top of drainage structures. Avoid obstructing the flow of stormwater with privacy fencing.

Apply pesticides and fertilizers in accordance with label instructions to minimize chemicals entering the stormwater system. Never dump pet waste, used motor oil, paint, chemicals, or other substances into a storm drain. Additionally, due to various chemicals existing in swimming pools, owners should never drain a swimming pool into storm drains without first treating the water to remove detrimental chemicals. These pollutants are often extremely difficult and costly to remediate or remove.

Report dumping or spilling of hazardous materials into a drainage system to the Fire Department by calling 911 in case of an emergency, or contact Natalie Wilson at 409-795-1517 or email at [nwilson@cityofhitchcockpd.com](mailto:nwilson@cityofhitchcockpd.com) in a non-emergency situation.

## VETERAN'S PARKING SIGNS



The City of Hitchcock in partnership with HonorLocalVets.org is offering signs for local businesses to dedicate parking spaces for our Veterans.

The property owner will need to complete an application and submit a description of where the sign is to be placed. The application can be picked up at City Hall at 7423 Hwy 6, Hitchcock, TX or you can request an application by email by contacting Ruth Ann Sorrell, call (409)986-5591 or email [rsorrell@cityofhitchcock.org](mailto:rsorrell@cityofhitchcock.org).

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## NEW CITY ORDINANCES

**2020-022** The City of Hitchcock's Code of Ordinances, Title IX (entitled General Regulations) is hereby amended by adding Chapter 95 - Mass Gatherings

**2020-023** The City of Hitchcock's Code of Ordinances, Title VII – Traffic Code, is hereby amended by adding Section Chapter 74 – Motorized Cart Regulations

**2020-024** The City of Hitchcock's Code of Ordinances, Title IX (entitled General Regulations) is hereby amended by adding Chapter 96 - Alarm Systems

To read the full Ordinances visit our website at [www.cityofhitchcock.org](http://www.cityofhitchcock.org).





## REPORT STREET LIGHT OUTAGES

CenterPoint Energy maintains street lights throughout their electric service area in and around Hitchcock. If you need to report a power outage please call 713-207-2222 or 800-332-7143

When reporting, you will be asked to provide:

- A pole number for the non-functioning lights you want to report.
- Contact information (in case more information is needed to locate a street light).
- An e-mail address (if you want feedback regarding your repair request).
- The number of street lights you would like to report.

[www.centerpointenergy.com](http://www.centerpointenergy.com)

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO APPLY FOR A BUILDING PERMIT?

Our city has a professionally certified inspector that ensures your construction project will meet the safety requirements established by code. Having a building permit comes with a multitude of benefits. Permit inspections help protect your family and future owners by ensuring the project is done safely and correctly. One of the most valuable steps in the permitting process is having the work looked at by our city inspector who knows how it should be completed. If you are doing the work yourself, then it is another set of eyes checking your project out so you can rest assured that the work being done is up to code. If you are hiring a contractor to do the work, having it inspected reassures you that the work is meeting the safety requirements established in building codes and corners are not being cut.

Without a permit, you may run into some troubles. First, a red tag can be placed to stop and cease work with fines. Also, you are likely to run into difficulties if you ever look to sell your house and work was done on it without a permit. For instance, you may be instructed to tear down and redo the work (this time with a permit), which will cost much more as a result. Another issue you could run into is damage to your home or business due to the work that was done without a permit. More often than not, your insurance will decline to cover the damage. Thus, it is in your best interest to obtain a permit at the start of your project.

Code Enforcement and our City Inspector work as a team. Our objective and goal is the safety and welfare for all of our residents. Please don't hesitate to call for any questions you may have (409)986-5591.

## 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)502-0424
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ANDRE PERKINS	CITY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 4	district4@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 739-1375
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NATALIE WILSON	ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATOR	nwilson@hitchcockpd.com	(409)750-1517
FRED WELCH	INTERIM EXEC. DIRECTOR OF HEDC	hedc@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)502-7331
HENRY DEBORD	BUILDING INSPECTOR	inspector@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 739-0822
VACANT	PERMIT CLERK	jduncan@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 986-5591
ANDY JENKINS	STREET SUPERVISOR	anthonyjenkins47@icloud.com	(409)986-5591
LEROY THOMAS	WATER/WASTEWATER SUPERINTENDENT	lthomas@cityofhitchcock.org	(409)761-0737
MIGUEL DELGADO	INTERIM WWTP OPERATOR		(409)986-5591
FIRE MARSHALL	DARRON RAY	darronjray@gmail.com	(409) 457-6258
ANIMAL CONTROL			(409) 948-2485
MOSQUITO CONTROL			(281) 337-4289
GARBAGE COLLECTION	AMERIWASTE		(281) 331-8400
AFTER HOUR WATER/ SEWER/WWTP			(409)986-5559
NON EMERGENCY POLICE			(409)986-5559