



City of Hitchcock

Newsletter September 2022

STORMWATER RUNOFF

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 from gutters, french drains, downspouts, swimming pools, retention walls, or other private systems directed 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 can not 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. Place silt fencing around developments to prevent trash escaping and soil runoff from your property. Do not rake, blow, or dump grass clippings or leaves into the storm drainage system. 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 Cynthia Smith-Rex at 409-986-5591 or email at code@cityofhitchcock.org in a non-emergency situation.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

- 9/13/2022 City Council Special Called Meeting 6:00pm.
- 9/19/2022 City Council Meeting 6:00pm.
- 9/27/2022 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting 6:00pm.

NEW WATER METERS COMING SOON

The City of Hitchcock has entered into an agreement with Badger Meters by way of Performance Services to replace all 2800 water meters in the city. The City will be moving to the new industry standard, ultrasonic no moving parts water meters. This style water meter has a minimum 20 year life expectancy and accuracy designation. The water meter changeout project will commence near the end of October 2022 through the end of April 2023. All residents will be notified by individual mailout and door hangers. Additional information can be found on the city's website www.cityofhitchcock.org.

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

PREVENT SEWER STOPPAGES

Sewer stoppages are costly. Due to inappropriate items being flushed or rinsed into the sanitary sewer lines, the City has made approximately \$1,600,000 in repairs and maintenance at various lift stations throughout the city.

Tips to help prevent sewer stoppages:

DO

- Scrape grease and food residue from dishes and pans into garbage bag before putting in your dishwasher or sink. This will reduce grease build-up in the sewer lines.
- Unclog drains naturally by pouring 1/4 cup of baking soda down the drain followed by 1/2 cup of white vinegar. Follow a few minutes later with boiling water. Pour boiling water down the drains to prevent clogs.
- Avoid release of hair into drains of showers, bath tubs, and wash basins to prevent clogs in the traps and drains.
- Empty washing machine lint into a garbage bag to avoid the discharge of lint into the sewer line.
- Clean vents annually (leading from toilets) located on the roof. It is identifiable by a 2 inch pipe on the roof. Failure to clean vents may result in stoppages, causing dangerous sewer line gases to back up into your residence.

DON'T

- Pour household grease into sinks, garbage disposal, or other drains. This is one of the major contributors to sewer stoppages.
- Flush diapers, sanitary napkins, newspapers, soiled rags, or paper towels down toilets.

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



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.

NEW CITY ORDINANCE



Ordinance No. 2022-012

An Ordinance regarding Parking Regulations throughout the City of Hitchcock

Read it in full at this web address:

[HTTPS://LIBRARY.MUNICODE.COM/TX/HITCHCOCK/ORDINANCES/CODE_OF_ORDINANCES?NODEID=1168162](https://library.municode.com/TX/HITCHCOCK/ORDINANCES/CODE_OF_ORDINANCES?NODEID=1168162)



TOILETS ARE NOT TRASHCANS!
 “Flushable” wipes DO NOT break down like regular toilet paper.

Please only flush the 3 P’s:

- Poop
- Pee
- Paper (Toilet)

DO NOT FLUSH

Hair	Medications
Diapers	Gum Wrappers
Paper Towels	Flushable Wipes
Tissues	Dental Floss
Cotton Swabs	Cigarettes
Baby Wipes	Cotton Balls
Cleaning Wipes	Kitty Litter
Bandages	Women’s Hygiene Products
Makeup Remover Wipes	Facial Cleansing Pads



HOW TO CONTACT US

NAME	TITLE	E-MAIL	PHONE NUMBER
CHRIS ARMACOST	MAYOR	mayor@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 519-9646
MARY COMBS DEMBY	CITY COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT 1	district1@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 502-0424
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HENRY DEBORD	BUILDING INSPECTOR	inspector@cityofhitchcock.org	(409) 739-0822
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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			(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