

December 2025

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER

Spring Creek
UTILITY DISTRICT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01. **A Word From The Board**

05. **Spring Creek UD Tax Rate
(A History)**

02. **Winter Pipe Protection**

06. **Firework Safety**

03. **What Not to Flush**

07. **News Update**

04. **Projects Update**

08. **Extra Safety Tips**

YOUR SMART METER

Early leak detection is the key to keeping your monthly bill low and avoiding excess water usage. Residents who use the EyeOnWater app are more likely to detect leaks before they see the increase in fees on their monthly bill.

VISIT WWW.SPRINGCREEKUD.ORG/SMART-WATER-METERS
AND SIGN UP FOR EYEONWATER APP TODAY!



FIRST A WORD FROM THE BOARD

In this year's last issue of our newsletter, we are reminding our residents of some seasonal precautions that we need to take not only for their own safety and the safety of their neighbors but also to ensure that our systems and infrastructure are well protected.

Next, we are addressing one of the major issues affecting the Sanitary Sewer System, the so-called "flushable" items that end up clogging the system, causing backflows and damaging equipment.

In another article, we are providing an update on four (4) major projects

under development in the district, among others our new building which is nearing completion.

Recently, homeowners have received, directly or via their mortgage company, invoices for the real estate taxes from the various taxing entities and we thought it would be timely to present a brief overview of the evolution of the Spring Creek Utility district tax rates in the recent years.

And, finally, we are giving a brief snapshot of recent news and/or activities in the district.

Wishing you a Happy Holiday season!

Claude Humbert

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD



Claude Humbert
PRESIDENT



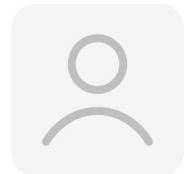
Mark Fusca
VICE PRESIDENT



Leslie Gourley
SECRETARY



Paul Sterling
ASSISTANT SECRETARY



MJ Dougherty
DIRECTOR



Pipe Winterization

Winter Pipe Protection: Keeping Your Home and Neighborhood Safe This Season

As temperatures begin to drop, homeowners should take time to prepare their plumbing systems for cold weather. Frozen and burst pipes are among the most common—and costly winter home repairs. They can cause water loss, structural damage, and unnecessary strain on the community's water system.

Taking preventive action before the first hard freeze can save time, money, and frustration later. Here's what you need to know about why pipes freeze, how to protect them, and what to do if one does.

Understanding Why Pipes Freeze

When temperatures fall below freezing, the water inside pipes can solidify. As it freezes, water expands and creates pressure inside the pipe walls. If the pressure becomes too great, the pipe can crack or burst—sometimes in multiple locations.

The risk is highest for:

- Outdoor spigots and garden hose connections
- Pipes in unheated areas like attics, garages, basements, and crawl spaces
- Pipes running along exterior walls where insulation is minimal
- Vacant homes where heating systems are turned down or off

Even a small crack from a frozen pipe can release hundreds of gallons of water once thawed. This not only causes damage inside your home but also increases demand on the local water supply and wastewater system

Indoor Pipe Protection Tips

Inside your home, simple steps can prevent freezing:

1. **Insulate exposed pipes** — Wrap pipes with foam sleeves or fiberglass insulation, especially in areas like under sinks, along outside walls, or in unheated basements.
2. **Keep cabinet doors open** — On particularly cold nights, open the doors under sinks to allow warm air to circulate around plumbing.
3. **Allow a small trickle of water** — Running water, even at a slow drip, can help prevent freezing by keeping water moving through the pipes.
4. **Maintain a consistent indoor temperature** — Keep your thermostat set no lower than 55°F, even if you're leaving home for a few days.
5. **Seal drafts and leaks** — Use caulk or insulation to seal gaps around windows, doors, and wall penetrations where cold air can enter near pipes.

Outdoor Plumbing and Yard Preparation

Outdoor plumbing and irrigation systems are especially vulnerable to cold weather:

Disconnect and drain garden hoses — Leaving hoses attached can trap water inside outdoor faucets, causing them to burst.

Install faucet covers — Insulated covers or wrap-around insulation materials provide an extra layer of protection for outdoor spigots.

Shut off and drain sprinkler systems – Follow the manufacturer's instructions or contact your irrigation professional to winterize your sprinkler lines.

Locate and insulate your backflow preventer – If your irrigation system has one, ensure it's drained and properly protected from freezing.

What To Do If a Pipe Freezes

If you turn on a faucet and only a small trickle of water comes out, it could mean a pipe is frozen.

Here's what to do:

1. **Keep the faucet open** – As the frozen section begins to melt, running water will help thaw it faster.
2. **Apply gentle heat** – Use a hair dryer, heating pad, or warm towel. Start warming the pipe near the faucet and work back toward the frozen section.
3. **Never use open flames** – Torches, lighters, or gas heaters are dangerous and can cause fires.
4. **If you can't find the frozen area, call a licensed plumber** – They can safely thaw the pipe and check for damage.

If a pipe bursts, immediately shut off your home's main water valve and call a plumber or your local water utility for emergency assistance.

Protecting Vacant or Seasonal Homes

If you plan to travel or own a property that won't be occupied this winter:

- Shut off the main water supply and drain all pipes by running faucets and flushing toilets.
- Leave cabinet doors open and set the thermostat to at least 55°F.
- Ask a trusted neighbor or caretaker to periodically check the property, especially during extended cold spells.

Community Impact: How Your Preparation Helps Everyone

When individual homeowners protect their plumbing, it benefits the entire community. Burst pipes can lead to large, sudden water



losses that lower system pressure and increase treatment costs for everyone. During hard freezes, multiple leaks can also strain your Utility District's infrastructure and water supply.

By taking steps to insulate, drain, and protect your plumbing, you help:

- Reduce unnecessary water loss
- Preserve steady water pressure for fire protection and household use
- Preventing flooding and contamination risks
- Lower long-term maintenance and repair costs for the District

Stay warm, stay prepared, and protect your pipes this winter.

Winterizing your plumbing system is one of the most effective ways to safeguard your home and contribute to the reliability of your community's water system. With a few hours of preparation now, you can prevent days—or weeks—of inconvenience and expensive repairs later.

For more information on water safety, leak detection, and emergency contact information, please visit your local Utility District's website or contact the District office.

What **NOT** to flush

What Not to Flush — and Why It Matters

Many people think that if something fits in the toilet, it's safe to flush. Unfortunately, that's not true. Toilets and sewer systems are designed to handle only **human waste and toilet paper** – nothing else. Flushing the wrong items can cause costly clogs, sewer backups, and damage to your home's plumbing and the public wastewater system.

Common Items You Should **NEVER** Flush

Even if a product claims to be “flushable,” it often doesn't break down like toilet paper. Here are some items to always keep out of the toilet:

- **Wipes of any kind** – baby wipes, cleaning wipes, makeup wipes, and even “flushable” wipes do not dissolve and can clog pipes.
- **Paper towels and tissues** – these are thicker than toilet paper and don't break apart easily.
- **Feminine hygiene products** – pads, tampons, and applicators absorb water and expand, quickly blocking pipes.
- **Cotton balls, swabs, and dental floss** – these tangle together and form knots that trap other debris.
- **Medication and chemicals** – these can contaminate the water supply and harm the environment.

- **Hair and pet waste** – hair forms stringy clogs, and pet waste (and litter) does not break down properly.

Why It's a Big Deal

When non-flushable items enter the sewer system, they can:

- **Cause blockages** that back up into homes and streets.
- **Damage pumps and equipment** at wastewater treatment plants.
- **Increase maintenance costs** for the utility district – costs that affect everyone.
- **Pollute rivers and bays** when clogs cause spills or overflows.

DO NOT FLUSH



Project Updates

Here is a brief update on the status of the projects currently underway in the district:

District Building:

The building is now complete (see picture), and we will now bring furniture inside and get ready to have our regular meetings at that location very soon.



SCUD water Plant #3:

The water storage tank is now completed. The drilling contractor continues with the pilot hole drilling and logging geophysical data to determine the best positioning of the well. A temporary sound barrier has been built to minimize the noise impact on neighboring residents during the construction process.



Reclaimed Water Project:

The contractor mobilized in October and foundations for equipment and tanks are completed. One of the two storage tanks is completed, and the construction of the second tank has begun (see picture)



Astra (formerly The Alcove) at Bender's Landing:

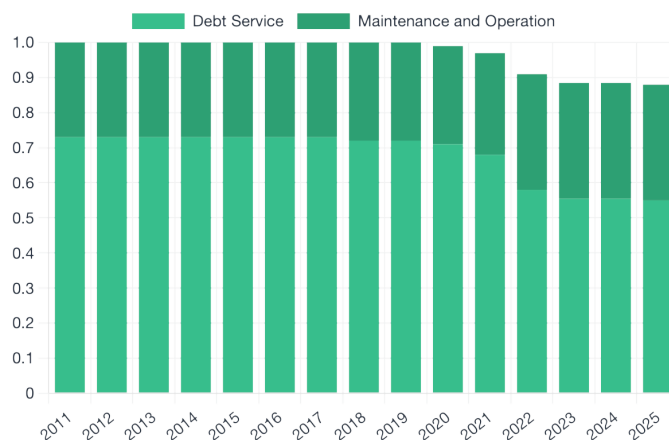
The developer's contractor is on track to complete the first building and the clubhouse in January, and the developer is hoping to be able to welcome the first tenants sometimes in February. The management company will start marketing the units available for lease very soon. (Attached picture shows an aerial view of the site-Picture taken mid-October)



The Spring Creek UD Tax Rate (A History)

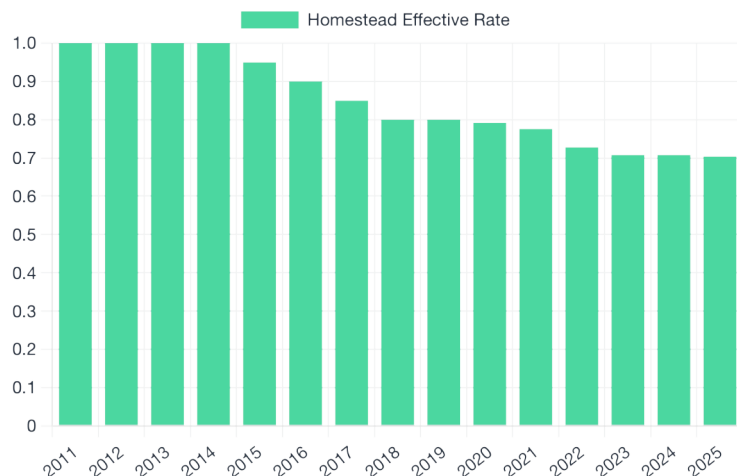
Property owners have recently received, either directly or via their lender, the annual tax statements from the various taxing entities.

This year, despite the numerous large projects undertaken by the district, the Board of Directors was able to offer a small reduction of the overall tax rate. This follows a few years of reductions which started in 2015.



Here is a snapshot of the district's tax rates per \$100 of assessed value. The first chart shows the overall tax rate before exemptions and its two components: the **Debt Service** rate and the **Maintenance & Operations (M&O)** rate. Whenever we were able to, we increased the M&O rate (without increasing the overall rate) to help minimizing future dependance on borrowed money to pay for small capital items as well as being able to pay for additional maintenance costs that come with aging infrastructure.

In 2015, the Board decided to offer a Homestead Exemption to our residents and increased that exemption by 5% each year until we reached the maximum of 20% allowed by the legislature. Then, in 2020, we started reducing the overall rate for everyone. The second chart shows the "Effective" rate for homeowners who claim the homestead exemption and the significant reductions that took place in the last few years.





Fireworks Safety

Fireworks Safety: Celebrate Responsibly This Season

Fireworks are a staple of holiday celebrations and community events, lighting up the sky with color and excitement. However, improper use of fireworks can quickly turn a celebration into an emergency. Each year, thousands of people are injured and fires are started due to unsafe handling of fireworks. By following a few key safety tips, you can help ensure a fun and safe celebration for everyone.

Know the Law

Before lighting any fireworks, check local laws and regulations. Some areas restrict or completely prohibit the use of consumer fireworks to prevent injuries and wildfires. Always purchase fireworks from licensed, reputable vendors – never use homemade or illegal fireworks.

Handle Fireworks With Care

- **Always supervise children.** Fireworks are not toys. Even small sparklers can burn at temperatures over 1,200°F.
- **Light fireworks one at a time.** Keep a safe distance after lighting and never lean over a firework.
- **Never relight a “dud.” Wait at least 20 minutes,** then soak it in water before disposal.

- **Keep water nearby.** A hose, bucket of water, or fire extinguisher should always be within reach.

Protect People and Property

- **Only use fireworks outdoors in a clear, open area,** away from buildings, dry grass, and vehicles.
- Do not hold fireworks in your hand or aim them toward people, animals, or homes.
- **Dispose of used fireworks properly** by soaking them in water before placing them in a metal trash can.

Consider the Alternatives

If fireworks are not allowed in your area, or you'd rather skip the risks, **consider attending a professional fireworks show** or celebrating with **glow sticks, confetti poppers, or laser light displays.** These alternatives are safe, fun, and family-friendly.

Final Reminder

Fireworks can be a beautiful part of any celebration – but safety should always come first. Respect the rules, handle fireworks responsibly, and be mindful of neighbors, pets, and the environment. A little caution goes a long way toward keeping your festivities safe and enjoyable for everyone.

NEWS UPDATE

MANDATORY WATER RESTRICTIONS

As you are most likely aware, the Spring Creek Utility District, jointly with Montgomery County MUDS 88 and 89 with whom we are sharing some water plant facilities, has returned to Stage 2 of the Drought Contingency Plan. A text alert was sent to all residents earlier this month with a link to the detailed announcement on our website.

Even though we had some “good” rain events in November, the total amount of rainfall in our area this year is still 13” below the 30-year average as the months of August, September and October were much drier than normal.

Our operator, Municipal Operations & Consulting (MOC), has a pump specialist doing regular performance testing on our water well pumps and it was determined that the Static Water Level and the Pumping Level in one of joint facility well had dropped nearly 20 feet since July and were close to the lowest level seen in 2023.

It takes a while to recharge the aquifers, and we are encouraging our residents and commercial users to conserve water. MOC will keep monitoring excessive and non-compliant water usage and apply penalties as necessary.

WELCOMING A NEW BOARD MEMBER

Director Sunderman, who has served as Director since May 2014, has recently moved outside of the district and, accordingly, presented his resignation to the Board. A call for candidates to fill this vacant position and complete the term of Director Sunderman was made. Three (3) residents expressed their interest and after interviewing each of them, the Board selected M.J. Dougherty as a new Director. M.J. resides in the Forest Village subdivision and has lived in the district since 2014.

NEW PROJECTS

The Board has recently authorized the district’s engineer to begin the design and prepare requests for proposals for two (2) new projects: Replacement of sanitary sewer pipes in the Fox Run subdivision and extension of the water main line along Rayford road across the DD6 channel to close the existing loop between parts of the distribution system. We will provide updates on these projects as these move forward



Season's Greetings

Extra Safety Tips:

- Always keep your gas tanks full.
- Check tire pressures and ensure they are at the right pressure during freezes.
- Always keep blankets, jumper cables, and a phone charger in the car in case of an emergency.
- Check local road conditions at **www.houstontranstar.org**.
State highway information is also available at **www.drivetexas.org**.
- Never leave a space heater unattended.
- Don't overload outlets or breakers.
- Do not power space heaters with extension cords or power strips.
- Do not leave candles or the fireplace burning unattended.
- Always turn off space heaters when unattended or going to sleep.
- Never use an oven or stove to keep your home warm.
- Practice safety when handling fireworks
- Always check your smoke detector batteries
- Add water to live trees in the home so they do not become a fire hazard