



Harris County

Municipal Utility District

No. 81

FOURTH QUARTER • 2023

HC MUD 81 Board of Directors

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Have a question?



**WATER/SEWER BILLING
OR SERVICE ISSUES**
MDS: 281-290-6500 (24/7)



TRASH SERVICE
BEST TRASH:
281-313-2378



TAX BILL/PAYMENT
WHEELER & ASSOCIATES:
713-462-8906



GENERAL QUESTIONS
ABHR/LEGAL:
713-860-6400



MUD 81 OFFICE
281-392-8112
(8 AM - 2 PM, M-F)

HARRIS COUNTY MUD 81

805 Hidden Canyon
Katy, Texas, 77450

281-392-8112

hcmud81.com

Note from the Board of Directors

Happy Fall from the Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 81 (MUD 81) Board of Directors! After enduring one of the hottest summers on record for the Houston area, we all are looking forward to the upcoming holiday season and the usual cooler, wetter weather that accompanies it. The MUD 81 Board greatly appreciates that when we put out the call for voluntary water conservation in August due to the continued drought conditions, you answered and we were able to ensure we could continue to supply the community's water needs. Read on for more information regarding the triggering of Stage 1 drought conditions.

As always, the MUD 81 Board encourages you to visit <http://www.bjconcepts.com/hcmud81/signup.html> to sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts that will allow MUD 81 to deliver important news directly to your inbox or text app.



REMINDER: Free fall community shred event for MUD 81 residents



- **DATE:** Saturday October 14, 2023, from 9 a.m. - noon
- **LOCATION:** Parking Lot across from the MUD 81 administration building, at 805 Hidden Canyon, Katy, TX 77450
- Please remember to bring a current MUD 81 utility bill as proof of residence!

Help Us Improve Garbage and Recycling Collection

Recently, MUD 81's garbage and recycling provider, Best Trash, contacted the District to let us know that there has been a recent increase in resident vehicles parked on the street during the regular Monday and Thursday collection days. Particularly when vehicles are parked on both sides of the street or in a cul de sac, it can be very difficult for the garbage and recycling trucks to get through, which can lead to significant delays and increased costs for collection. The MUD 81 Board respectfully requests that you please try to avoid street parking during the day on Mondays and Thursdays to help facilitate orderly garbage and recycling collection in our community.



For more information about MUD 81's garbage and recycling services, please contact Best Trash, at (281) 313-2378, or visit <https://www.best-trash.com/>.



Sign up for MUD 81 email and text alerts at
<http://www.bjconcepts.com/hcmud81/signup.html>

Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 81

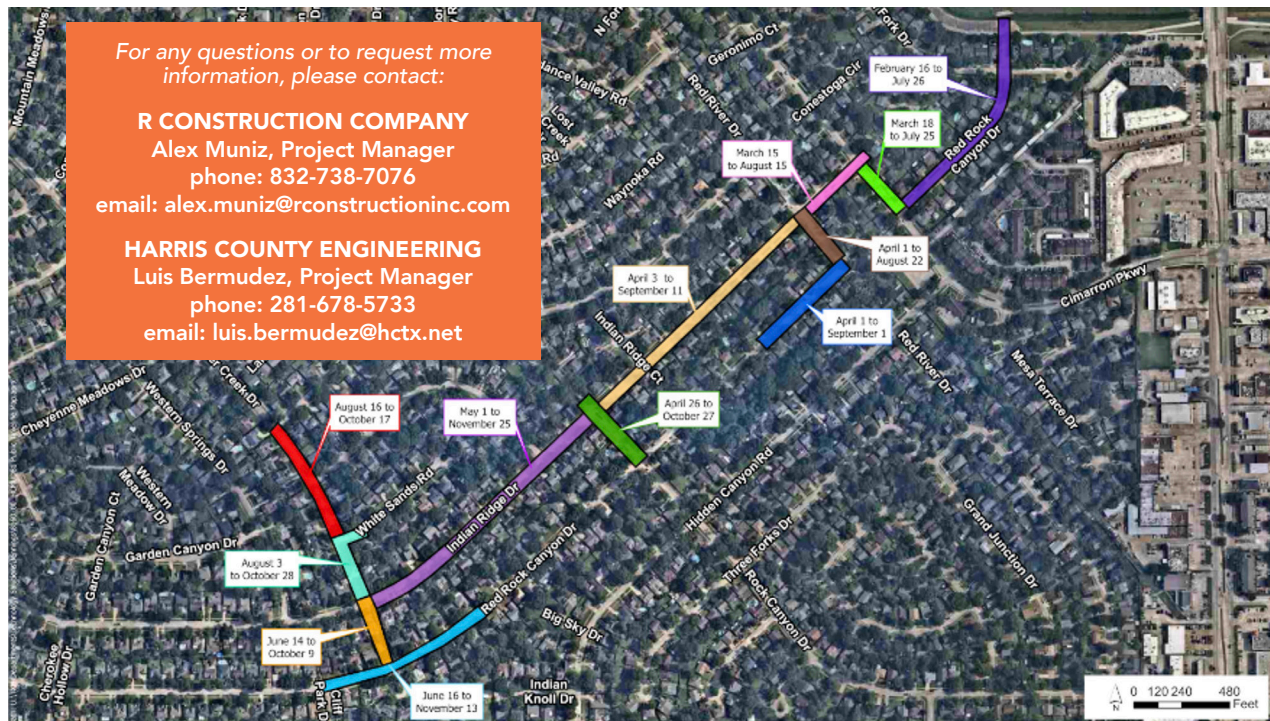
Storm System Improvements

Since Hurricane Harvey made landfall in August 2017 and resulted in flooding in MUD 81 and throughout southeast Texas, MUD 81 has been working with Harris County regarding Harris County's proposed drainage improvements within MUD 81 for the Memorial Parkway Subdivision and Cimarron Subdivision – Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5. The purpose of the projects is to improve the District's decades-old drainage system and reduce the risk of future flooding within the community. Costs for the projects will be shared between Harris County, MUD 81, and as appropriate, other area MUDs that will benefit from the improvements. MUD 81's share of the drainage improvements will be funded by the issuance of bonds, which were authorized by MUD 81's voters at the election held on May 1, 2021.

Cimarron Sections 2,3,4, & 5: Celebrate!

After many years of planning and more than half a year of construction, Harris County's contractor, R Construction Company, should be wrapping up the drainage improvements in Cimarron Subdivision, Sections 2-5, in late November or early December. The updated completion schedule is shown below and remains subject to change based upon contractor staffing, weather, equipment, and other conditions.

Thank you to our Cimarron residents for your patience and understanding as this project has progressed. The MUD 81 Board began working on this project after residents whose homes flooded during Hurricane Harvey came to the Board to request that we consider drainage improvements to upgrade decades-old facilities to current standards and help reduce future flooding risk. We are grateful to Harris County for partnering with us to bring this important project to fruition, and to our residents who overwhelmingly voted in favor of the May 2021 bond election to fund MUD 81's portion of the cost.



Memorial Parkway:

BGE has completed the field work and is continuing with the design of the Memorial Parkway drainage improvements. The proposed improvements include upsizing storm sewer lines, installing additional surface drains, and constructing new detention facilities to meet current drainage criteria. Harris County has submitted an application to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to request approval to allow peak flows into Barker Reservoir in connection with the project and is awaiting their response. Because of the regional benefit that the detention facilities would provide, MUD 81 has requested and Harris County has agreed to coordinate with other nearby MUDs to request that those MUDs also share in the costs of the project.

Ongoing Construction Projects:

- **Generator Replacement at Water Plant No. 2.** MUD 81 advertised for competitive bids for the replacement of the emergency generator at water plant no. 2 and awarded the project to the lowest qualified bidder, W-Industries. The contractor has completed some site work, and the remainder is on hold until the generator is delivered.
- **Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation – Memorial Parkway Sections Nos. 3, 4, and 5.** MUD 81's engineer, BGE, is nearing completion of the detailed design drawings for the rehabilitation of the sanitary sewer lines in Memorial Parkway Section Nos. 3, 4, and 5 as a result of the recently completed sewer survey.



- **Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation – Memorial Parkway Section Nos. 6, 7, and 8.** Given the age of these sections, the MUD 81 Board recently authorized BGE to begin the design for the televising and cleaning of the Memorial Parkway Section Nos. 6, 7, and 8 sanitary sewer lines. As with the prior sanitary sewer line projects, once this project is complete, BGE will utilize the information to identify areas in need of repairs.
- **Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation – Cimarron Subdivision, Section Nos. 1, 2, and 3.** As with the prior project, given the age of these sections, the MUD 81 Board recently authorized BGE to begin the design for the televising and cleaning of the Cimarron Subdivision Section Nos. 1, 2, and 3 sanitary sewer lines. This project will allow BGE to identify areas within these decades-old lines that are in need of repairs.
- **Park York Force Main Replacement.** Design is underway for the replacement of the sanitary sewer force main along Park York. This decades-old line has nearly reached the end of its useful life and requires replacement to continue to serve the residents of MUD 81.
- **Lift Station No. 1 Odor Control.** The MUD 81 Board has received resident feedback regarding odor concerns at Lift Station No. 1, located on Park York, one of the oldest and largest lift stations in the District. The MUD 81 Board previously had increased the frequency of cleaning and authorized other measures in an effort to reduce the odor concerns. However, with recent advances in technology, the MUD 81 Board has authorized installation of a new odor control system called SuperAll. The Board expects the new system to be installed and operational before the end of the year.

MUD 81 Drought Contingency Plan

Over the summer, the Houston area, including MUD 81, experienced some of the hottest, driest weather on record. The sustained heat and drought conditions led to significant increases in water usage in MUD 81 and throughout the Houston metropolitan region. As you likely saw, in August, MUD 81 triggered Stage I (voluntary reductions) of its Drought Contingency Plan. The MUD 81 Board wanted to take a moment to explain the stages of its Drought Contingency Plan and the circumstances that led to triggering Stage I this summer.

As a retail water supplier in Texas, MUD 81 is required to have a Drought Contingency Plan (Plan), which seeks to ensure the District will be able to continue to provide an adequate supply of water even during natural disasters or when there is equipment failure. The Plan contains three stages: Stage I (Mild Drought), Stage II (Moderate Drought), and Stage III (Severe Drought). The triggers for each Stage and accompanying Drought Response Measures are shown below.

MUD 81 owns and operates four water plants that serve the District. All of MUD 81's water currently is produced by pumping groundwater via the District's water wells. MUD 81 is within the boundaries of the Harris Galveston Subsidence District (the Subsidence District), which regulates groundwater withdrawal from wells like those operated by MUD 81. The Subsidence District has adopted regulations requiring reduction of groundwater withdrawals through conversion to alternate source water (e.g., surface water) in certain areas within the Subsidence District's jurisdiction, including the land within MUD 81. The Subsidence District imposes disincentive fee penalties, currently \$10.78 per 1,000 gallons of water, for groundwater use that exceeds its regulations.

In 2001, the Texas legislature created the West Harris County Regional Water Authority (the Authority) to, among other things, reduce groundwater usage in, and to provide surface water to, the western portion of Harris County and a small portion of Fort Bend County. MUD 81 is located within the boundaries of the Authority. The Authority has entered into a Water Supply Contract with the City of Houston to obtain treated surface water from Houston. The Authority has developed a groundwater reduction plan (GRP) and obtained Subsidence District approval of its GRP. The Authority's GRP sets forth the Authority's plan to comply with the Subsidence District regulations, construct surface water facilities, and convert users from groundwater to alternate source water (e.g., surface water). Harris County MUD 81 has not yet been converted to alternate source water, but instead currently is required to pay pumpage fees to the Authority for all groundwater pumped from MUD 81's wells.

Under the Authority's GRP, the Authority currently is required to ensure that at least 30% of the total water demand within its boundaries, including within MUD 81, is provided each year by using surface water. Although the Authority is in the process of constructing additional surface water facilities that will provide significant new surface water capacity, those are large scale, multi-year construction projects that are unable to provide additional supply overnight. The extreme heat and drought conditions over the summer, however, resulted in rapid and substantial increased water demand throughout the area. Without the availability of additional surface water supply, that demand was met through groundwater pumped from wells, such as those within MUD 81.

The scope of the issue was severe enough that there was significant concern the Authority could fall short of the 30% surface water requirement this year and, accordingly, that the Subsidence District could—and likely would—impose the \$10.78 per 1,000 gallon disincentive penalties on the Authority for the excess groundwater use. Because the Authority's operating funds come from the pumpage and surface water delivery fees paid by water users within its boundaries, including the residents of MUD 81, the MUD 81 Board was concerned those substantial costs likely would, in turn, be passed along to our residents.

As a result, when the Authority triggered Stage 1 (voluntary reductions) of its Drought Contingency Plan on August 10th and asked all users within its boundaries, including MUD 81, to voluntarily conserve water, the MUD 81 Board took action and also triggered Stage I of its Plan. The MUD 81 Board greatly appreciates your efforts in helping reduce water usage in our community, and we hope that upcoming cooler and wetter weather will help to resolve this issue!

STAGE I (MILD)

- **Trigger:** Water demand meets or exceeds 80% of production capacity for 5 consecutive days
- **VOLUNTARY Drought Response Measures:**
 - Outdoor watering limited to even- or odd-numbered days based upon address
 - Outdoor watering prohibited from 6-10 a.m. and 6 p.m.-midnight
- **Penalties for Non-Compliance:** None

STAGE II (MODERATE)

- **Trigger:** Water demand meets or exceeds 90% of production capacity for 5 consecutive days
- **MANDATORY Drought Response Measures:**
 - All Stage I measures continue
 - All outdoor watering must use a hand-held hose; use of automatic irrigation systems and sprinklers prohibited
- **RECOMMENDED** to suspend street washing, fire hydrant flushing, and draining and refilling of swimming pools
- **Penalties for Non-Compliance:**
 - First violation - written notice
 - Second and subsequent violation - termination of water service and/or penalty of up to \$10,000 per violation

STAGE III (SEVERE)

- **Trigger:** Water demand meets or exceeds 100% of production capacity for 24 hours
- **MANDATORY Drought Response Measures:**
 - All Stage I and II measures continue
 - All outdoor watering prohibited
 - A surcharge equal to 200% of the normal rate shall be imposed on water use in excess of 10,000 gallons per month
 - District may prohibit water use by industrial or commercial users, utilize alternative water sources or delivery mechanisms, and ration water
- **Penalties for Non-Compliance:** Same penalties as for Stage II apply

Detecting and Preventing Water Leaks

Hot, dry conditions like we experienced this summer often lead to increased leaks in homes and other buildings. The combination of high temperatures and dry weather can put a strain on plumbing systems, leading to potential water damage and increased water bills. Read on for information on how to detect and prevent leaks during and following hot and dry weather to help you protect your property and conserve water.

DETECTING LEAKS:

1. **High Water Bills:** A sudden increase in your water bill could be a sign of a hidden leak. Monitor your bills for any unusual spikes in water usage.
2. **Check the Water Meter:** To confirm if there's a leak, turn off all water sources in your home and check the water meter. If it's still running, you likely have a leak.
3. **Inspect Water-Using Appliances:** Examine appliances like washing machines, dishwashers, and water heaters for any signs of leaks or water damage. These are common sources of household leaks.
4. **Listen for Dripping Sounds:** Quietly listen for any unusual sounds of dripping water, especially in walls, ceilings, or crawl spaces, and for toilets refilling with water when they haven't recently been flushed.
5. **Visual Inspection:** Regularly inspect visible pipes, faucets, and fixtures for signs of leaks, such as puddles, water stains, or dampness. Test each zone in your irrigation system and look for broken sprinkler heads and leaks.

PREVENTING LEAKS:

1. **Regular Maintenance:** Schedule routine inspections and maintenance for your plumbing system. This can help identify and address potential issues before they turn into leaks.
2. **Weatherproofing:** Consider insulating exposed pipes to prevent them from expanding and contracting excessively. This can reduce the risk of pipe damage and leaks.
3. **Proper Landscaping:** Ensure that trees and shrubs near your property don't have invasive roots that could damage underground pipes. Consider installing root barriers if needed.
4. **Upgrade Plumbing Fixtures:** Consider installing low-flow and water-efficient fixtures to reduce water pressure and stress on pipes, decreasing the likelihood of leaks.
5. **Regularly Replace Supply Lines:** Rubber hoses on appliances like washing machines can deteriorate over time. Consider replacing them with stainless steel braided hoses, which are more durable.
6. **Monitor Water Pressure:** High water pressure can strain pipes and cause leaks. Consider installing a pressure regulator to maintain a safe water pressure level.