

**HOUSTON
CITY
COUNCIL
DISTRICT
G**



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News From District G

September-October 2010

To The Residents of District G:

The Memorial City Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone 17 recently released a draft of the regional drainage study prepared by Lockwood, Andrews and Newnam, Inc. The report identifies 15 potential drainage projects that could relieve neighborhood flooding in a study area of some 2,927 acres including Harris County Flood Control District Channels W140-01-05, W140-01-00, W151-00-00 and W153-00-00.

The goal of the study is to identify individual drainage improvement projects that function collectively to benefit the region as well as independently to account for project sequencing. Recommended drainage improvement projects will be designed to cost-effectively reduce structural and nuisance flooding. Improvement alternatives will be developed for various levels of protection, and a cost benefit analysis will be provided to assist in determining the most cost-effective solution. Recommended improvement projects will be prioritized with an objective ranking matrix that will include a list of projects that may be constructed quickly to provide drainage relief to poorly drained areas in a timely manner.

The TIRZ 17 Regional Drainage Study builds on the HCFCD W151-00-00 Implementation Study from Buffalo Bayou to IH-10 completed on August 6, 2009. This study does not seek to duplicate the HCFCD model effort, but build upon it to create a more detailed and inclusive model of the W151 watershed including the area north of IH-10.

Some of the projects will be complicated by the fact that they would require cooperation among, and joint funding by, TIRZ 17, the Harris County Flood Control District, The City of Houston, the Village of Bunker Hill and Hedwig Village. To the extent that water detention is to be put in place, those projects would be further complicated by the difficulty of finding suitable locations that are also affordable.

For additional information, visit: <http://www.houstontirz17.org> or call 713-984-8737.

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Further Details on Renew Houston/Proposition 1



[Editor's Note: This information is provided as a public service, so constituents can be fully informed when they decide to vote for or against Proposition 1's intended creation of a dedicated, pay-as-you-go fund to improve the city's streets and drainage facilities.]



At the September 29 City Council meeting, Mayor Parker provided some proposed principles that the administration would use to implement Proposition 1 if it passes on November 2. This task would be handled through the creation of a Municipal Streets and Drainage Public Utility System (the "System").

Funding Sources: The Mayor has identified four funding sources that will be used to fund this new dedicated enterprise fund:

(1) Developer Impact Fee: this will be a separate impact fee and will not affect the current impact fees levied for water and sewer facilities. This fee would be calculated by a process defined in state law and approved by City Council.

(2) Drainage Fees: as described in detail below, for properties served by the System, drainage fees will be calculated to generate at least \$125 million during the City's 2012 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter.

(3) City Property Tax: 11.8 cents of the City's property tax revenue, which is the amount currently spent by the City for street and drainage projects.

(4) Other Proceeds: any other proceeds received from third parties, such as METRO, TxDOT, or the federal government, or grants received, all which relate to street and drainage projects.

Lock Box: The Mayor has proposed a lock box feature into which would be placed all funds raised for the System. This would ensure that the funds will not be diverted to any other city purpose.

Exempt Properties: Only those properties that receive drainage services will be required to pay the drainage fee. The only properties that would be exempt are those that are required to be exempted under state law, including land appraised for agricultural use, public and private colleges and universities, and property owned by state agencies.

Appeals: an on-line verification and correction process would be put in place, which would allow a customer to appeal a drainage fee to a neutral body that would have the authority to adjust the drainage fee according to the evidence presented.

Project Priorities: the current 5-year Capital Improvement Plan would be used until a full needs assessment has been completed and presented to City Council. A needs assessment for streets and drainage will be updated by the Public Works Department and both would be presented to City Council in July 2011.

Oversight Committee: the Mayor would appoint an Oversight Committee to advise on priorities and the process to be used to select the priority of projects to be funded. The committee would be comprised of individuals with significant backgrounds in community development and infrastructure improvements, as well as other stakeholders. The Mayor would not appoint any contractor or engineering firms participating in any System projects.

Calculation of Drainage Fee: all drainage fees would be based on the square footage of actual impervious surface on the property (these include any areas that do not readily absorb water such as buildings, decks, patios, driveways and other paved areas).

(1) Residential Property (single family homes and duplexes):

- **Curb & Gutter:** the annual drainage fee for streets served by curb and gutter drainage would be 3.2 cents per square foot of impervious surface.
- **Open Ditch Drainage:** the annual drainage fee for streets served by open ditch drainage would be 2.6 cents per square foot of impervious surface.

While each property owner will be free to prove up the actual amount of impervious surface located on their property, there is a method that will be used to estimate the amount of impervious surface. If you go to your property's listing at HCAD (<http://www.hcad.org/>), in the bottom right corner is a box with "Building Areas". Add up all the primary lot improvements square footage (those with "PRI" after the description).



Example:

Building Areas	
Description	Area
BASE AREA PRI	761
ONE STORY FRAME PRI	810
OPEN FRAME PORCH PRI	28
ONE STORY MAS PRI	165
OPEN FRAME PORCH PRI	25
ONE STORY FRAME PRI	48
BASE AREA UPR	761
ONE STORY FRAME UPR	25

Using the above example, the PRI is 1,837 square feet (you don't include any "UPR" or upper stories as they do not add to the foot-

print of the building). To estimate the total amount of impervious surface (since not all impervious surfaces, such as driveways, are included in the PRI figures) you add 38% (or multiple by 1.38). In this example, that would be $1837 \times 1.38 = 2535.06$. Assuming the property in the example is served by curbs and gutters, the monthly fee would be $[2535.06 \times .032] / 12$ or \$81.12 a year / 12 = \$6.76 a month. If the property in the example were served by open ditch drainage, the monthly fee would be $[2535.06 \times .026] / 12$ or \$65.91 a year / 12 = \$5.49 a month.

(2) Commercial, Industrial and Institutional Properties: All commercial, industrial and institutional property owners would pay the \$0.032 per square foot annual fee without regard to whether their streets have curbs and gutters or open ditch drainage systems.



Help for Minority, Women, or Disadvantaged Small Business Owners

The Mayor's Office of Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance certifies minority, women and disadvantaged small businesses and assists them in competing for City contracts. All programs geared toward minority and women owned businesses are also available to businesses owned by persons with disabilities and disadvantaged business enterprises. For more information, contact their office at 713-837-9000 or visit their website at <http://www.houstontx.gov/aacc/certification.html>.

Interested in starting a small business? A small business is defined as a business organized for profit, that has a place of business in the U.S., operates primarily within the U.S., is independently owned and operated, is not dominant in its field on a national basis, and meets the Size Standards established by the SBA (either by average annual receipts or by number of employees; see http://www.sba.gov/idc/groups/public/documents/sba_homepage/serv_sstd_tablepdf.pdf for these Size Standards). The One Stop Business Center provides information on the basics of operating a small business in Houston and Harris County (including information on permits, licenses, and mandatory filings). To obtain a free Getting Started Packet, contact the One Stop Business Center at 832-

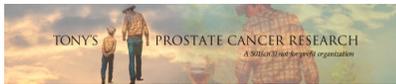
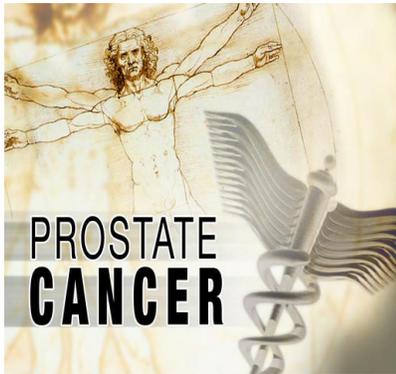
393-0954 or visit their website at www.houstontx.gov/onestop/index.html.

For information on upcoming small business workshops and seminars, check out the Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance Division's calendar of events at <http://www.houstontx.gov/aacc/events.html>.

If you would like an AAD representative to attend an event to provide information on their services, please contact the Small Business Program Manager, Roger Harris at 713-837-9024.



District G Honors Tony Masraff



For additional information on Tony's Prostate Cancer Research, visit:
<http://www.tpcr.org>

Tony Masraff and his son Russell are the owners of Masraff's, located at 1753 Post Oak Blvd., which is an elegant upscale Galleria-area restaurant known for exceptional American cuisine.

Council Member Pennington introduced Mr. Masraff to City Council on September 14 and Mayor Parker proclaimed the day as Tony Masraff Day in Houston, Texas, honoring Mr. Masraff for his support of prostate cancer research.

Tony's Prostate Cancer Research ("TPCR") is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2002 by Tony Masraff shortly after he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. The foundation's mission is to raise awareness of prostate cancer and to raise funds for a non-invasive cure. Prostate Cancer awareness is significant not only because of its mortality rate but also because of its high incidence affecting the quality of life due to related side effects of treatments, such as incontinence and sexual dysfunction.

When looking for a platform to launch his foundation, Mr. Masraff (at the fine young age of 66), chose to run the 2003 Houston Marathon with his daughter, even though he admits he had never run more than 200 yards at a time his whole life. As his friends, customers and business associates began to hear of his mission to run a marathon, they started promising so many dollars per mile or so many dollars if he actually finished the race. While he collapsed with about 15 feet to go and literally had to crawl on his hands and knees the

last 12 feet to finish the marathon, Mr. Masraff raised \$120,000 that day, which is the most any single person has ever raised in the Marathon.

In its very first year of operation, TPCR donated \$370,000 for non-invasive prostate cancer research to the Scott Department of Urology at the Baylor College of Medicine. The funds were directed towards Dr. Timothy Thompson's GLIPRI Protein Therapy Research, a cancer suppressant that could one day lead towards a cure for prostate cancer.

To date, the foundation has raised \$2.7 million for non-invasive prostate cancer research and continues to support Dr. Timothy Thompson, who is now at the University Of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Department of Genitourinary Medical Oncology, where Masraff serves as a Prostate Cancer Research Patient Advocate.

Prostate Cancer is the second leading cause of death in men. Already in 2010, there have been an estimated 217,730 men diagnosed with prostate cancer and an estimated 32,050 men have already lost their lives from this disease. Prostate cancer accounts for approximately 30% of all cancer cases in the United States and 11% of male cancer deaths.

For additional information on Tony's Prostate Cancer Research, visit: <http://www.tpcr.org>

Early Voting Starts October 18

Early voting for the November 2 Election begins on Monday, October 18, and continues until October 29.

For a map showing the 37 locations where early voting will take place, visit: http://www.harrisvotes.com/docs/EV/earlyvotinglocations_schedule_ENG.pdf During early voting, you may vote at any of these locations.

Early Voting Hours:

October 18-22: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 October 23: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 October 24: 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
 October 25-29: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

More information on the entire election process can be found in English, Spanish and Viet-

namese at: <http://www.harrisvotes.org> or by calling 713-755-6965.

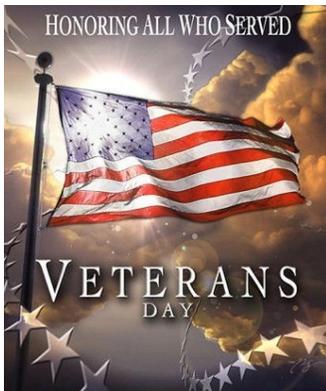
Election Schedule:

The General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 2, 2010, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. During the General Election, you may ONLY vote at your precinct polling place. To determine where you are required to vote on November 2, visit: http://www.harrisvotes.com/English_PollingLocations.aspx

In addition to the dozens of Federal, State, and County races, the ballot also includes three (3) City of Houston Propositions, including Renew Houston, Intersection Safety Cameras (Red Light Cameras), and residency requirements for District Council Members in the November 8, 2011 election.



Veterans' Day Parade November 11



On Thursday, November 11, 2010, the City of Houston will show support of our Armed Forces as we celebrate the 12th Annual Houston Salutes American Heroes Veterans' Day Commemoration and Parade.

The ceremony begins at 10:00 a.m. on the steps of City Hall, 901 Bagby.

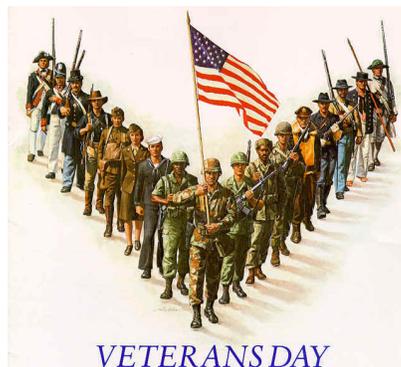
The American Heroes Parade will follow at 11:30 a.m. and travel down Smith Street between Texas and Lamar. There will be a Veterans' Job Fair from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Also, top companies will be in Hermann Square recruiting (Military I.D. will be required to participate).

Free parking will be available from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Theatre District Parking lots courtesy of the Convention and Entertainment Facilities Department.

To register/apply to be in the parade, please visit: <http://www.houstontx.gov/nov11/register.html>

For additional information:

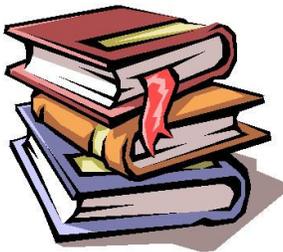
Mayor's Office of Special Events
 City Hall
 901 Bagby, 4th Floor
 Houston, TX 77002
 PHONE: 832-393-0868
 E-MAIL: veteransday@houstontx.gov



"For those who have fought for it, freedom has a taste the protected will never know."



Financial Literacy At Your Houston Public Library



The Houston Public Library presents “More Money @ Your Library”, a two-year financial literacy initiative for individuals and families in the greater Houston area. This program is made possible by a grant from the FINRA Investor Education Foundation through Smart Investing @ Your Library, a partnership with the American Library Association. The goal of the grant is to help people of all ages understand how to manage money more effectively. More Money @ Your Library will allow adults, children, and family groups to learn according to their own styles – either through classes, special programs, self-directed multi-media learning, or web-based resources.

During this two year period, the Houston Public Library will host a variety of programs at neighborhood libraries and the Central Library downtown on a quarterly basis. The launch of the program will take place in October 2010. Other programming months are January 2011, April 2011, and October 2011. Offerings include instructor-led classes focusing on basic financial literacy education and are available in both Spanish and English. Topics include: banking and checking basics, credit and credit repair, the importance of saving, etc. Also available are special programs such as adult speaker series, children’s story times & crafts, computer games for teens, and financial literacy fairs for all.

For additional help with financial literacy, the Houston Public Library has created a great space on their website (<http://www.hpl.lib.tx.us/moremoney>) which includes suggested reading lists, books, periodicals and databases, class

schedules, and links to other community resources. Also found here are self-guided education modules which are interactive, easy to use, and available in both Spanish and English.

One of the topics currently being covered is Starting a Small Business. Participants of this program will receive useful information on starting a small business and learn about resources available through the Houston One Stop Business Center. This workshop will be offered at:

- Henington-Alief Regional Library (Monday, Oct. 4 at 6:00 p.m.)
- Bracwell Neighborhood Library (Thursday, Oct. 7 at 5:30 p.m.)
- Collier Regional Library (Saturday, Oct. 9 at 1:00 p.m.)
- Johnson Neighborhood Library (Monday, Oct. 11 at 5:30 p.m.)
- Jungman Neighborhood Library (Thursday, Oct. 14 at 5:30 p.m.)
- Melcher Neighborhood Library (Monday, October 18 at 5:30 p.m.)

In addition to this program offered through the Houston Public Library, the Houston One Stop Business Center is offering several free business workshops this fall:

(1) Business Permits and Regulations in Houston (Presented by One Stop and the UH Small Business Development Center)

- UH Small Business Development Center (SBDC) – Friday, November 5 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at 2302 Fannin, Suite 200. To register call 713-752-8488
- UH Small Business Development Center (SBDC) – Wednesday, November 10 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at 2302 Fannin, Suite 200. To register call 713-752-8488

(2) Start-Up 101: Business Financing Basics (Presented by One Stop and Covenant Capital)

- City Hall Annex Council Chambers – Tuesday, November 16 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at 900 Bagby Street, Public Level. To register call 832-393-0954
- City Hall Annex Council Chambers – Tuesday, December 14 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at 900 Bagby Street, Public Level. To register call 832-393-0954

City Council Confirms New Fire Chief Terry Garrison



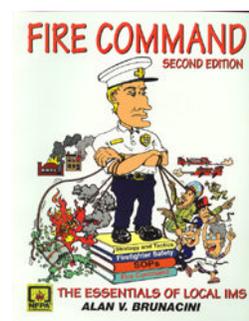
On September 15, City Council Confirmed Mayor Parker's appointment for a new Fire Chief, Terry Garrison.

Garrison worked in various capacities for the Phoenix Fire Department for more than 30 years, including as a fire/arson investigator, rising to eventually become Assistant Chief of the operations division. He then served as Fire Chief for the City of Oceanside, California, and most recently as interim chief and assistant

chief for Daisy Mountain Fire District in Arizona.

As an educator, Garrison has co-authored an instruction workbook outlining incident command procedures that is sold worldwide and has been a teacher at several symposia and conferences for many years. He was a member of the Phoenix Community College Fire Science Instructor Faculty for six years and then served as department chair. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Fire Science Management from Ottawa University and a Masters of Education in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University. He also completed the Certified Public Manager program from Arizona State University in 2009.

Chief Garrison, 52, has four grown children with his wife, Annette. He will now lead a department of approximately 3,984 classified members and 257 civilian employees.



Neighborhood Matching Grant Program

The Neighborhood Matching Grant Program helps neighborhoods fund various beautification and improvement projects by providing dollar-for-dollar matching grant reimbursements ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. The program is designed to cultivate the spirit of volunteerism to help neighborhood-based organizations learn the art of planning and community building through neighborhood projects.

Eligible organizations must meet the following criteria:

- A neighborhood-based organization
- Incorporated as a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) non-profit organization through the State of Texas
- Represent a specific geographic area located within the Houston city limits
- Identify how the organization will fund and support the project in the future

The program helps pay for physical improvements or projects that are accessible and beneficial to the community. The program will not

pay for ongoing operation or maintenance such as upkeep of landscaping or a community garden. Funds received through this program may not be used to lobby or participate in political campaigns and/or elections. Projects that are already completed are not eligible for reimbursement.

Application submittals will be accepted beginning on Friday, October 1, 2010, and must be submitted by October 29, at 5:00 p.m. For an application, please visit: <http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/Neighborhood/nmgp.html> or write to the following address:

Neighborhood Matching Grant Program
City of Houston
Planning and Development Department
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251-1562

For additional information about the program, please contact Anna Sedillo at 713-837-7778 or anna.sedillo@houstontx.gov.



For additional
information
contact
Anna Sedillo at
713-837-7778 or
[anna.sedillo@](mailto:anna.sedillo@houstontx.gov)
houstontx.gov

Welcome KIPP Sharpstown College Prep to District G



“Demographics do not define destiny.”



Council Member Pennington was honored to welcome KIPP Sharpstown College Prep to the District at its grand opening ceremonies on September 10. The new middle school covers grades 5-8, and is located at 8440 Westpark Drive. Mr. Chong-Hao Fu is the School Leader.

At KIPP, Students are accepted regardless of prior academic record, conduct or socioeconomic background. KIPP is proving that demographics do not define destiny. At KIPP Sharpstown, 92% of students are from low-income families and 95% are African-American or Hispanic. KIPP is known for extremely high achievement by under-resourced communities. While less than one in five low-income students attends college nationally, at KIPP 85% of students who complete the 8th grade go on to college and 90% go on to college-preparatory high schools.

The “KIPP Effect”: after 4 years at KIPP, 100% of KIPP 8th graders outperformed their district averages in both math and English. The average student entering KIPP is in the 41st percentile in math and the 31st percentile in reading. After 4 years at KIPP, these same students are performing at the 80th percentile in math and the 58th percentile in reading.

KIPP schools share a core set of operating principles known as the Five Pillars:

(1) High Expectations. KIPP schools have clearly defined and measurable high expectations for academic achievement and conduct that make no excuses based on the students' backgrounds. Students, parents, teachers, and staff create and reinforce a culture of achievement and support through a range of formal and informal rewards

and consequences for academic performance and behavior.

(2) Choice & Commitment. Students, their parents, and the faculty of each KIPP school choose to participate in the program. No one is assigned or forced to attend a KIPP school. Everyone must make and uphold a commitment to the school and to each other to put in the time and effort required to achieve success.

(3) More Time. KIPP schools know that there are no shortcuts when it comes to success in academics and life. With an extended school day, week, and year, students have more time in the classroom to acquire the academic knowledge and skills that will prepare them for competitive high schools and colleges, as well as more opportunities to engage in diverse extracurricular experiences.

(4) Power to Lead. The principals of KIPP schools are effective academic and organizational leaders who understand that great schools require great school leaders. They have control over their school budget and personnel. They are free to swiftly move dollars or make staffing changes, allowing them maximum effectiveness in helping students learn.

(5) Focus on Results. KIPP schools relentlessly focus on high student performance on standardized tests and other objective measures. Just as there are no shortcuts, there are no excuses. Students are expected to achieve a level of academic performance that will enable them to succeed at the nation's best high schools and colleges.

For more information, visit: <http://kipphouston.org/sharpstown/>



Solid Waste Adds Two New Neighborhood Depositories/Recycling Centers

The Solid Waste Management Department is celebrating the grand opening of two brand new Neighborhood Depositories/Recycling Centers. The City now has six (6) self-serve locations where Houston residents can take their recyclable materials, tires, and bulky items such as furniture and appliances (“junk waste”) for proper handling.

One of these new facilities is located at 10785 Southwest Freeway, 77074 (59 South @ Beltway 8). The facilities are open 7 days a week, except holidays, from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (during Daylight Savings Time) and from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (during Non-Daylight Savings Time). The facilities allow residents to dispose of junk waste material if they can't wait for their regularly scheduled junk waste month. This service is provided to Houston residents at no charge with proof of Houston residency in the form of a water or utility bill and a Texas Drivers license or ID. There are also drop-offs for recycling. They accept paper, cardboard, #1-5 and #7 plastic, glass containers, and aluminum and tin cans.

There are now 6 such facilities located in Houston:

North: 9003 N Main 77022 – *NEW*
 Northwest: 14400 Sommermeyer 77041
 Northeast: 5565 Kirkpatrick 77028
 Southeast: 2240 Central Street 77017
 South: 5100 Sunbeam 77033
 Southwest: 10785 SW Freeway 77074 – *NEW*

For additional information, visit www.houstonsolidwaste.org, or call the City of

Houston's Customer Service Hotline, 3-1-1.

The Westpark Consumer Recycling Center, located at 5900 Westpark (just east of Fountain View), is open Monday-Saturday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. and accepts other items including certain hazardous waste. The facility is a drive through, so recycling could not be any easier.

The Westpark center accepts the following:

- #1-5 and #7 plastics (no #6) (no toys, packing material, flower pots, Styrofoam, plastic bags or plastic furniture)
- Aluminum and Tin cans
- Cardboard (must be broken down with all packaging materials removed)
- Paper, magazines, newspaper, telephone books, etc.
- Glass bottles and jars
- Oil Filters and used motor oil (Limit: 5 gallons)
- Tires (Limit: 10 per month)
- Car Batteries—lead-acid type only
- Latex Paint (no oil-based paint accepted) —Limit: Ten 1-gallon cans and One 5-gallon can
- Anti-freeze (Limit: 5 gallons)
- Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs (Limit: 10 per household per month—residential only)
- Computers and other residential electronic scraps—monitors, TVs, printers, keyboards, mice, scanners, fax machines, telephone handsets, VCRs, CPUs, cell phones without batteries, and other small consumer electronics (Limit 5 per month).



Kudos to Briar Meadow Middle School

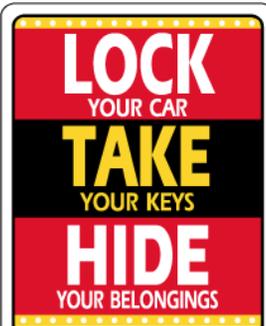
Council Member Pennington is pleased to congratulate the Briar Meadow Middle School, a 2010 recipient of the United States Department of Education Blue Ribbon School Award. Briar Meadow Middle School, located in District G, is one of five schools in the Houston Independent School District receiving the award this year for high performing or improving student achievement to high levels. Briar Meadow Middle School is among only 304 schools in the entire county and 25 in the state of Texas that have achieved the National Blue Ribbon honor this year. HISD accounts for only 3% of the schools in Texas, yet the school district has 19% of the Blue Ribbon

schools this year (more than any school district in Texas).

HISD Superintendent Terry Grier said “This is the highest honor the U.S. Department of Education can bestow upon a school. These HISD schools serve as shining examples for other schools across the county to follow.”

Briar Meadow Middle School will be honored in Washington, D.C. on November 15-16. It will receive a plaque and a flag to signify its Blue Ribbon School status. KUDOS to Briar Meadow Middle School!!





Crime Prevention—BMV

Burglary of a motor vehicle (“BMV”) is the #1 crime reported in Houston. BMVs are largely preventable if you take certain precautions. Lately, HPD has been doing sweeps of parking lots and issuing vehicle owners report cards whenever valuable items are found in plain sight—it’s all part of a crime prevention program to get the attention of motorists and reduce BMVs. The bad news is that fully 70% of all vehicles checked by HPD failed—that’s just what the criminals want to hear. The lesson we all need to learn is to **HIDE YOUR BELONGINGS, LOCK YOUR CAR** and **TAKE YOUR KEYS**. Thieves are looking for valuables in plain sight such as purses, wallets, cash, brief cases, laptop computers, shopping packages (the more expensive the store, the better), GPS devices, iPods, cell phones and other similar items.

Tips from HPD: put your vehicle in a garage and lock the door (at a minimum park your vehicle in a well-lighted driveway and NOT on the street); keep all valuables and packages out of sight; use auto theft deterrents such as car alarms, kill switches, steering wheel & column devices; don’t leave your keys in the car; don’t leave an unattended vehicle running even for a minute; always park in a well-lighted area; and park in high traffic areas of a parking lot or preferably in an attended lot or garage.

Other crime prevention information from HPD: http://www.houstontx.gov/police/crime_prevention/

Crime Prevention—Home Burglary



HPD offers a number of useful tips to help keep your home safe from burglars.

Doors and Windows

- All exterior doors should be solid core or of metal construction.
- All entry doors should be equipped with a good quality deadbolt lock having a minimum of a one inch throw.
- A good quality double cylinder deadbolt lock should be used if there is glass within 40 inches of the lock. If using a double cylinder deadbolt lock, make sure a key is readily accessible in case of an emergency.
- Use a heavy duty strike plate secured with number 12 gauge three inch wood screws.
- All exit doors with outside hinges should have their hinges pinned.
- Install a peephole with at least a 180-degree viewing area.
- Secure all sliding glass doors with an anti-lifting device and a secondary locking device.
- Windows have latches and not locks, therefore, install secondary locking devices on all windows.

Exterior and Landscape

- Install lights in areas around doors, walkways, and driveways.

- Locate outside lights high and out of reach.
- Use inexpensive timers or photo electric cells to automatically turn the lights on and off at dusk and dawn.
- Trim shrubbery and trees so doors and windows are visible from the street. If there is a second floor, prune the trees so that a thief cannot use them to reach a second floor window.
- To discourage an intruder, plant thorny hostile plants along fences and near windows.
- A good fence should not block visibility.
- Do not leave ladders or tools outside, they can assist a person in gaining entry.
- Gates on fenced yards should be locked with good quality padlocks.
- Install large reflective numbers (minimum 3 inches) on your house, mailbox and/or curb so police and other emergency personnel can find your home quickly.

Alarm Systems

- Choose a reputable, well established company.
- Learn how to use your alarm system properly to reduce false alarms. Fines can be assessed for excessive false alarms.

- Do not write your alarm code/password on or near the alarm keypad.
- Put a warning sign on windows and entrances.
- Make sure your alarm call back list is always up to date (if you have private security, add that number to your alarm call back list).
- Keep a current inventory of all your valuables. Include photos or video, descriptions, and serial numbers of all electronic equipment.
- Engrave valuables with your Texas driver's license number or other identifying number. It is not recommended to put your social security number on your valuables. In the event your home is burglarized, this will help police identify the property if it is recovered. Engraving property can also help with insurance claims.
- Secure cash and jewelry in bonded storage.

Additional Information

- Acknowledge all callers through locked doors.
- Keep doors, windows and garage doors closed and locked even when at home.
- Before moving into a new house or apartment, re-key or change the locks on all exterior doors. Also change the code to your garage door opener.
- Draw all curtains or shades at night to prevent viewing from the street.
- Never leave a house key in an obvious place such as a mailbox, under plants or a doormat. Never leave a deadbolt key in the deadbolt. All a burglar has to do is smash a window and reach in and turn the key.
- When traveling, keep your home looking lived-in by having grass cut, mail and newspapers picked up, and lights turned on and off (you can purchase a timer to turn your lights on and off).

Getting Involved

- Know who belongs in your neighborhood.
- Report suspicious persons immediately.
- Be alert in protecting not only your home but your neighbors as well.
- Don't tell a stranger that your neighbor is not at home or volunteer any personal information about your neighbor.
- Never leave a note on your door that reveals that your home is not occupied.
- Join a neighborhood watch group. If there is not one in your neighborhood, start one.

Other crime prevention information from HPD:

http://www.houstontx.gov/police/crime_prevention/



HPD Crime Prevention Information:

http://www.houstontx.gov/police/crime_prevention/

Staying Healthy During Flu Season

We are just beginning another flu season. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Below are everyday actions people can take to stay healthy:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities (your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine).
- Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based hand rubs, tissues and other related items might be useful and help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious.

As always, a vaccine is available to protect against seasonal influenza. For more information, visit the Houston Department of Health and Human Services: <http://www.houstontx.gov/health/flu/index.html> or call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at 1-800-232-4636.



If you would like to receive periodic emails from Mayor Annise D. Parker and the City of Houston on topics of interest to you and your neighborhood, please go to <http://www.houstontx.gov> and register with CitizensNet



3-1-1

Cell phone or VoIP:
713-837-0311

District G Staff:

John Moss
Chief of Staff
(832) 393-3271

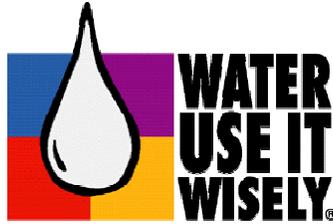
Mark F. Kirschke
Director of Communications
(832) 393-3267

Mary Harmon
Director of Constituent
Services
(832) 393-3272

Christina F. Manero
Volunteer Coordinator
(832) 393-3270

Carol Dillon
Council Intern
(832) 393-3266

Water Conservation Tips & Hints



Tired of paying high water rates? Have you considered implementing water conservation measures to limit the amount of water you use, thereby keeping your bills low? Here are a few of the top recommendations for conserving water:

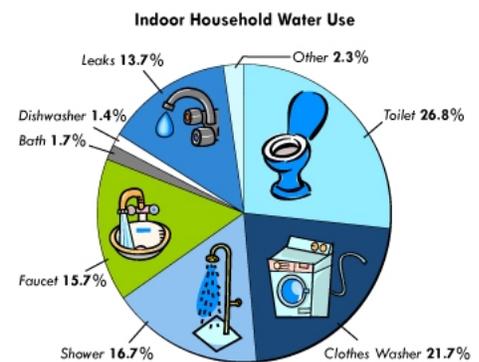
- For cold drinks keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap. This way, every drop of water goes down you and not the drain.
- When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water.
- Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street.
- Run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- Install covers on pools and spas and check for leaks around your pumps.
- Monitor your water bill for unusually high use. Your bill and water meter are tools that can help you discover leaks.
- Water your lawn and garden in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation.
- Replace your showerheads with a water-efficient model.
- If water runs off your lawn easily, split your watering time into shorter periods to allow for better absorption.
- Shorten your shower by a minute or two and you'll save up to 150 gallons per month.
- Upgrade older toilets with water efficient models.
- Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the toilet bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Fixing it can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- Collect water from your roof to water your garden.
- Use drip irrigation for shrubs and trees

to apply water directly to the roots where it's needed.

- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth and save 25 gallons a month.
- If your toilet flapper doesn't close after flushing, replace it.
- Install an instant water heater near your kitchen sink so you don't have to run the water while it heats up. This also reduces energy costs.
- If your dishwasher is new, cut back on rinsing. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.
- If your toilet was installed before 1992, reduce the amount of water used for each flush by inserting a displacement device in the tank.
- Listen for dripping faucets and running toilets. Fixing a leak can save 300 gallons a month or more.
- Turn off the water while you wash your hair to save up to 150 gallons a month.
- When shopping for a new clothes washer, compare resource savings among Energy Star models. Some of these can save up to 20 gallons per load, and energy too.
- Turn off the water while you shave and save up to 300 gallons a month.

For a list of Water Saving Products relating to your indoor plumbing, visit: <http://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/indoor-tips/water-saving-products-indoor.php>

For a list of Water Saving Products relating to your outdoor plumbing, visit: <http://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/outdoor-tips/water-saving-products-outdoor.php>



Source: Awwa Research Foundation (1999)