

BlueLine

Harris County MUD 217 Edition

Summer | 2018



HARRIS COUNTY
MUD 217

MUD Board of Directors:

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NEIGHBORS ON ALERT



Security Patrol in HCMUD 217

Statistically speaking, neighborhoods with residents that look out for each other typically see a reduction in crime rates. In an effort to provide additional security to our neighborhood, the District has contracted with deputies of the Harris County Sheriff's Office and other local law enforcement agencies. We've spoken with Sergeant McGowen to get some insight on what residents should be doing to "Stay Alert, Be Proactive and Watch For Suspicious Behavior." Sergeant McGowen said "If you see something say something; when neighbors look out for each other, everyone wins."

Being a good neighbor is more than just a great slogan, it's also a great idea. Sergeant McGowen said "we need our residents to be our eyes and ears" so please let us know if you see something that seems a little "out of the ordinary" or maybe it just strikes you as a bit "odd." That's okay, notify us.

As always, please direct all potentially life threatening or immediate emergencies to 911.

For all non-emergency reports you may email: mud217sec@gmail.com.

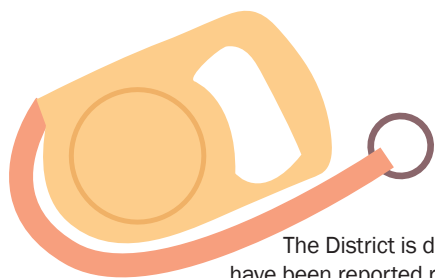
So, when you see the patrols pass by, give them a wave and a "thank you" for their hard work keeping the neighborhood safe!

As we head back into the school season, here are some tips to help keep your neighborhood and family safer:

- Stay vigilant; be aware of your surroundings, and attentive to others in your immediate vicinity.
- Report strange vehicles and/or odd behavior.
- Be mindful of school buses and traffic rules regarding them.
- When picking up your children, do not block residential driveways.
- Be mindful of your speed and cell phone use in school zones.

Sergeant McGowen shared some tips on how to protect your home and vehicle:

- Always lock your car and garage doors
- Take any valuables out of your car or store them in your trunk
- Always lock your house doors and windows
- Ensure adequate lighting around your house
- Consider an alarm and/or camera system
- Collapse all boxes for curbside trash pick up so someone passing by doesn't know that you just purchased (for example) a new big screen TV
- Be creative with placement of your front door key (not under the mat, under the potted plant or above the door)
- If there is a street light out in the neighborhood, please advise the MUD by emailing: contact@hcmud217.com.



LEASH LAWS

STRAY ANIMALS AND HARRIS COUNTY LEASH LAW

The District is dedicated to ensuring the safety and security of its residents. Recently, a number of stray dogs and cats have been reported running around without a leash, while also lacking any identifying information. We would like to encourage you to please phone Harris County Animal Control at 281-999-3191, to report an animal that you think may be a stray.

Harris County's leash law was enacted to help ensure the safety of children and adults. Harris County Animal Control states that "all dogs and cats must be kept under restraint while in the unincorporated areas of Harris County, Texas." Dogs and cats are not permitted to roam freely and must be kept under direct control (on a leash) by their owner. Our pets are beloved, but we are all required to have them on a leash.

If you would like to give your dog additional space for activities, there are a few dog parks located nearby. Please refer to the links below:

Meyer Dog Park: <http://www.hcp4.net/Community/Parks/Meyer/Dogpark>

Bibi and Mini-Me Bush Dog Park: <http://www.hcp4.net/Community/Parks/Pundt/Dogpark>

To read the Harris County animal ordinances, go to www.publichealth.harriscountytx.gov/Resources/Animals-and-Pets/AnimalLaw



National Night Out

Oct. 2, 2018

HCMUD 217 Administrative Building

Each year, on the first Tuesday in October, residents of our district are asked to lock their doors, turn on outside lights and spend an evening outside with neighbors. Neighbor knowing neighbor is one of the most effective ways to prevent crime.

This annual community-building campaign promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make a safer, better place to live. National Night Out helps reduce crime and support a drug prevention program. By strengthening neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships,

we can send a message to criminals letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

It's also the perfect opportunity to get to know your neighbors and enjoy an evening among friends. NNO has proven to be an effective, inexpensive and enjoyable program to promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships in our fight to keep our city safe. You can support NNO with a display of outdoor lights and front porch vigils. We are hosting activities for kids and ice-breaker games for adults. According to NATW (National Association Town Watch), last

year's event was the largest ever that involved 37 million people in 15,000 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide.

Please plan to attend National Night Out at the Admin Building on Oct. 2nd. There will be something for everyone:

- Food and Drinks
- Fun and Games
- Prizes
- Face Painting
- Meet Police Officers
- Magician
- Photo Booth

Easter Egg-stravaganza



Community Fun Day



Annual Cleanup Day

Cookies & Crafts

with Santa

December 8th 10AM-2PM

Again this year, boys and girls of Heritage Village can pay a visit to Santa Claus on December 8th at the Harris Co. M.U.D. 217 Administration Building. We hope you will bring your children to talk with Santa and enjoy a time of visiting neighbors, while you enjoy delicious snacks and activities.

Due to the success of last year's craft fair, your Board of Directors will again open the activity room for Heritage Village craft vendors who would like to sell to all of those in attendance.

Also, plans are still being made for Santa to return to lead the annual parade through

Heritage Village. Watch for more information on the parade date and time to be announced in the near future. Please come out and bring the kids to visit Santa on December 8th and, at the same time, enjoy some refreshments and a phenomenal craft fair! We hope to see you there.

If you are a Heritage Village resident and would like to reserve a space at the craft fair (free of charge), please contact the district facilities manager, Marina Galvan, at 832-249-7000, by December 1.



DIGITAL INFO

NEW DIGITAL MARQUEE

By now you have seen the new digital marquee sign providing digital information for our residents. The new marquee was installed last fall near the entrance to the neighborhood on T.C. Jester.

Information displayed on this digital marquee is updated periodically.

You can see information on:

- Special community events
- Safety messages
- Emergency notices
- Contact information for the community center room and event rentals.

The Harris County Municipal 217 Board of Directors wants to keep you updated on the latest community information. This digital marquee is another example of how they work to make our community a great place to live.

If you have any questions about something you read on the marquee, please call the HCMUD217 office at 832-249-7000.



Have you visited the HCMUD 217 WEBSITE?

This website was designed to be a constant source of information and to provide our residents with a place to stay connected and informed.

Some of these features include:

- View District Announcements
- Pay your Water Bill
- Meet Your MUD Directors
- View the MUD 217 Newsletter
- Get a Membership at our Fitness Facility

- Reserve the Banquet Room
- View Posted Emergency Alerts
- Schedule use of our Conference Room

We are constantly looking for ways to broaden our reach to residents. With our new web site, we can keep the community up-to-date on current events, news and announcements, changes, and important data. We invite and encourage you to visit our new website today!



Are you HURRICANE PREPARED?



It takes only one storm to transform both your life and community.

Last year Hurricane Harvey made landfall between Port Aransas and Port O'Connor, Texas, as a large Category 4 storm with winds up to 130 MPH. Harvey was one of the most destructive hurricanes to ever hit Texas causing nearly 1 billion dollars in damages.

This storm was a sobering reminder of how a little preparation can go a long way.

1. Determine Your Risk

Find out what types of wind and water hazards can happen in your specific area. Flooding is the primary concern for inland Houston, and it's not always a result of immediate rainfall, some areas can flood down river as waters move toward the gulf. In order to be safe you must stay vigilant during the entire storm.

2. Develop an Evacuation Plan

Most evacuation routes for Houston involve heading West with contra-flow routes opening up along I-10 West and 290 towards Austin. TxDOT keeps an updated evacuation map at www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/traffic/safety/weather/hurricane.html. Be prepared to evacuate quickly as rising waters can become dangerous in a very short time. Pack a bag at the onset of the storm, include all important papers, cash, IDs medicines at least two changes for clothes and essential items.

3. Secure an Insurance Check-Up

Call your insurance company and insure you have enough homeowners insurance to repair or even replace your home, car, or boat. Remember, standard homeowners insurance **does not** cover flooding although many areas of Houston have it as a requirement!

4. Assemble Disaster Supplies

Hurricanes are unpredictable, if you do not have time to evacuate it is important to have a disaster kit ready. You should have enough non-perishable food, water, and medicine to last each person in your family at least one week. Gas up vehicles when a storm enters the gulf, and try to keep vehicles full until the storm has passed. Waiting for the last minute to gas vehicles can be costly as many stations run out of gas as the storm approaches. If the power goes out vehicles can also be used to charge phones and other devices.

5. Strengthen Your Home

Make sure your home is in good repair and up to hurricane building code specifications. Many retrofits can be done inexpensively. Have the proper plywood, steel, or aluminum panels to board up your windows and doors. Remember the garage door is the most vulnerable part of your home.

6. Identify Trusted Sources of Information

NOAA's National Hurricane Center and Central Pacific Hurricane Center are your official sources for hurricane forecasts and the issuance of hurricane watches and warnings. The Houston Chronicle or your favorite local newscast should always have up-to-date information as well.

7. Complete Your Written Hurricane Plan

The time to prepare for a hurricane is before a storm enters the gulf, when you have the time and are not under pressure. Take the time now to write down your hurricane plan. Know where you will ride out the storm and get your supplies now. Who you will call if evacuated without your vehicle, where will you go if evacuated most hotels will be full, and know where emergency shelters are located.

Hurricane Watch = Conditions possible within 48 hours

- Review your evacuation route(s) and listen to local officials
- Review your disaster supply kit; and add items to meet the needs for family members and pets

Hurricane Warning = Conditions are expected within 36 hrs

- Follow evacuation orders from local officials (if any are given)
- Check-in with family and friends by texting or using social media
- Follow the hurricane timeline preparedness checklist.





THE SCAM:

There are reports of individuals claiming to be from the Water Quality Association, or other similarly-named groups, going door-to-door in the Houston area.

Here is what we want you to know if you see these notices or they knock on your door.

COMMUNITY WATER TEST

WILL BE PICKED UP 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

For the next two weeks, we will be conducting water tests for the residents of this district. So there will be no inconvenience to you, please follow the instructions below:

1. **FILL** the enclosed water sample bottle with tap water.
2. **COMPLETE** and **SIGN** the form below. (Signature required for results)
3. **PLACE** bottle and form back into the plastic bag.
4. **HANG** bag back where you found it by 8:00 a.m. tomorrow.

If you do not want your FREE WATER TEST we would appreciate it if you would please hang the EMPTY bottle (in plastic bag) back out for pickup. The bottle can be used at another residence preventing waste in our landfills.

1. Date sample taken _____
2. Are you the home owner? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ RENTING
3. What source of water do you have?
☐ City ☐ Community Well ☐ Private Well ☐ M.U.D.
4. Please check any conditions you experience now.
☐ Chlorine Smell ☐ Rust stains ☐ Rotten egg smell
☐ Salty Taste ☐ Blue Green Stains ☐ Other _____
5. When was the last time you had your water tested?
☐ Never Year Tested _____
6. Do you currently use any type of water filtration? ☐ YES ☐ NO
If Yes: ☐ Whole house ☐ Drinking water only ☐ Refrigerator
7. Do you buy bottled water? ☐ YES ☐ NO
8. To estimate water use, How many people reside in your household?
Adults _____ Children _____ Pets _____
9. Check One: ☐ Working ☐ Retired ☐ Other _____
10. How would you rate your water?
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ I Won't Drink It
11. Is there anything you would change about your water?

12. Resident Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Zip: _____
Subdivision: _____

Phone Number (Required): (_____) _____-_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Place this form and water sample back into the plastic bag and hang it out for pick-up tomorrow.

THERE IS NO CHARGE TO RESIDENT. NOT AFFILIATED WITH CITY WATER OR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENTS.

These individuals passing these notices out are posing as “water inspectors” testing homeowner’s tap water for levels of chlorine, pH levels, arsenic, and other heavy metals. They “test” the tap water in the home and find “bad results” which they use to convince the homeowner that they need to purchase an expensive filtration system. They insist they aren’t there to sell, only to inform the public, but they are actually a private company endorsing their own products.

The Facts:

The red boxes show questions the District would never ask its residents.

The blue boxes include wording which prove they are trying to sell water filter systems. “The Water Quality Association (WQA) does not solicit door-to-door, period,” said WQA Executive Director Pauli Undesser. “WQA represents the water quality industry and does not sell products or solicit to test water for the public”. Therefore, anyone coming to your home claiming to be from the Water Quality Association are **NOT** employees of the WQA and are simply trying to get you to purchase their product.

The District already is aware of where your water is coming from and they are the ones testing your water so they wouldn’t question residents on this. The water in your district is already closely monitored and tested for quality on a regular basis. You can find the annual water report called the “Consumer Confidence Report” on the District’s website. The report explains that “In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems.” The report also shows no violations to any of the regulated contaminants in your District.



The District’s operator, **Water WasteWater Management Services (WWWMS)**, does do water sample testing in homes. Their requests will be from **WWWMS and the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ)**, with their logos.



If you want more information about your water, a home test, or state certified programs you can call the district’s operator.

The WWWMS 24-Hour Number is 281-895-8547

If you want to test your water yourself, you may find state programs and labs on the US Environmental Protection Agency’s website, or following this link: www.epa.gov/dwlabcert/contact-information-certification-programs-and-certified-laboratories-drinking-water

What to Do?

If you have one of these so called inspectors come to your home, call the Harris County Sheriff’s Office and report them.

The Harris County Sheriff’s Office number is 713-221-6000

To report any problems with your water, visit the HCMUD 217 website and fill out a Problem Report or email documents and photos to info@hcmud217.com.

TWO SEWERS

STORM & SEWAGE

We have two types of sewers serving our community. One is the storm-sewer, which takes care of mostly rainwater and ensure that the streets are free of flooding. The second sewer is the sanitary-sewer which handles wastewater from the house, such as the toilet, sinks, showers, dishwashers, washing machines and such.

STORM SEWER:

This type of sewer is vital during heavy rains, as yard runoff, roof drains and streets run into it and prevent flooding. Most front yards slope to drain water off and into streets and are set lower to provide a conduit for the water which then drains to a canal, pond or often Galveston Bay.

You may have seen leaf blowers being used to push yard clippings into drains; this can create a terrible problem during a heavy rainstorm. Storm sewers can become clogged and blocked by this debris and cause neighborhood flooding. According to cleanwaterways.org, *"even though yard trimmings and soil are natural debris, when put in the storm drain they flow to our bayous, rivers and Galveston Bay where they can ruin the natural balance of the ocean and harm fish."* Because these sewers drain into drainage canals or the Galveston Bay with NO treatment it's important that there are no chemicals that can kill animals and plants.

DO NOT FLUSH THESE ITEMS DOWN EITHER SEWER:

- Pet waste, animal parts, goldfish, and cat litter, "flushable" cat litter
- Disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, tampons (including tampon applicators), condoms, other bulky "disposable" products
- Disposable, or 'flushable' wipes' (they are not flushable!), baby wipes
- Q-tips, cotton balls, dental floss, band-aids, hair
- Chewing gum, cigarette and cigar butts
- Corrosive substances, either acidic or caustic
- Flammable or explosive liquids, solids, or gases. Antifreeze or coolant, brake fluid, transmission fluid and automotive chemicals
- Paint, stains, wood preservatives, solvents, sealants and thinners
- Poisons, hazardous waste, fertilizer, pesticides, insecticides
- Big chunks of garbage, sand, metals, wood, straw or grass, wastepaper, plastics, toys, and glass

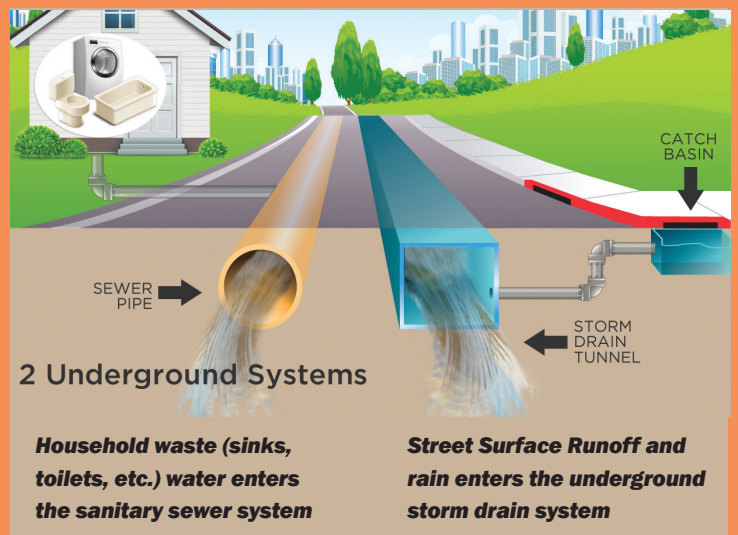
Many of these items will clog up your house sewer first.

It is each homeowner's responsibility to ensure that only clean, uncontaminated water flows from his/her yard into storm drains. This means keeping not only debris from these drains, but also harmful chemicals and waste. It is not simply civic responsibility, it is the law.



SANITARY SEWERS:

This is the sewer water from your house that goes to a treatment plant that turns human waste and household sewage into water suitable to be placed in a drainage canal that often makes its way to Galveston Bay. Good old Galveston Bay. The water from the treatment plant is sometimes used for irrigation but it is not reused for drinking. There are many things that should not be "flushed" or put down the drains.





**Text YES to (832) 610-2511 or visit
www.hcmud217.com/alerts for Resident Alerts**

We recommend at least two people per household sign up to receive resident alerts. If at any time you want to opt out of the alert system, simply reply "stop" to be removed from the system.

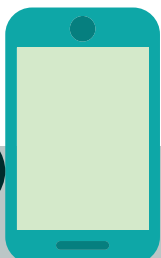
For any other questions or comments regarding the MUD and its functions, please visit our website or email us at contact@hcmud217.com

SITUATION:
Emergency (Life Threatening, Eminent Danger)
Report a Criminal Act
File a Complaint (nuisances & other misdemeanors)
Report Suspicious Persons or Activity
Water or Sewer Issues (WWWMS)
Garbage Service (WCA)
Heritage Park Items (MUD217)
MUD Admin Bldg Events
Loose or Stray Animals (HC Animal Control)

Number:

911
911
713-221-6000
mud217sec@gmail.com
281-895-8547
281-368-8397
832-249-7000
832-249-7000
281-999-3191

NUMBERS TO KNOW



24/7