

SPRING | 2015
NEWSLETTER

Get Ready!



***2015 Hurricane Season predicted to
be the most active and dangerous
in 3 years.***

 **BlueLine**

www.kingsbridgemud.com
Kingsbridge M.U.D. Publication

The respected team of Klotzbach and Gray from Colorado State University's Department of Atmospheric Science believes that we remain in an active era for Atlantic basin tropical cyclones since 1995 (despite the quiet seasons that occurred in 2013-2014), and say they expect typical conditions associated with a positive Atlantic Multi-Decadal Oscillation (AMO) and strong thermohaline circulation (THC) will return in 2015. They say the greatest probability envisioned so far is 8 to 15 named tropical storms, with from 3 to 9 hurricanes and 1 to 4 major hurricanes.

We want you to be prepared and now is the time to get ready. Two keys to weather safety are to prepare for the risks and to act on those preparations when alerted by emergency officials.

The first step is to build an emergency kit. Try to assemble your kit well in advance of an emergency. You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take essentials with you. You will probably not have time to search for the supplies you need or shop for them. You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water,

medication, flashlights, and a battery operated radio, (don't forget the batteries.) Also, stock up on any other personal supplies you may need to survive for a few days after an emergency. You should have enough supplies to last at least 72 hours. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You may get help in hours, or days. Here is what you will need.

Basic Emergency Kit Supplies

A basic emergency supply kit should include the following recommended items:

- **Water: one gallon of potable water per person per day for at least three days for drinking purposes**
- **Food: at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food**
- **Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both**
- **Flashlight and extra batteries**
- **First aid kit**
- **Necessary prescription or nonprescription medications**
- **Whistle to signal for help**
- **Dust mask to help filter contaminated air**

- **Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place**
- **Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation**
- **Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities (Channel locks, or crescent wrench)**
- **Manual can opener**
- **Printed Local maps: (cell phone GPS may not work)**
- **Cell phone with chargers, car inverter or solar charger, and/or USB batteries**
- **At least \$100 in cash small bills, \$500 would be best (ATM & Credit Card Systems may be down)**
- **Written contact numbers for family and friends outside of the area**

Family Communication Tips

Identify a contact such as a friend or relative who lives out-of-state for household members to notify they are safe. In case of emergency long-distance phone calls may be the only working option, as lines across town may be down. Consequently out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.

If you have a cell phone, program that person(s) as "ICE" (In Case of Emergency)



Try to assemble your kit well in advance.

When disaster strikes you will probably not have time to shop.

in your phone. If you are in an accident, emergency personnel will often check your ICE listings in order to contact someone you know. Be sure to notify your family and friends if you've listed them as emergency contacts.

Teach family members how to send and receive text messages and emails as these can often get around network disruptions when a phone call may not. The best time to prepare for an emergency is before anything happens, so prepare now and mitigate panic.

Who's Watching Your Trash?

You've just left your favorite electronics store with that new 70" flat screen television. You get it installed with surround sound and you are ready for the big game or Dancing with the Stars. You've got everything ready, right?

Every day homes are burglarized and one of the most attractive targets for burglars is electronics. If you have failed to record your serial number, the police will take your report but it will likely become one of the thousands of unsolved property crimes. Your serial number is like a fingerprint which distinguishes your electronic device from the thousands of otherwise identical devices. Law enforcement now has the

2015 Hurricane Workshop

Please plan to join us for this upcoming important and free public event (the largest of its kind in the nation). It will be held on **Saturday, June 6, 2015** at the **George R. Brown Convention Center Hall D 10am – 3pm. Admission is free!**

The 2015 Hurricane workshop is a great learning experience that will help everyone get prepared together. You can register now at www.hurricaneworkshop.com

ability to track stolen serialized property. Most stolen property is pawned or sold in pawn shops within 24 hours of being stolen. In many cases the property is pawned before it has been reported to law enforcement.

When an item of serialized property is pawned or sold in a pawn shop, the serial number, make and model is entered into a database along with the identity of the "customer" which in many cases is the burglar. This database is constantly monitored by law enforcement. When an article of reported stolen property is located, law enforcement officers are authorized to seize the property as part of a criminal investigation. Many burglaries

are solved just that simply, but only if you record the serial number.

Did you put the empty box of your newly purchased electronic device out on the street for trash pick up? Well, you have just put out an advertisement to thieves.

The best defense against burglary is a strong offense. Don't advertise the fact that you have a flat screen "easy to pawn" TV, don't make it easy for them. Simply break the empty box down and then put it in a garbage can or trash bag just like any other item of trash. We all want to live in a safe community and together we can ensure that Kingsbridge MUD is that safe place to call home.

S.E.A.L. Security Officers

We Are Here For You!

How do I reach an officer?

(713) 766-1600 Contact the 24 hour operations center to reach an officer, to report suspicious activity or to notify S.E.A.L. you are going on vacation and would like your house to be monitored on their patrol rounds.

How can I be sure my neighborhood is being patrolled? All S.E.A.L. Security Officers are GPS checked every 15 minutes to ensure they are patrolling the entire area and for the entire time.

Did you remember to record your make, model and especially serial number?





S. SAFETY
E. ETHICS
A. ABILITY
L. LEGAL

Do I give my alarm company the S.E.A.L. number? S.E.A.L. should be listed as the secondary contact with your alarm company to contact after they call the sheriff's office.

It's important to get the sheriff's deputy in route right away, but it is up to the discretion of the resident who you choose to put first. The alarm company then calls S.E.A.L. who will dispatch the officer immediately who, during regular patrol hours, should be able to arrive within minutes. If it is not during patrol hours, the dispatcher will see where the closest supervisor is and send them to the home.

What type of background checks do the officers go through? All S.E.A.L. Officers are DPS Certified Officers. They cannot get or maintain a Security license from the State of Texas without a clean background check by the FBI. S.E.A.L also runs a very thorough background check that includes a driving records check every 6 months.

Are the S.E.A.L. officers given psychological exams to determine their mental stability? No security company gives a psychological exam, however they do require all S.E.A.L. officers to maintain additional training through S.E.A.L. with an Instructor at their range

and with various types of classroom training. Officers must attend the classes in order to keep their license current and in good standing with S.E.A.L. as well as DPS. Only 2 out of 15 applicants that apply are hired by S.E.A.L due to the standards set forth in their hiring policy.

Officers are required to be baton, pepper spray and K-9 certified, as well as verbal judo to ensure they use every non-lethal measure possible.

On-going training is the key to providing qualified and professional officers.

Are the officers given a physical exam to determine their fitness for the job? S.E.A.L. Security has their own Crossfit Gym on site called Crossfit 1525 and it is for private members as well as all officers of S.E.A.L. to work out and maintain good health. The classes provided by

S.E.A.L. can be very physical and require an officer to be in good shape to pass.

What type of training do the officers go through and is training given on a continuing basis? S.E.A.L. Officers are required to take a 40 hour security class with an additional 8 hours a month of on-going training; all certified by the Texas Department of Public Safety. S.E.A.L also runs one of the largest training academies in Houston.

Will dogs be used to patrol? S.E.A.L. Security officers are all K-9 certified and will also patrol our common areas and public property with one of their elite K-9s to add a greater level of deterrence to criminal activity.

S.E.A.L. is here to serve you, please don't hesitate to contact them at (713) 766-1600.

Did You Know?

Facts about Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs)

What is a MUD?

A MUD is a Municipal Utility District and it is actually a political subdivision of the State of Texas authorized by the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Its purpose is to provide

water, sewage, drainage and other services within the MUD boundaries.

How is a MUD created?

A majority of property owners in the proposed district petitions the Texas

Commission of Environmental Quality to create a MUD. The TCEQ evaluates the petition, holds a public hearing, and grants or denies the petition. After approval, the TCEQ appoints five temporary members to the MUD's Board of Directors. After this, an election is called to elect permanent Board members, confirm the MUD's creation, authorize bonds and taxing authorities for bond repayment. The first five members of a MUD are usually determined by the developer.

How does a MUD work?

The publicly elected Board of Directors manages and controls all of the affairs of the MUD subject to the continuing supervision of the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality. The Board establishes policies in the interest of its residents and utility customers. A MUD may adopt and enforce all necessary charges, fees and taxes in order to provide district facilities and service. MUD meetings are public meetings that are governed by the Texas Open Meetings Act which has the same governance of cities, counties, and School Districts.

Who Collects Your Trash.

In addition to their common functions of water and wastewater service, MUDs are legally empowered to engage in conservation, irrigation, electrical generation, Security, solid waste collection and disposal. A MUD can provide some recreational amenities that are approved by the Board of Directors and funded by the District.

Kingsbridge is your MUD and we work for you. Please let us know what we can do to make our community a better place.

The Coming Challenges for Texas Water Districts

**Former Texas State Representative
Bill Callegari**



Representative Callegari is one of the leading experts on water in Texas.

Throughout my career in the Texas Legislature, I have maintained that water districts represent the most local form of government. Districts, by nature, are small in size. Their elected directors are neighbors, living within the immediate community they serve.

As members of the community, District Directors understand their neighbors' interests, and diligently work to serve the households and families they represent. Moreover, districts provide water and wastewater service essential to communities' survival.

While water districts may be small and local in nature, they will be affected by the Texas Legislature's on-going discussion on two major issues affecting our state's future. Those issues are the need to build water supplies for a growing state, and a concern over state and local debt.

2011 was the worst one-year drought in Texas' recorded history. That year, dry

conditions wreaked billions in economic damages as our water supplies diminished. Despite some beneficial rainfalls since, Texas has not pulled out of the water supply deficit created by on-going drought conditions. In fact, our monitored storage reservoirs currently are 64 percent full as groundwater levels remain low.

The effects of drought have not gone unnoticed by the Texas Legislature. Lawmakers did create a special fund to finance the building of water supply projects in our state water plan. While this was a needed step, the issues relating to water supply and drought remain at the forefront of the Legislature's agenda. This is particularly true as we enter the Texas summer with nearly half of the state in severe, or worse, drought conditions.

Solutions to our water challenges will not be coming from Austin. Rather, our state's water planning process adheres to a Texas tradition of "bottom-up" planning, where local governments identify the water supply projects that will best meet their needs.

This puts water districts on the front line of Texas' drought response. The water supply solutions crafted by our local governments, districts included, will play a key role towards charting Texas' future growth and prosperity.

The second political trend relating to districts is a growing concern about state and local debt. As a fiscally conservative legislator, I understand the reluctance to borrow money for which taxpayers must be accountable over time. As federal debt continues to grow, state legislators are increasingly anxious about state and local obligations.

Debt service is a key water district function. Districts issue bonds to pay for water and wastewater infrastructure, and levy ad valorem taxes to retire that debt. Although water districts have a track record of responsibly issuing bonds and levying taxes, this practice is likely to come under increased legislative scrutiny. I don't think this newfound attention is a negative phenomenon. If anything, this new climate presents a unique opportunity for water districts and their directors to engage and educate their elected officials on what they accomplish for their constituents.

The best step that districts can take in this political environment is to work on building relationships with their area legislators.

Take the time to personally meet with your legislators and their staff. Invite them to attend your board meetings or tour your district's facilities.

These visits provide legislators with the opportunity to better understand how districts provide water and wastewater services to their constituents in a fiscally responsible manner.

The more legislators understand water districts, the better prepared they will be to recognize how districts provide a valuable service to the citizens they serve. This dialogue is critical in showing how districts are a part of Texas' drought response while serving as responsible stewards of taxpayers' dollars.

I have worked to educate legislators about water districts throughout my 14 year tenure. As you may be aware, I have retired from the Texas House of Representatives as of the end of 2014. In addition, other legislators who are familiar with districts' accomplishments

have departed. Current legislatures will include new faces-some unfamiliar with water districts.

The story of how water districts work for the growth and prosperity of our state is a good. In light of this, it is imperative that directors take the initiative to inform their legislators of what districts accomplish for Texas. Equally important, district directors, as representatives of their communities, must take the time to come forward and become more active in educating legislators on the needs and concerns of water districts.

Former Representative Callegari represented the Katy and the west Harris County area in the Texas House of Representatives. He chaired the House Committee on Pensions, and has served as a member and a Vice Chair of the House Committee on Natural Resources for several sessions. Representative Callegari has 40 years of experience in the water industry. He is a founder of AWBD (Association of Water Board Directors) and a recipient of the Visions Award, the most prestigious award the Association can bestow in recognition of outstanding service and commitment both to AWBD and to the water industry.[†]

[†]) REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM REPRESENTATIVE BILL CALLEGARI.



2011
was the worst
one year drought
in Texas' recorded history.

Save water and money by using rain sensors.

Does your sprinkler turn on even if it's raining? A rain sensor can stop that from happening. A rain sensor is a device or switch that overrides the automatic irrigation system when it senses rain.

A 10,000 square-foot lot will receive almost 7,000 gallons of rainwater for just one-inch of rainfall. That amount of free water can save you up to \$70 on your monthly water bill.

Rain sensors range for \$25 to over \$100, with the average cost being about \$50. Some additional costs may incur from installation but the systems themselves are not very expensive. In fact, a rain sensor system can pay for itself in less than one year.

Your irrigation sensor will temporarily shut off your system if it is operating

during a rain shower or if it is scheduled to run following a rainfall.

Types of rain sensors:

1. One type breaks the connection by weighing the water in a rainfall collection cup.
2. The next type uses electrodes to determine how much water is in the collection cup.
3. The most common type of rain sensor used by professionals is the expansion disk device. This kind of sensor does not use a collection cup; instead rainfall causes cork disks to expand. This device uses a pressure switch to break the electrical connection. These can be adjusted in increments of 1/4" to the desired rainfall setting. This adjustment is usually set to turn off the sprinklers after 1/2" of rain has fallen.

Benefits of a rain sensor system:

1. **Saves Money.** Whether you pay for water or spend electricity running a pump, the money you save over time will more than pay for the rain sensor.
2. **Extends Sprinkler System Lifespan.** Irrigation systems are made up of moving parts. If the system parts are utilized less frequently (during the rainy season), they last longer.
3. **Protects Shared Water Resources.** By limiting the over use of your sprinkler system, rain sensors reduce excess water runoff that carries fertilizers and pest control chemicals into our shared water supply.
4. **Conserves Water.** Less water is wasted during raining weather when less supplemental water is needed for your turf and in your garden.

To ensure proper operations, rain sensors should be checked at least once annually. Let's all do what we can to save both money and water!



Don't let the **IRRIGATION SYSTEM** waste **YOUR MONEY** during seasonal rainfall.

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Si Environmental
sienv.com

832-490-1600

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Miller & Associates

713-977-4700

Bookkeeper

McLennan & Assoc.

281-920-4000

Tax Assessor

Bob Leared Interests
bli-tax.com

713-932-9011

Communications

Blue Umbrella
blueumbrellaco.com

281-766-4276

Other Contacts:

Trash Pickup

Best Trash

281-313-2378

Water Leaks

Si Environmental

832-490-1500

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800-752-8036

Sheriff's Office

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281-342-6116

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713-766-1600