

# Chisholm Trail Newsletter

## CHISHOLM TRAIL SPECIAL UTILITY DISTRICT

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### Questions and Answers Concerning Transfer and Board's Continued Operation

Q. I receive my water bills from the City of Georgetown. Hasn't the transfer already taken place? Why is the CTSUD still in operation?

A. While the transfer of assets and liabilities has occurred and the City now owns, manages, expands, operates, and maintains all infrastructure, and bills for service, the Board is required to remain in operation until each of the following events occur:

1. **The Texas Public Utility Commission (PUC) authorizes the transfer of Chisholm Trail Special Utility Districts' Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN)** (the authority to sell water to customers in the Western District territory) to the City of Georgetown. This is pending review and approval by the Texas PUC. We expect the PUC to meet in early December, 2015 and render its decision within a

few weeks. When the CCN transfer occurs, the Board will no longer be responsible for setting rates or monitoring service provided to its former territory.

2. **The Texas State Legislature passes a law permitting the CTSUD Board to dissolve itself.** Legislation was introduced in the last session of the State Legislature that would have enabled the Board to dissolve itself upon transfer of the CCN, but failed to be voted on by the 84th Legislature. As previously reported, this was due to action by opponents to prevent the House Bill from coming up for a vote. Until a new Bill is considered and passed, the Board must meet its statutory obligations, remain in operation, meet periodically, and continue to hold annual elections until the next legislative session two years from now.

### Water Usage Seem High? Here's how to Check for Leaks

Larger leaks or a combination of small leaks can often be detected by the water meter. A whole house meter check can sometimes inform you of a leak and its flow rate but does not usually indicate where the leak is occurring. Performing this leak check includes the following procedures:

1. All water is turned off inside and outside the home. Special notice must be given to occupants to not use any water (including toilet flushing) for the next 20 minutes. This test must be performed when no automatic water equipment is used, such as irrigation controllers, clothes washers, dishwashers, etc. Occupants should also avoid using ice from refrigerator ice and water dispensers.
2. Record the reading of the water meter, and wait 15 minutes. Record the reading of the meter again. If the meter has recorded water use during the test, it might be due to a

leak. Verify the water use is not due to small appliances such as water filters, water softeners, or whole house humidifiers. Perform test again, if necessary, You can calculate monthly water waste by multiplying the water in the 15-minute test period times 2,880.

The meter test only verifies large leaks; it cannot assure that small leaks do not exist in the home or in your landscape irrigation system. Even when leaks are detected, this test does not indicate the location of the leaks. Further investigation is needed to detect and locate all significant leaks in the water supply line, faucets, showers, tubs and toilets .

*CREDIT: Alliance for Water Efficiency <http://www.allianceforwaterefficiency.org>*

### Winter Tree and Lawn Care for Central Texas

Trees require care before and during the winter to remain in top health.

“Homeowners are doing their trees a huge favor by preparing them for cold, winter conditions, and making them healthier for the next growing season,” recommends Fred M. Hall, former Williamson County Extension Agent. The following tips will help prepare urban trees for winter:

**Wrap the trunk.** In Central Texas, thin-barked trees like honey locust, ash, maple and linden are susceptible to sunscald and frost cracks because of drastic winter temperature fluctuations. To prevent bark damage, guard the trunks of younger trees up to the first branches using commercial tree wrap. Leave the wrap on until danger of frost is over.

**Mulch the base.** Apply two to four inches of wood chips, bark or other organic mulch near the base of the tree, but not against it, to reduce soil evaporation, improve water absorption and insulate against temperature extremes. Check your community recycling program, as some programs provide wood chips free of charge.

**Recycle leaves.** Instead of disposing of autumn leaves, consider layering them around the base of each tree as mulch, or blend them into the yard with a mulching mower to retain nutrients.

**Prune while trees are dormant.** Late winter is the best time for pruning most tree species, but it can be done whenever trees are dormant over the winter months. Common reasons for pruning are to remove dead branches and improve form. Always prune just outside the branch collar; the point where a branch joins a larger one, and don't remove any branches without good reason. Remember to always paint wounds when you trim oak trees.

**Give them a good drink.** Rather than simply run a hose at the base of each tree, instead water in the area

from just outside the trunk to the extent of the longest branches. Water slowly, with a sprinkler or soaker hose, at the rate of 10 gallons per inch of tree diameter.

**Focus on younger trees.** With less extensive root systems, they require the most care. Hall notes that urban trees will also require additional, regular watering over the winter. During extended dry periods provide supplemental water per the guidelines above. The best time for winter watering is on warmer days, when the temperature is above 40 degrees.

**Irrigation.** In fall months, apply a maximum of 1.0 inch of water per week if adequate rainfall does not occur. You can actually apply less than this amount and still have a healthy stand of turfgrass. In winter dormancy period, apply supplemental irrigation every 4 to 5 weeks if adequate rainfall does not occur. Note, on sandy soils, Extension professionals recommend watering every 3 to 4 weeks during dormancy period if adequate rainfall does not occur. Avoid overwatering in the fall months. Applying excess water encourages disease problems such as Large patch, particularly in St. Augustine grass and centipede grass lawns.

**Mowing.** With fall rainfall and drop in temperatures, the growth rate for the warm season turfgrasses is starting to increase over the growth rate for the late summer months. It is very important to mow these warm season turfgrasses at the proper height and frequency to avoid placing stress on the turfgrass plants going into winter dormancy. Mowing at the proper height and frequency will produce a denser stand of turfgrass in the lawn and will encourage a better root to shoot ratio. A dense stand of turfgrass will aid greatly in helping to reduce the amount of winter weeds in the lawn. Continue mowing until turfgrass is dormant.

**To report out-of-service water emergencies or make any other call in regard to customer service, please call Customer Care at 888-474-4904 or 512-930-3640**